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COMMISSION ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PERSONS, AND WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE (1867).

FIRST REPORT

OF

THE COMMISSIONERS,

WITH APPENDIX PART I.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.

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COMMISSION.

VICTORIA R.

Victoria, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith.

To Our trusty and well-beloved Hugh Seymour Tremenheere, Esquire, and Edward Carleton Tufnell, Esquire, Greeting.

Whereas it has been represented unto Us, that it is expedient that inquiry should be made into the several matters herein-after mentioned.

Now know ye, that We, reposing great trust and confidence in your ability and discretion, have nominated, constituted, and appointed, and do by these Presents nominate, constitute, and appoint, you the said Hugh Seymour Tremenheere and Edward Carleton Tufnell to be Our Commissioners for the purposes of the said Inquiry.

And We do hereby enjoin you, or either of you, to inquire into and report upon the Employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women in Agriculture, for the purpose of ascertaining to what extent, and with what modifications the principles of the Factory Acts can be adopted for the regulation of such Employment, and especially with a view to the better Education of such Children.

And for the better discovery of the truth in the premises, We do by these Presents give and grant unto you or either of you full power and authority to call before you or either of you such persons as you shall judge necessary, by whom you may be the better informed of the truth in the premises, and to inquire of the premises and every part thereof by all other lawful ways and means whatsoever.

And Our further Will and Pleasure is, that you Our said Commissioners do, with as little delay as may be consistent with the due discharge of the duties hereby imposed upon you, certify unto Us, under your hands and seals, your several proceedings in the premises.

And We do further will and command, and by these Presents ordain, that this Our Commission shall continue in full force and virtue, and that you Our said Commissioners, or either of you, shall and may from time to time proceed in the execution thereof and of every matter or thing therein contained, although the same be not continued from time to time by adjournment.

And for your assistance in the execution of this Our Commission, We have made choice of Our trusty and well-beloved Prideaux Selby, Esquire, Barrister-at-Law, to be the Secretary to this Our Commission, and to attend you, whose services and assistance We require you to use from time to time, as occasion may require.

Given at Our Court at St. James's, the Tenth day of May 1867, in the Thirtieth year of Our reign.

By Her Majesty's Command.

SPENCER H. WALPOLE.

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COMMISSION ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PERSONS, AND WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE (1867).

FIRST REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS.

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY,

1. WE, the Commissioners appointed by Your Majesty to inquire into the Employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women in Agriculture, humbly submit to Your Majesty this First Report of our Proceedings in execution of Your Majesty's Commission.

2. In obedience to the Commission addressed to us by Your Majesty's commands on the 18th June 1865,—in extension of the previous Commission of the 18th February 1862 on the Employment of Children and Young Persons in Trades and Manufactures not then regulated by Law—we inquired into the system of organized agricultural gangs, commonly called "public gangs," existing in some of the eastern counties. The evidence and report upon that inquiry, laid before Parliament on the 5th March 1867, caused the Act 30 & 31 Vict. c. 130. for the Regulation of Agricultural Gangs to be passed on the 20th August 1867. The inquiries which led to that Act, and to the Factory Acts Extension Acts of 1864 and 1867, and the Workshops Regulation Act of 1867, (which gave effect to the recommendations of our reports, and placed all remaining trades and manufactures under regulation,) caused a general conviction that the children, young persons, and women employed in agriculture otherwise than in "public gangs," that is, either in "private gangs," as in some counties, or individually throughout the kingdom, could not be permitted to remain the only portion of the labouring community to whom the beneficent legislation of the Factory Acts, or legislation on a similar principle, was not applied, if it should be found, after due inquiries, that there was good reason for extending such legislation to them.

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3. Accordingly it pleased Your Majesty to issue to us Your Majesty's Commission, which we had the honour to receive on the 18th May 1867, enjoining us "to inquire into "and report on the employment of children, young persons, and women in agriculture, "for the purpose of ascertaining to what extent, and with what modifications, the prin-"ciples of the Factory Acts can be adopted for the regulation of such employment, and "especially with a view to the better education of such children."

4. On the 4th June 1867 we had the honour to submit to Your Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department the names of five Assistant Commissioners, the number which we deemed necessary to enable the inquiry to be completed for England and Wales within a period of two years, beyond which period we did not think it advisable that the inquiry should extend.

Appointment of Assistant Commissioners.

5. On the 7th June we received the approval of the Secretary of State to our nomination of those gentlemen, namely, the Rev. James Fraser, M.A., Rector of Ufton, Berks, late Assistant Commissioner to the Education Commission and to the Schools Inquiry Commission; Joseph J. Henley, Esq., M.A., of Shirburn Lodge, Oxon; the Hon. Edwin Berkeley Portman, M.A., late Fellow of All Souls, Oxford, Barrister-at-Law; Charles James Boyle, Esq., M.A., late Fellow of All Souls, Oxford; and the Hon. Edward Stanhope, M.A., Fellow of All Souls, Oxford, Barrister-at-Law.

6. In the course of January 1868 Mr. Henley and Mr. Boyle resigned their offices, the former in consequence of accepting an appointment as Poor Law Inspector, the latter in consequence of ill-health. Their resignations were communicated to the Secretary of State on the 4th of February, and on the same day the names of their successors were submitted for approval, namely, Frederick Henry Norman, Esq., M.A., late of Trinity College, Cambridge, Barrister-at-Law; and George Culley, Esq., B.A., late of Trinity College Cambridge, of Fowberry Tower, Northumberland.

7. On the 8th February the Secretary of State signified his approval of these appointments, and within a few days those gentlemen proceeded to the districts assigned to them.

8. On the 15th June 1868 the Rev. James Fraser, having completed his report on the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Sussex, and Gloucester, resigned his office as Assistant Commissioner, in consequence of the pressure of other duties, and on the same date his resignation was communicated to Your Majesty's Secretary of State. At the same time the name of Robert Frederick Boyle, Esq., M.A., Fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford, Barrister-at-Law, was submitted to the Secretary of State, and approved of by him.

Preliminary proceedings of the Commissioners on entering upon their duties.

9. Our first duty on receiving Your Majesty's Commission was to draw up instructions for the guidance of the Assistant Commissioners; to construct tabular forms to be filled up by employers of children, young persons, and women in agriculture; to frame queries that might be annexed to those forms; and circulars to employers, magistrates, clergymen, and others, directing their attention to the inquiry, explaining its objects, and inviting their co-operation.

10. The instructions were issued to the Assistant Commissioners on the 8th July 1867; and to the instructions and to the tabular forms and circulars which we have added in the Appendix (P. 161) we beg leave to refer, as exhibiting the view we take of the nature and extent of the inquiry, and the spirit in which it should be conducted.

Counties embraced in this year's inquiries.

11. The portion of the kingdom embraced in our first year's inquiries comprises the eastern, some of the northern, and some of the midland and southern counties.

12. In commencing with the eastern counties we were influenced by the fact that public attention had been already much directed to those counties by the inquiry into the "public gangs," and that it was therefore desirable to complete the inquiry there by investigating the question of the number of children, young persons, and women employed in "private gangs," which had been represented to us as very great. It was said that the nature and circumstances of their employment differed very little from those of the "public gangs," and equally called for regulation. In the same counties there were also the ordinary number of children, young persons, and women employed individually as in other agricultural districts.

13. In taking next the counties of Northumberland and Durham, where agricultural wages are high and many of the arrangements of hiring and payment favourable to the labourer, and the important counties of York (North and East Riding), Nottingham, Leicester, Northampton, Huntingdon, Bedford, and Buckingham, where farming is carried on on a large scale, and where the questions to be dealt with in this inquiry, in their bearing both upon the farmer and the labourer, would be sure to receive full investigation by a large number of most intelligent occupiers and owners of the soil, we conceived that we should best prepare the way for the consideration of those questions in other parts of the country.

14. Two southern counties (Sussex and Gloucestershire) comprised in our investigations of this year will afford some materials in this Report for contrasting the condition of the agricultural labourer in the south, and the current of opinion there in reference to the matters under consideration, with the facts and opinions prevalent in the northern and midland counties.

The leading subjects for inquiry under this Commission.

15. The leading subjects for inquiry under this Commission are,—

I. Is the labour of children, young persons, and women in agriculture anywhere habitually, or in any places occasionally, of that excessive kind which was found to exist in the factories and workshops of the kingdom, and which justified the legislature in placing them under regulation in respect of hours of work and meal times?

II. Does the employment of females in agriculture have an injurious effect upon their morals, or on their proper training for domestic duties? If so, would it be possible, having due regard for the demands for labour, and the pecuniary resources of the agricultural labourer, to place any and what restrictions on the employment of females in agriculture?

III. What limitations should be adopted in regard to the age at which boys or girls should be permitted to be employed in farm labour?

IV. What amount of school attendance of boys and girls employed in agriculture would it be justifiable under the circumstances to enforce, and between what ages?

16. The evidence already collected by our Assistant Commissioners, and their respective reports upon it, will be found to have materially advanced these questions towards their solution. But any attempt on our part to draw general conclusions from them

would at present be manifestly premature. The evidence and reports will doubtless be well considered, not only in the counties to which they refer, but in those to which the inquiry has not yet extended. In the course of the ensuing six months a sufficient number of counties in the western and southern portions of England and in Wales will probably have been visited by the Assistant Commissioners to enable us to present to Your Majesty the evidence they will collect and our final Report in the course of the next session of Parliament.

Final report will be presented next year.

17. In proceeding now to direct attention to the principal points in the reports of the Assistant Commissioners, we are withheld from entering into any great detail by two considerations. First, we are apprehensive of weakening the effect of the full, minute, and comprehensive statements of facts embodied in each report, and of the inferences so carefully drawn by each Assistant Commissioner from what fell under his own observation. Secondly, the time will not have arrived for contrasting these facts and opinions and endeavouring to present general conclusions upon some of the most important topics involved in this inquiry until the reports and evidence relating to the counties which will occupy the Assistant Commissioners during the next six months are received.

Principal points in Reports of Assistant Commissioners.

18. In Mr. Fraser's report, which is such an one as we anticipated from his great practical experience and well-known ability, may be noticed the great variety of circumstances affecting the condition of the agricultural labourers in different localities, which so materially increase the difficulty of applying satisfactorily to their case and that of their children the legislation which, in the case of factories and workshops, has been finally adopted without hesitation.

Mr. Fraser's Report on the counties of Norfolk, Essex, Sussex, and Gloucester, and on two districts in Suffolk.

19. In one district wages are 13*s.* and 14*s.* a week, and cottage rents moderate; in another, with wages at 13*s.* a week, cottage rents are high and provisions dear (A. 27). Elsewhere wages are low and rents high (A. 31). In another district the proportion of labourers who have only precarious employment, "catch work" men or "shifty labourers," is unusually large.

Varying condition of agricultural labourers.

20. And as regards the employment of boys at an early age, in one case boys as young as from 7 to 10 were sought for (A. 26 and 27). In others they are not wanted for constant work until they are 11 or 12; in other cases, such as where there is stiff clay, they are not wanted until they are strong enough to drive a plough, at the age of 12 or 13. "On this heavy land a boy under 11 or 12 would not have strength to get "through the day" (A. 26). In that district wages are 13*s.* a week, but rents struck Mr. Fraser as "ranging high," and the poor rates are high; and it is in this same district that in February and March little children between 7 and 10 are employed, their occupation being to follow the dibble and drop peas and beans into the holes.

Very young boys wanted for work in some districts, and not in others.

21. The chief characteristic in reference to the employment of the youngest children is, as described by Mr. Fraser, (A. 42), that it is "precarious, occasional, and fluctuating." When a child, and particularly a boy, arrives at 10 years of age he begins, in some localities, to be "of constant use upon a farm, and is probably employed without inter-"mission throughout the year" (*ibid.*). The fluctuating nature of his employment up to 10 years of age affords good ground for the opinion that advantage might be taken of it to insist upon a certain amount of school attendance during the time which is not required for work. Schoolmasters assured Mr. Fraser that, "it is not at all uncommon "for boys to leave school early in the spring and not return again till the late autumn, "though for half that time perhaps they have only been expecting work, and not been "actually employed." A compulsory school attendance to a certain extent during those periods would be no hardship to the parent, and would secure to the child the proper use of time now wasted. And it is highly satisfactory to find that in "the almost unanimous "opinion of the labouring men" whom Mr. Fraser questioned on the subject, even continuous school attendance up to the age of 12 or 13 would be no detriment to a boy with a view to his future career as a farm labourer. Their opinion is "that there is no need "for a boy to turn his hand to farm work till he is 12 or 13 years of age, if only his "parents can afford to keep him at school and dispense with his earnings," and that his remaining at school up to that age will not stand in the way of his making "a thoroughly "efficient agricultural hand." This opinion is the more important as coming from labourers in the southern counties, because it entirely accords with the practice of those in Northumberland and Durham, as described by Mr. Henley (B. 90), who voluntarily keep their boys at school often even to the age of 12 or 13.

Employment of younger children fluctuating.

School attendance may be insisted on in intervals of demand for their labour.

22. The restrictions as to the age and hours of labour for children employed in agriculture mentioned by Mr. Fraser (A. 46, 47) as having been recommended by practical persons at several of the meetings which he summoned, attended both by

Restrictions on boys' labour recommended.

labourers and farmers, and of which Mr. Fraser approves, will receive further illustration in the course of the inquiry in other districts. There is much in them to invite acceptance. They are "that 10 hours labour in the day is as much as ought to be required from any "boy under 12 years of age;" that "no children under the age of 12 should be employed "in out-door agricultural work between the 1st of November and the 1st of March;" also,—a point which no doubt is likely to be entertained,—"that where children are "employed in bird scaring, sheep tending, or other farm work, including stable work, "the same child should not be employed on two successive Sundays, but only on "alternate Sundays."

Diversity of opinions as to restricting labour of females.

23. In regard to the employment of females, in some localities they are not employed at all in the field (A. 24), in another only scantily (*ibid.*); but elsewhere they are largely employed (A. 30), and yet in a district where the land requires much cleaning, and women and children are much sought for by most of the occupiers, some of the largest farmers "cultivate the land without employing females at all," and one gentleman who occupies 2,000 acres, moved a resolution "that girls under 16 should be prohibited from working "on the land." It is noticeable also that where the custom of employing females on the land had declined,—not a tithe of the number being employed that were so 20 years ago,—the employment of men and boys has increased, "four men, a big lad, and a boy "of 12 or 13" being now required to cultivate 100 acres (A. 26).

24. The effect of employing females on the land is, Mr. Fraser says, "admitted to be "demoralising" (A. 49), but to forbid their employment would, at all events in the case of adult and married women, be considered a hardship and an unjustifiable use of the powers of the legislature. In some counties farm operations could not be successfully performed without them (§ 49); on the other hand Mr. Fraser heard that the women were found to be less and less disposed to go out to work upon the land; "that they "refused unsuitable work, and would stay at home on wet days."

25. But with respect to young girls, the bad moral effects of their employment in field labour are very generally admitted, and almost without modification, and that not more distinctly by the clergy than by the farmers themselves (A. 51), and it is noticeable that in Norfolk, "where the employment of girls attains considerably larger dimen-"sions than in any other of the three counties" which Mr. Fraser visited, "the opinion "in favour of restriction was the strongest, and the age to which most persons were "prepared to recommend that the restriction should extend was 16" (§ 52). Various other opinions were however strongly held. Some would allow work up to 13 and prohibit it afterwards; others would prohibit it at 18 or 20. Mr. Fraser is of opinion that the restriction up to 16, if adopted, should be accompanied with dispensation for girls between 12 and 16 working in company with or in assistance to their mothers in the six summer months (April to September).

Education of agricultural children; conditions necessary for.

26. In dealing with the question of the education of agricultural children Mr. Fraser records opinions to which his experience under the Duke of Newcastle's Commission in 1859, and in other public employments, necessarily gives great weight. He reminds us of the fact that it is only by the combined fulfilment of three conditions that any great improvement upon present results can be obtained. A sufficient number of good schools must be provided; regular attendance must be secured; the evil of a too early withdrawal from school must be prevented. The two last conditions alone fall within the view of this Commission.

Different views as to compulsory attendance.

27. It is a very hopeful feature in the present state of things, and a proof that the efforts made in behalf of education during the last 30 years have begun to exert a wide influence among the agricultural population, that Mr. Fraser, speaking of the apathy and carelessness of parents in some parishes in regard to the education of their children, is nevertheless able to say, that "there is fully an equal number of parishes in which the "parents are most anxious to get the best education for their children which is within "reach, and where the existing freedom produces quite as happy and quite as abundant "results as any mode of compulsion could hope to do." Sometimes it is the efforts of the clergyman that have dissipated that apathy; sometimes that of the landlord, as mentioned by Mr. Fraser in the case of the schools on the estate of Mr. Osman Ricardo, near Ledbury, who "not being deterred by difficulties" arising from the condition of the people, and the example of the surrounding neighbourhood, has, by providing really efficient schools, succeeding in "filling them to the utmost of their capacity with a "crowd of eager and punctual scholars," many of whom come from a distance of two miles, "deserting an inferior school close to their own doors" (A. 32). In other cases similar results have been produced "where the awakened public spirit has been general,

"and it has been felt that the degradation of one class has been a reproach and a peril "to all."

28. But in the absence of any probability that a more enlightened appreciation of the benefits of education will within any reasonable time become general among the labourers in agriculture, compulsion in some form, Mr. Fraser says (A. 62), is thought by a considerable number of persons to be "the proper corollary of a prohibition from labour." Therefore that if, for example, the legislature should think fit to declare that no child should be employed in agriculture under, say, 10 years of age, such child should be compelled to attend school up to that age. But this, as it goes beyond any principle hitherto sanctioned in the factory legislation, requires the fullest discussion and the most careful consideration with respect to the state of the labourers in all parts of the country, before it could be recommended for adoption. On the other hand, the principle that there should be attached to employment for wages certain obligations of school attendance up to a certain age, is a principle already adopted by general consent in regard to all other occupations.

Difficulties arising from poverty of parents.

29. But even were the latter proposition accepted, as involving less sacrifice to the parents—though in many cases less acceptable, as Mr. Fraser shows, to the farmers—there arises at once "the formidable difficulty" (A. 66) in the way of giving it by legislation the full effect which all the evidence points out as desirable—the poverty of a large proportion of the parents. Mr. Fraser refers to a statement which he made to the Duke of Newcastle's Commission, and which he deems still applicable, viz., that "the agricul-"tural labourer's wages are never up to the mark that can allow of his sacrificing the "earnings of his child to higher considerations."

Rates of wages in Mr. Fraser's district.

30. The rates of wages given by Mr. Fraser in the counties which he visited (A. 24, 32, 69, 76) "only profess to regard the case of the best labourers, and even then suppose "them to lose no time" (§ 76). But below these there are the "'catch-work' labourers, "or 'shifty' men, whose work is irregular; the men with less natural aptitude for work, "and who can only do one thing; the men who, from sickness or weather, lose a consider-"able amount of time in the year" (§ 75); the men of unsettled habits. Many of these may be in the prime of life, and have a family of young children. If the steady, first-rate labourer in good employ cannot at the rate of wages in many counties dispense with the earnings of his younger children without hardship to himself and them, what is the case with the second class of labourers? It is "to the poverty of the parents, mainly," Mr. Fraser says, "that we are to trace that irregular attendance during the children's nominal school life, and the premature termination of that life, which constitute the two "great obstacles to the education of the farm labourer" (§ 78).

Mr. Fraser's conclusions.

31. After a very able review of all the systems hitherto embodied in our legislation, or proposed, for securing some amount of school attendance in conjunction with work for children up to a certain age, and after pointing out the defects in what has been adopted, and the objections he sees to what has been proposed (A. 80–97), Mr. Fraser proceeds (§. 99) to state the conclusions he has arrived at. He contents himself "with asking for "a law which shall require regular uninterrupted attendance at school up to the age of "10; and for the two years beyond 10 and 12, while the child is at work, a certain "amount of attendance, as suggested by the Norfolk Chamber of Agriculture, either at "day or night school, during the leisure part of the year." Such a solution would doubtless best suit the convenience of the farmer, as appears abundantly throughout the evidence collected by Mr. Fraser. But how far it could be entertained consistently with the acknowledged fact of the poverty of a large proportion of the parents can only be determined when all the evidence which will be collected by this Commission will be submitted to the judgment of the country.

Agricultural cottages.

32. Mr. Fraser's picture of the state of the agricultural cottages in the counties which he visited cannot fail to produce a deep impression (A. 113). He says of it that "it is a "hideous picture, and the picture is drawn from the life" (§ 116). "It is," he declares, "impossible to exaggerate the ill effects" of the present state of things "in every aspect, "physical, social, economical, moral, intellectual" (*ibid.*). At the same time Mr. Fraser fully recognizes the fact that a great deal has been done of late years, especially by the largest landowners, to remedy the evil (§ 137). Unfortunately the complete remedy does not rest with the wealthiest landowners. Many cottages belong to small proprietors too indigent to have any money to spare for their improvement; some to absentee and embarrassed landowners; some to mortgagees; a large proportion to speculative builders, particularly in the "open" parishes (§§ 115, 128). "It is estimated," Mr. Fraser adds, "that the proprietorship of less than half the cottages in Norfolk is in the owners of the "soil" (§ 128).

33. As the Artizan and Labourers Dwellings Act has now become law, the time, happily, cannot be far distant when Parliament may be able to see its way to some measure of a similar kind applicable to agricultural districts, and also to some more effectual inspection for the prevention of overcrowding than the present one, depending as it does on the local authorities alone, which Mr. Fraser notices as quite ineffective (A. 116).

34. The whole of Mr. Fraser's remarks on the subject of cottages,—the best and fairest mode of tenure, the true view of cottages as property, the possibility of making them fairly remunerative, their construction and arrangement, and other points,—will be read with the greatest interest.

35. Mr. Fraser also gives much valuable information on the different modes of hiring which he found in his different districts, the beer-house system, the harvest homes, the existence of "largesse" in Norfolk, the effects of the preservation of game, the co-operative system, and other topics. Mr. Fraser's observations on these and on all the other subjects so ably dealt with in his report will doubtless be studied by all persons interested in the objects of this inquiry with the attention they eminently deserve.

Effect of Agricultural Gangs Act.

36. We are glad to find that Mr. Fraser is able to state (A. 37) that the Act passed last year for placing public agricultural gangs under regulation, founded on our recommendation contained in the Sixth Report of the Children's Employment Commission (1862) is producing "some good." It appears that some of the worst characters among the gangmasters have been unable to obtain a licence; and that the separation of the sexes, and the requirement that where females are employed they should be superintended by a licensed gang-mistress, have been carried into effect. But it appears also that what we stated would in all probability occur is already taking place; the "public" gangs are being turned into "private" gangs. For the regulation of these some legislation may possibly be required similar in principle to that for the public gangs (A. 38, 40).

Mr. Henley's Report on Northumberland and Durham.

37. Mr. Henley's inquiries were prosecuted chiefly in Northumberland; but he was able also to present a short report upon the county of Durham.

38. It was a cause of much satisfaction to us that we were able to secure the services of Mr. Henley for the duties of the Commission in these two northern counties, inasmuch as his experience as a magistrate and a poor-law guardian, and also his practical knowledge as an agriculturist in Oxfordshire, pointed him out as a gentleman whose description of the state of things in the north would be received by landowners and occupiers in the South as those of one who was qualified to look at them from a southern point of view.

39. We much regret that the present is the only report we shall receive from Mr. Henley, in consequence of his having accepted the offer of the more onerous employment of a poor-law inspector.

Mode of hiring and payment in North Northumberland.

40. The Glendale Union was selected by Mr. Henley for minute inquiry, as presenting a suitable type of the agricultural system of the north; but the same system prevails in the unions of Berwick-upon-Tweed, Belford, and Alnwick—in other words, in the whole of North Northumberland. The peculiarities of this part of the county are that there are very few villages, the farmers being almost entirely dependent upon their cottages for the labour of their farms, and the men being generally hired by the year (B. 5); also that it is the custom of the country to pay the labourers mostly in kind. Their wages are stated at 15*s.* to 18*s.* a week, including everything (B. 7).

41. Mr. Henley sums up very fully the advantages and disadvantages of this system (B. 8–12), but decides in favour of the advantages, which he thus describes (B. 8):—

"The advantages of this system are certainty of payment for the whole year, both in sickness and health, absence of temptation to spend money, and of any necessity for overtime or over exertion at piece work, a constant supply of good wholesome food at cost price, including abundance of meal and milk for the children, besides the various cakes of barley and peas, brown and white bread, butter, cheese, vegetables, and home-fed bacon, and fuel brought to the door from the pit's mouth free of charge."

42. He adds that "it redounds to the credit of the system, as well as to the credit "both of employers and employed, that at the Wooler Petty Sessions in the year ending "December 31, 1866, not one conviction of 'servants in husbandry misbehaving' is "recorded."

43. Also, from his own observation and much conversation with the wives of the labourers, he is "convinced that those who are paid in kind or 'corn conditions' are the "best off; and though at times the want of ready money may press, the children's "earnings bring a good deal into the family. Children are paid in cash, and this is "usually half yearly. Even after they have reached the age of maturity the whole family

"make common cause with a common purse. Cows are also a great source of profit" (B. 12).

44. Labourers hired by the day or otherwise than by the year receive from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* a day (B. 14).

45. The employment of women in North Northumberland in farm labour presents some striking features. The old "bondage" system by which "the hind was bound to "find the work of a suitable woman whenever she was needed," receiving her earnings and "engaging to give her wages, lodging, food, and washing," is described as "gradually "dying out," (B. 16–20). Where the woman was one of the daughters of the hind, it was a profitable arrangement, but where they had to hire a stranger it was said to be otherwise. The name "bondager" is becoming unpopular, and the term "woman worker" is being now substituted. The women thus employed turn their hand to every description of work on the farm, including the barn work which is described as the hardest, the driving of horses, filling dung carts, and turning straw heaps, spreading dung, and forking and loading hay and corn—work generally considered in the south unsuitable to women, and condemned by some persons in the north (B. 21–25). Mr. Henley's opinion after seeing them in the field, and visiting them in their cottages is that it does them no harm, physically or morally (B. 28). It is almost exclusively performed by the unmarried women living in their own homes. In the Glendale Union, out of 373 women returned in our circulars of inquiry as "working out" only 29 were married. On this Mr. Henley remarks that "throughout North Northumberland the daughters are content "to forego the pleasures of town life and higher wages in order to live with their parents, "thus leaving the mother free to attend to her home duties. But they cannot remain at "home, unless they are prepared to accept any description of work that is offered to "them, including perhaps that which has been censured" (B. 29).

Effects of employment of women not injurious.

46. And of these same women when they come to be mothers of families and have a home of their own—though often the very inferior one in point of accommodation of a Northumbrian cottage of the old style—Mr. Henley draws the following picture (§ 28):—

"There are many who hold the opinion that field work is degrading, but I should be glad if they would visit these women in their own homes after they become wives and mothers. They would be received with a natural courtesy and good manners which would astonish them. Let the visitor ask to see the house, he will be "taken over" it with many apologies that he should have seen it not "redd up." He will then be offered a chair in front of a large fire, with the never absent pot and oven, the mistress, meanwhile, continuing her unceasing family duties, baking, cooking, cleaning, &c. Not one word of complaint will he hear; but he will be told that though "working people" they are not poor, and a glance at the substantial furniture, the ample supply of bacon over his head, the variety of cakes and bread on the board, and the stores of butter, cheese, and meal in the house, will convince him of the fact. When he inquires about the children he will hear that though they have not much to give them, the parents feel it to be their sacred duty to secure them the best instruction in their power, and 'that 'they are determined they shall have.' The visitor will leave that cottage with the conviction that field work has had no degrading effect, but that he has been in the presence of a thoughtful, contented, and unselfish woman."

47. The example of these north-country women is also well worthy of imitation in the south in another important respect, namely, their dress when engaged in farm work. It is made of "strong materials that defy all weathers," fitting easily. "Generally it "consists of a pair of stout boots, a very short thick woollen petticoat, warm stockings, "a jacket, &c., over all a washing pinafore with sleeves (called a slip) which preserves "their dress from the dirt. Their faces are protected by a shade or 'ugly' of divers "colours. Thus equipped they present a great contrast to the draggled appearance of "the women who only work in the fields occasionally, wearing some thin gown, with "perhaps the addition of the husband's coat and boots. Nor is the difference less "striking in the results. The occasional worker not being inured to field labour fre-"quently suffers from exposure to weather, while the very appearance of the habitual "workers is sufficient to prove the healthiness of their mode of life; and the medical "evidence is overwhelming as to the absence of disease, and of the usual complaints "attendant on debility" (B. 31).

Their working dress.

48. Another remarkable peculiarity in this county is that the children seldom, if ever, go to work before 11 or 12 years of age, and "then merely for summer work" (B. 32). "Horses are never intrusted to the care of boys before the age of 14, consequently till "that time it is only summer work for which they are required, so that they are able to "continue their school attendance during winter" (B. 33).

Children seldom go to work before 11 or 12, and then only in summer.

49. The returns from South Northumberland, Mr. Henley says, (B. 90), do not show any children at work under 10 years of age. In North Northumberland 10 is considered too young (B. 89). But although this custom of the people in this county

In rare cases children leave school before 10.

to keep their children up to 12 and 14 at school until they are of proper age to begin to learn farm work is the rule, it is subject to occasional exceptions, with which, Mr. Henley is of opinion that it would not be wise to interfere. "In rare cases," he says (*ibid.*) "the eldest child is sent out by the pressure of a large family rather earlier than may "be desirable as regards its education, so as to provide schooling by its earnings for "younger ones; but any restriction upon this would only drive the mother out to work, "while the eldest child would be kept at home to attend to the household duties, and "would therefore be no way better off in point of instruction."

In South Northumberland married women go out to work. Wages are paid in money. Old dietary of the country abandoned.

50. South Northumberland presents some remarkable contrasts with the northern portion of the county, such as the extensive employment of married women in the farm labour, "neglecting their homes, and leaving a child that ought to be at school to look "after the house" (B. 52); secondly in the payment of wages in money,—which for hinds may be fairly stated at fully 1*l.* a week,—instead of in kind; thirdly, in the abandonment of the old dietary of the country, which was similar to that of the Scotch, namely, porridge, crowdy (scalded oatmeal), barley, pea flour, bread of whole meal and fine flour, milk, cheese, and butter, home-fed and cured bacon, and their hot meal during their long mid-day rest of two hours, for tea, coffee, butcher's meat, and white bread. It appears that the use of tea and coffee is becoming excessive, sometimes as often as four times a day, the coffee often being not free from adulteration. Grave evils are resulting from this change of diet. An experienced witness believes that "it takes three men now to "do the work of two" (B. 58). Another that the change of food of the working people is deteriorating their physical health and strength. It appears that this undesirable change has arisen since "coffee, tea, and sugar have become lower in price and more "attainable by the working classes" (B. 59–67).

The many advantages of labourers in Northumberland account for their general well-being.

51. Mr. Henley notices the great advantage to the farm labourers of Northumberland of cheap fuel, by which they are not only better enabled to provide cooked food, but "to dry their working clothes at night, by which means they keep off rheumatism and "its attendant evils," and he shows that in the severe winter of 1864 the rise in the rate of mortality in the northern divisions of the kingdom was only 4 per cent., whereas the general rise throughout the kingdom was 18 per cent. "These advantages," Mr. Henley adds, "together with the good habits of the people, account for their general "well-being and excellent social state" (B. 60, 63). So high, indeed, is the "general "condition of the people," that Mr. Henley sums up his account of them by quoting the evidence of a gentleman of much experience, both in this country and in the United States, who states (B. 63), that "he had never found working agricultural labourers so "well off in any place, including America."

Similar results in some parts of Durham.

In other parts, small holdings and less education.

52. In the county of Durham Mr. Henley found "on the estates that were thrown "into large occupations" the same or nearly the same organization of agricultural labour as in North Northumberland, with similar results. The wages are so high, as compared with other parts of England, that he dismisses the idea of children being sent to work at too early an age from the poverty of the parents in those portions of the country where the farms are large. But "in a great part of the county" the land is "broken up into small farms." "The labour upon these small holdings is done by the "farmer and his family, perhaps assisted by one or more young people hired into the "house and living with the family" (B. 65). This is the class of persons which, Mr. Henley rightly says, "holds a position which bridges over the distance between capitalists "and labourers." They are described as "an honest, industrious race," but they have "a hard struggle to live." It is important to observe the consequence in reference to the education of their children. They "fail to obtain sufficient school instruction, being "usually taken away from school at a very early age, as their parents were before them, "and they pick up a little schooling when they can" (B. 66). They are taken from school "not to work for wages, but to assist their parents," and some few "begin work "about the age of 9 or 10" for a limited time at the light exceptional work of assisting in the barking season (B. 69).

Best labourers formerly trained in the families of these small occupiers.

53. It is remarked (B. 65) that it was in the families of the small occupiers of this class that the best farm labourers used formerly to be trained. The "hired boys" living with the farmer were not, until recent years, tempted by the higher wages in the collieries, iron, or lead works, or other manufactures of the district, but remained long in farm service. The result is observed to be that "farm labourers are not so skilful as formerly, "from the absence of long training in farm service, when they were taught every kind "of labour required on a farm" (*ibid*).

Effect of employment of women

54. Mr. Henley's careful inquiries as to the effect of the employment of women in these two counties appear to establish the fact that they are, as affirmed in the return

from the Hexham Board of Guardians, "both in morals and in domestic duties in advance "of those of like standing in towns" (B. 76).

in these two counties not injurious.

55. Mr. Henley's account of the zeal for education shown by the shepherds in the Cheviot Hills, as well as by the class of agricultural labourers generally in Northumberland, will be read with much interest. "The demand for education combining religious "training with sound practical instruction," says Archdeacon Hamilton, "is universal, "and the supply has kept pace with the demand" (B. 106). Weather or distance do not seem much to affect the attendance where the teachers are good; "slight causes do "not stop them;" and the attendance of children who come from the greater distances is generally the best and most regular (B. 111). Neither does it appear to be much affected by considerations of expense, "the parents considering it a sacred duty to let "their children receive all the instruction they can" (B. 116), even those whose earnings were lowest (B. 120). In some cases the quality of the teaching is not such as to satisfy the people, who are unwilling that the teaching should be "below that of the "Scotch schoolmasters." In Durham, also, "among the working people and the small "farmers" there was "a very strong feeling against the system of instruction pursued "by the certificated schoolmasters," which is that of class teaching. They appear to think that it fails in reaching each individual child, and they miss the absence of the Scotch practice of giving school work to be taken home to be prepared for the next day (B. 115). With this general desire for sound education it is not surprising that there should be a general concurrence of opinion among the persons of higher position best qualified to judge, that the plan which "is now carried out in the district by the parents "themselves is the best method of obtaining for their children the instruction they so "much value" (B. 97) should be embodied in legislation, namely, that from Martinmas to May (11th November to 12th May) a certain amount of school attendance should be made compulsory.

Zeal for education among labouring class in Northumberland.

56. Of this Mr. Henley says (*ibid.*) that—

"When the potatoes are housed in the autumn the work of the children ceases for that season; and fortunately in North Northumberland they are not required at home to attend on younger members of the family by the absence of the mother at field work. Therefore during the winter season they can always attend school, and they do so as much as is in their power, braving all difficulties of distance and weather."

57. The schoolmasters of the district think that "in schools under certificated masters "an annual attendance of 88 instead of 176 whole days in school should be accepted as "the condition of a capitation grant for boys over 18 years of age" (B. 98). And as "most of the children up to 12 do attend" in this way, Mr. King, a clergyman in the district, suggests that 150 school attendances, as a maximum, should be made compulsory (B. 99). The Hexham Board of Guardians concur in this, deeming it "quite "practicable to enforce a certain amount of school attendance up to the age of 12 or "13" (B. 100).

What amount of school attendance should be made imperative.

58. But even in this county Mr. Henley reminds us that opinions which "look to "the teaching side of the question" "must be weighed with great care;" inasmuch as even here, "where the average earnings are so high," the assistance given by the children to the support of the family is the first consideration, and the pressure particularly falls on large families of young children" (B. 101).

Opinions which look to the teaching side of the question must be weighed with care.

59. Of the result of this training and of the social system generally in these counties, Mr. Henley speaks in cordial terms. "The Northumberland peasants are," he says, "as "they were described by Sir Francis Doyle in 1842—intelligent, courteous, with a manly "independence of demeanour: remarkably sober, rarely touching beer at their work;" "they bear a high character for honesty;" "and crime of a serious character may be "said hardly to exist among them" (B. 138). By working when young half the year they are enabled, Mr. King says (B. 143) "to pay for their own education and assist in "their maintenance." Their education and training makes them "efficient farm ser-"vants," and "able to avail themselves of any opening which may offer to benefit their "condition," so that "the stewards on all the large farms are almost to a man Northum-"brians who have commenced life as hinds" (B. 144).

Result of the training and social system in these two counties.

60. It is to be regretted that the dwellings of this exemplary race of agricultural labourers in the north are still, in numerous instances, in a very unsatisfactory state. Great progress has been made within the last 30 years in improving them, but still there are, Mr. Henley says, "probably some of the best and some of the worst" cottages in England in this district. The description given of the cottages of the old type shows how great must have been the discomfort, and how many the sources of injury to health and morals connected with them (B. 152). But this blot on the otherwise remarkably

Labourers' dwellings in the North.

favourable features of agricultural life in these northern counties is in course of being removed; "it will be found that farms, at the expiration of their present leases, will not "let without suitable cottage accommodation, which is as essential as suitable stabling "for the horses" (B. 156). The farmer must either pay extra wages to bribe a hind "to occupy what is so miserable for himself and his family, or he must remain content "with second class labour." It must also be said, Mr. Henley adds, "in justification "of the landlords," that "the work of improvement is progressing rapidly." The Dukes of Northumberland have built and improved 931 dwellings for farm and other labourers on their estates during the last 20 years, and "attention is attracted by the excellence of the cottages" on the large estates of Earl Grey and Mr. Creswell Creswell, and on many other estates, the list of which, Mr. Henley says, would be too long to mention. The ground floor cottages are the most popular. A witness said, "how is "the mother to cook the dinner and look after a small bairn when it is up stairs? She "is always on the stairs." Mr. Hunt, Surgeon, Belford, also states that "the most "suitable construction is a ground floor, the mother then being able to look after her "children in time of sickness." Mr. Henley adds many other particulars relative to the cottages in the north, both the old and the more recent ones, which are of general interest; also a full statement of the effect of the rules of the Inclosure Commissioners in the case of cottages built under their sanction, with money borrowed under the powers of Acts of Parliament (B. 186), with suggestions for the relaxation of the terms now imposed. He also supplies much valuable information on the other topics to which attention is called in our circular of inquiries.

Mr. Stanhope's Report on the counties of Lincoln, Nottingham, and Leicester.

61. Mr. Stanhope's Report comprises the counties of Lincoln, Nottingham, and Leicester. These three counties present strong contrasts in soil and cultivation. The very varied conditions of agricultural employment consequent upon these contrasts are fully exhibited by Mr. Stanhope.

Large farms on the Wold.

Labourers hired by the year;

62. The great wold district extends from Barton on the Humber to Horncastle and Spelsby. The northern half of it is remarkable for the very large size of the farms, "many of them reaching 800 or 1,000 acres. The villages are numerous and not far "apart, but small," in many cases only large enough to afford cottage accommodation for the labourers who are hired by the year, "confined" labourers (C. 6). These labourers are paid "partly in kind, and their wages amount to 40*l.* or 45*l.* a year" (C. 21). Their wives are described as being too well off to work (C. 8).

others in the same district irregularly.

63. But in this same district there are many men who only get "irregular and "uncertain work," "who live from hand to mouth," and whose wives and children go out in the "public" or private gangs which do the light work of the district; "whose "children must work at the earliest age they can" (68); men described in other portions of the county as "catch work" labourers, "who work for no fixed employer all the year," and whose earnings fall below the average of the district (C. 21, 22).

Importance of these facts as respects obligation of school attendance.

64. It is obviously of the first importance that facts of this kind should be kept prominently in view in considering the questions of the restrictions in the employment of juvenile labour, and the obligation of school attendance that could with propriety be enforced.

Causes of the unequal distribution of labour.

65. The unequal distribution of labour, which is one of the chief causes of the state of things just described, and which exists not only in the wold district "but in other "parts of the county," has not arisen, Mr. Stanhope says, from the destruction of cottages by the large landowners to save the rates, but from its being a new country. Large tracts of land have been brought into cultivation, farm-houses and farm cottages have been erected, but cottages in sufficient number upon, or near the farms have not yet been supplied (C. 9). Some landlords have done a great deal towards remedying this, and much progress is making on many estates (C. 184). The progress is also stimulated by the farmers, who consider that it has become "a vital question" to them. But "on some few of the large properties" which Mr. Stanhope visited "hardly any "improvement has taken place," of which he gives some striking proofs (C. 186–8). Under the most favourable circumstances the more even distribution of labour over these wide districts must be a gradual process, and until it is effected many serious obstacles are interposed to the moral and intellectual improvement of the young, and the general well-being of the labourers in agriculture.

Garden cultivation in the Axholme and Carr districts.

66. Entirely different from the circumstances prevailing in the wold are those of the Isle of Axholme and the Carr district, in the north-eastern corner of the county. Here the rich soil is "especially suited for garden cultivation," and is "mainly owned by small "freeholders cultivating their own land with the help of their families." From July, the

time of the potato setting, to that of the potato harvest at the end of November "almost all the female and juvenile population is engaged in field work" (C. 16). These "cottagers" or small freeholders are also very numerous in many parts of the fens (C. 26). They are a class in many cases very little raised above the hired labourer, and more hardly worked and less well fed and housed (*ibid.*). "They often live under a "heavy incubus of debt" (C. 27). Where the land they occupy is sufficient to employ fully a man's labour throughout the year, or where if less (only four or five acres) they will consent to hire themselves out when their own land does not require their labour, "they appear to be prosperous; but to the latter resource they are unfortunately averse, "and the consequence is that their children are worked earlier, and have less schooling "than those of hired labourers" (*ibid.*).

Effect of on education.

67. The period of the year during which the demand for these children's labour is the greatest,—from July to the end of November,—is noticeable as indicating the time left free for school attendance. On the other hand in three other districts of the same county, the wold, the cliff, and the heath, in consequence of the prevalence of turnip cultivation, the winter is the time when the boys from 9, 10, and 12 years of age are chiefly employed (C. 13). This is also the case in Notts. (C. 49). Picking stones is also another description of winter work (C. 14). On the other hand weeding and many other employments give occupation to boys from 7 to 11 and girls from 7 to 13 years of age "almost through the summer" especially in the fens where the weeds spring up rapidly (C. 19).

Periods of the year when children are employed.

68. In Nottinghamshire, one-half of which, that not adjoining Lincolnshire, "presents "many features of similarity with the Lincolnshire wolds," troops of children "are em-"ployed almost all the summer and even a part of the winter for stone picking" (C. 30), and in the other half of the county, where the soils are heavy, boys are wanted to lead the horses in ploughing, and "in some parishes go as early as 8 or 9, in others not till "10 or 11" (C. 31). "In this county wages may be said to be 15*s.* a week throughout "the county; near the collieries or the large towns 16*s.* or 17*s.* for first-class labour." In Leicester, the adjoining county, wages for able-bodied men vary from 11*s.* to 13*s.* a week. Boys from 9 to 12 years of age are taken permanently on the farm for ploughing (C. 34); and younger boys are occasionally wanted for "tending birds." The low rate of wages shows itself in the reduced diet of the Leicestershire labourer; "meat once "a day, and for the father only, is the rule;" whereas in Lincolnshire "the men "often eat meat two or three times a day, and sometimes give it to their families" (C. 35).

Similar features in part of Nottinghamshire.

69. We have only attempted to draw attention to some of the principal points, in their bearing on future legislation, dealt with by Mr. Stanhope in the preliminary portion of his report. The succeeding portions of it enter minutely into detail on all the questions submitted to him. The necessity of limiting the Sunday labour of boys occupied not only in "bird scaring," but in "tenting" cows, pigs, sheep, or horses, is clearly shown by his remarks in § 45. He has given an elaborate description of the private gangs, which are employed in one form or another throughout Lincolnshire and Notts. Mr. Stanhope states, that in his opinion the true distinction to be drawn between the different sorts of gangs is "between those in which young children only are employed, "and those in which old and young are mixed together" (C. 62). Where girls and boys work together in companies of moderate size, Mr. Stanhope says that "very little "harm is represented as being caused to their morals" (C. 63). He looks therefore, not so much to the separation of the sexes in gang work, which is ineffectual at meal times, and while they are going to or coming from their work, as to the separation of the old from the young. "It is the elder women who demoralize them." "It is the bigger "girls that corrupt the little ones, and no one else." "It's the old married women that "talk bad and corrupt the children" (C. 64). Private gangs, as already mentioned by Mr. Fraser (§ 36), and as we anticipated, have increased since the Agricultural Gangs Act came into operation. Whatever may be hereafter found practicable in the way of further regulation to prevent the serious demoralization caused by the present system, the best hope for the complete amelioration of the system is to be found in the extension of cottage accommodation upon or near the farm, and the consequent substitution of family work for the gang (C. 67, 84).

Necessity of limiting Sunday labour.

Private gangs increasing.

Extension of cottage accommodation the best remedy.

70. Reviewing all the circumstances that came under his observation in these three counties, in regard to the employment of boys, Mr. Stanhope comes to the following conclusion, which commends itself to the most attentive consideration:— (C. 73, 74.)

"Severe restrictions upon boy labour will also have the effect of driving out into the fields many more women and girls, or of causing the work which they now do to be neglected. And much of the

Mr. Stanhope's conclusions in reference to legislation.

light labour now done by children is of a character which though essential to first rate farming, is not absolutely necessary; and the neglect of it, though a loss to the farmer, will be felt far more by the poor families whose earnings are thus impaired.

"Whatever, therefore, may be the case with reference to the necessity of requiring some better school attendance from boys, there is no reason, on the ground of health, for fixing any limit before which they shall not be allowed to work different from that of the Factory Acts."

Opinions as to field work for girls.

71. Mr. Stanhope reviews very carefully the evidence regarding the age at which girls should be allowed to work, and the conclusion he arrives at is, that the employment of girls from 8 to 12 or 13 is the most free from objection, if properly regulated. In many districts females above that age are but little employed, in others not at all; everywhere it appears that there is a growing disinclination to field work among the women themselves (C. 75–84). Looking therefore to the spread of that disinclination, one witness remarks (Evid. 206), that "any restriction had better be left to personal "feeling." Let field work for girls be considered "a last and loathed resource. Let "everything from the gentleman's situation, and the shopman's down to the lowest farm "service, come to be preferred to the field." Such is the general opinion of field work in the south. It has been shown in Mr. Henley's report, that as conducted in Northumberland it is not found to injure the women as wives or mothers.

Distance to which children should go to their work.

72. With regard to the distances to which children have in some districts to go to their work (C. 95–100), which are sometimes very great, Mr. Stanhope thinks that although cases of injury to the children from that source "appear to be rare," and that they become labourers who can compare in strength and working ability with any in England (C. 101, 102), "if any regulations should be thought advisable, some simple "rule forbidding all children from being taken to work *on foot* beyond a distance of two "miles would appear to be the readiest mode of effecting the object with least inter-"ference with the labour of the children" (C. 102). Other persons, however, think that more stringent regulations are necessary (C. 103). The employment of women upon thrashing machines is also strongly condemned (C. 104–108). The employment of very young boys (of 8 years old or even less) in leading horses in carts is noticed. In Leicestershire Mr. Stanhope found "many boys of 10 regularly driving horses, and "employed all the year round in this way" (C. 109). But nevertheless inquiries led him to believe that accidents from this cause are not more common to boys of 9 or 10 than to boys of 14 to 15, that when they do occur it is more frequently from riding on the shafts or from carelessness than from any other cause, and that boys who begin early to go among horses get accustomed to their ways, and when under the eye of any one who can prevent careless habits are little exposed to danger; and he instances the difficulty of enforcing any restrictions on this point "unless they fall in to a certain extent with "the public opinion of the country," by referring to the Act 3 Geo. 4. c. 126., by § 131 of which no boy under 13 is allowed to drive a cart on the turnpike road, an Act which in his district "is absolutely ignored."

Employment of women on thrashing machines.

Demand for education very active among the labouring class.

Supply of schools satisfactory. Due to the clergy.

73. The question of education is dealt with by Mr. Stanhope very elaborately in §§ 114 to 182 of his Report. Among the many valuable facts there brought forward, it is of much interest to notice that in these three counties "the demand for education "among the labouring classes is very active" (C. 118), and the supply of schools—a large proportion of them good ones—so satisfactory, that in Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire the number of parishes in which there is no school available within a reasonable distance is certainly small (*ibid.*). This is attributed almost exclusively to "self-sacrifice "of the clergy" (C. 116); and where their exertions have not been able to reach, private schools, which when good are much valued by the parents, are serving a very useful purpose, especially where "the growing tendency to place the labourer nearer his "work" has increased the difficulty of providing schools within a reasonable distance of his home (C. 122, 123). Yet with this unusually good supply of schools, and in counties where the rates of wages are high, and the condition of the peasant good, and the difficulties in the way of maintaining schools consequently "less than ordinary" (C. 119), such is the demand for juvenile labour at field work that the "school results" are extremely unsatisfactory.

But school results extremely unsatisfactory.

"The greater cultivation of root crops," Mr. Stanhope says (C. 139), "and the large amount of land recently brought into cultivation, the very slight increase of population to meet those demands, and the increasing unwillingness of married women to go out to field labour has given rise to a much larger employment of children than formerly in Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire. They are employed in occasional jobs and are taken into regular sevice at a younger age."

74. Two results follow; first, the attendance becomes irregular at an earlier age, "even infant schools are affected by the demand for field work." In one parish the children going to such work included 12 boys and five girls of 8 and under; one girl was 6 only (Evid. 83). In one village on the wolds "some few have gone as

"early as 6, but 8 is about the usual age." At Croyland "in the summer only "infants attend" (Evid. 233). At Dorrington on the day of my visit, six boys and two girls under 7 were taken from school to work (Evid. 110). (C. 140).

75. The second result is that "the age at which children finally leave school is "gradually dropping."

76. "Twenty years ago," said one witness, "we kept them till 12 or 13, but now it "is rare to keep them till 10" (Evid. 189). "The girls used to be older and bigger "than the boys; now they are about as young and fewer in number" (Evid. 231). Out of the 17 last children mentioned in the Kirton register as having finally left school, eight were 9 years of age (Evid. 66). At Morton "we cannot depend on their "staying at school till after 9" (Evid 254). At Worksop (Notts.), "a great many "boys leave altogether at 8 years old. At that age they will have got to read a chapter "in the Testament, they can write a little on a slate and some of them on paper" (C. 141).

77. Thus the number of boys on the books of any school at 10 years of age being small, "the proportion of those who attend with any regularity falls in many cases to "nothing," especially in the case of children of agricultural labourers (C. 142). The same facts exist in Leicestershire with the addition that "the schools are inferior," and "the Government schools not being so much within reach," even fewer children remain at school after 10 (C. 143, 147).

78. The effect of all this is that the evidence exhibits a lamentable picture of the existing state of education among the rising generation in these counties. The little knowledge the children have gained at school is quickly lost. One witness states, that "taking the lowest standard of a sufficient education for an agricultural labourer, he "believes that more than one-half the population is growing up without it." A large proportion of youths examined by other witnesses were found either not to be able to read or write at all, or not to any practical purpose; and Mr. Stanhope gives this summary of the results of his own examination of children whom he found at work:—

"Out of 180 children in Lincolnshire over 10, and actually engaged in field work on the day that I examined them, 42 could not read or write, 36 could read only, 60 could read and write a little, while only 42 had received a really satisfactory education in these respects, but no less than 31 out of the 42 who were uneducated came from towns or large open villages. On one farm between Retford and Worksop, out of 15 lads between 12 and 16, four could neither read nor write (three of them coming from large towns) and two could read only, five were well educated. One employer at Deeping St. James, says,—'I have 10 boys only; of these four cannot read or write. I asked them to-day, and I 'was much surprised, because I know two of those who could not read to have been at school a 'great deal'" (C. 146).

79. The parents, though for the most part "professing to see the advantages of "education" and supporting private-adventure schools where there are no others, and eager to avail themselves of any opportunities afforded, have nevertheless set before themselves a very low standard of education for their children, not much regarding the moral duty of providing them with a good one, and taking their children away from school the moment their services become valuable to them (C. 151). The children also seem to get beyond the control of their parents as soon as they earn enough to support themselves (C. 152).

Review of suggested remedies.

80. Mr. Stanhope reviews with great care the suggestions that have been made for improving this state of things, especially the half-time system carried into effect by Mr. Paget at Ruddington (C. 157), and the "somewhat more elastic schemes suggested "by Mr. Lakin and by Mr. Willes (C. 169, 170); as also the plan most approved of "by the farmers, which would set boys free for farm work at 10 if not at 9 years of age" (C. 173), compelling them to a certain amount of school attendance before that age; a plan above noticed as the wish of the farmers in the counties reported on by Mr. Fraser.

Remedies to which Mr. Stanhope's opinion inclines.

81. Mr. Stanhope inclines to requiring a certain amount of school attendance in every youth up to 12 or 13, as more likely to produce enduring results (C. 174), and thinks it would be effected without loss to the farmers who might return to the old hiring system, and take lads rather older into their houses (*ibid.*). He also points out that in one district exclusion from field work would be attended with great hardship to individuals and disadvantage to the public (C. 175). He shows also by accurate calculation that, "speaking generally," in the districts "where young children are much in "request for agricultural labour," there were 95 school days when they were absolutely unemployed, "so that to require 100 days school attendance in each year from 8 to 13 "would have been to deprive the families of very little money, and hardly to interfere "for a single day with the requirements of the farmer. The best proof of this is that

" many parents in Lincolnshire voluntarily adopt this system, and the acquirements of " their children, so far as I could test them by personal examination, appeared to me little " inferior to those of the more regular attendants of the labouring class. Some boys under " 13 are no doubt employed all the year in these districts, but in order that a farmer " may be sure of such labour at certain seasons, he will often employ at other times " when not absolutely necessary to him " (C. 176).

82. Mr. Stanhope is of opinion that restrictions "if carried so far as to exclude the " children from labour altogether" up to a certain age, would "be very widely felt," and seriously affect the resources of poor families. But "if half a year's work at any " rate is still left open, it would not be a very serious loss." The age at which the restriction should begin he thinks, for the reason he assigns (C. 180) should be that of the Factory Acts, namely 8 years, and he is disposed to think that 12 is the age at which it should cease. He says,—

" A very serious question, however, to both employers and employed is the age at which any restrictions should cease. The age of 12 recommended itself on many grounds. Throughout these counties boys can get employment almost all the year at that age, and in most cases, not before that age; and in the event of restrictions upon the labour of young boys would be sure of getting it. It is the age at which boys usually begin to learn how to drive a plough, and other more skilled work. In Leicestershire some begin this sooner, but in a Table which will be found in the evidence (Evid. 328) two-thirds of all the boys under 14 employed were over 12 " (C. 179).

83. Two other suggestions are also submitted by Mr. Stanhope, under this head, for consideration; one that better support should be given to infant schools, the other that Boards of Guardians should be required to do what they are now empowered by law to do, namely, " to send the children of the poor receiving out-door relief to school. The " young children of such families are often forced out to work on every day that they " can get it, and no provision whatever is made for their education " (C. 182).

Mr. Portman's Report on Cambridgeshire and the three ridings of Yorkshire.

84. Mr. Portman's report deals with Cambridgeshire and Yorkshire. The favourable influence of a prevailing and uniform high rate of earnings upon the disposition of the parents to give their children the benefit of education is strongly exhibited by Mr. Portman in the portions of his report relating to Yorkshire.

Favourable influence of high earnings on education in Yorkshire.

85. In all the principal agricultural districts in that county the average rate of wages is 14*s.* a week, or more frequently 2*s.* 6*d.* a day for a man, 1*s.* a day for a woman, and 10*d.* or 1*s.* for a child (D. 13). In addition to this there is the "harvest pay" and extra earnings at piece work in draining, banking, singling turnips, flax pulling, pea picking, &c. The custom of hiring farm servants by the year, and boarding them is also very general; a foreman obtaining 30*l.* a year and board; a waggoner, 16*l.* to 20*l.* a year and board, and plough lads, 10*l.* to 14*l.* a year and board (D. 14).

86. As the gang system does not here interpose to force the children into premature employment, the parents are described as yielding to the dictates of their own proper feelings in encouraging the education of their children. Mr. Jackson, of Waghen, in the East Riding, says (D. 49) that he has "great pleasure in stating that the feeling " of parents generally is that parental duty is not fulfilled if their children have no " education; this feeling appears to grow with those parents who have not had that " advantage, and in this part of the East Riding of Yorkshire the children generally " attend a day school about nine months in the year."

87. Again Mr. Angas, on behalf of the agriculturalists of Holderness, says that (D. 50):—

"With a view to guard against the possible contingency of such evils arising in this district as exist in the gang counties, they would be quite willing to agree to a minimum standard of age in respect to children as field hands, but at the same time would feel strongly opposed to any coercive means being put in operation, believing not only that the feelings of parents would revolt from what they would certainly consider as an arbitrary law, but that, left to the dictates of their own consciences and free will, with the example of those a little higher in the social scale, the education of our young rural population would certainly and steadily progress."

88. Consequently, as regards the state of education throughout Yorkshire, while it appears that in the East Riding "the children generally attend a day school about nine " months in the year," in the portions of the West and North Riding visited by Mr. Portman, "there appeared to be no dearth of available schools, and the state of " education is probably better than in many parts of England" (D. 52).

Contrast in Cambridgeshire.

Bad effect of gang system and of low wages on education.

89. The contrast between Yorkshire and Cambridgeshire in these respects is remarkable. In the southern portions of the latter county wages are in one district 10*s.* a week, in another 11*s.*; women's wages average 10*d.* a day; children's from 4*d.* to 6*d.* (D. 12). In the northern part of the county "the wages of an ordinary day labourer" are 12*s.* and 13*s.* a week; in one instance at Parsondown they were "said to be 15*s.* a week."

90. In Cambridgeshire "the private gangs may be said to be universally employed "on the light lands" (D. 18). In the Isle of Ely and the northern parts of the county "the public gang system is in thorough operation" (D. 24).

91. Accordingly it is found that throughout the county, both where wages are low and where they are high, education, notwithstanding Mr. Portman did not find "any "want of accessible schools" (D. 48), is in an exceedingly unsatisfactory state. Mr. Portman thus describes it (D. 46):—

"In Cambridgeshire the state of education among the labouring class is in many instances lamentably deficient; the old and middle aged cannot, with rare exceptions, either read or write, and consequently they place no value on learning, but think it far more important that a child should go out as soon as it is able to earn its daily bread. In many parishes it is stated that it is very rare that a couple when they come to be married can sign the register. The practical working of the system of field labour with regard to education is that now as a rule boys leave day school entirely at 9 years of age, never to return. Those who leave school at 7 or 8 years of age generally go to field labour for weeding in the months of March, April, and May, and return for a short time previous to the harvest holidays, they are then absent from school until November, when field work for children ceases. The Sunday school is usually well attended, but the benefit of religious instruction on that day is much decreased by the inability of the children, who only attend once a week, to follow the reading of the teacher, and that is the only education which, often from the age of 8 years, children are able to get."

92. It is manifest that in those portions of the county where wages are high, and where, consequently, the parents might, with the exercise of a due amount of self-denial, forego the earnings of their younger children, the public gang system draws them away prematurely to field labour; while in the southern parts of the county, where wages are low, the necessities of the parents and the prevalence of private gangs on the light soils operate in the same direction.

93. Mr. Portman presents this point as follows:—

"Under this head of the general employment of children the question of the necessity of the children's earnings for the maintenance of the family must be considered. Where wages are low it is no doubt of very great importance to the mother that every sixpence that can be earned should be obtained. During the past winter, when flour was at a high price and where the wages had not risen in proportion, I found that out of 12*s.* a week (the husband's earnings) the outgoing for flour alone for the support of the family of six children was 10*s.* 6*d.* per week (see No. 28); the woman said she could not live without the children's earnings. There may be some truth in that statement where wages are low, but in Yorkshire, where the average rate of wages may be said to be above 14*s.* a week, it is hardly possible to believe that there is this necessity for sending the children into the fields at a tender age" (D. 36).

94. The foregoing was written when flour was very high, but the case is not much altered when the price is lower, if the average rate of wages is low. The ordinary state of things in such cases appear to be represented by Mr. Portman in the succeeding paragraph, in which he states that "at present parents solicit employers to take children into service "when so young as to be worthless, and until wages are raised it appears probable that "they will continue to do so" (D. 37).

95. But this account of the state of things as regards education in the principal portions of these two counties, where farming is carried on more or less on a large scale, does not exhaust the view that these two counties present. In parts of Cambridgeshire, and in the dales near the moors, and in other parts of the North and West Ridings of Yorkshire, there exists a class of smaller occupiers "holding four, five, or ten acres of "land which they cultivate by themselves and their children, and rarely, if ever, employ "a labourer."

Where holdings are very small, the loss of the children's earnings would be severely felt.

"To these men the loss of their children's aid would be fatal, they are too poor to hire labour, and the assistance rendered by a child of 8 or 9 years old is of great value. I think that as a rule these men are desirous of giving their children as much education as they can, and I may instance the case of "Chop Gate" school, in Bilsdale, North Riding, to which children come two miles and a half and three miles up and down the dale over a bad road, and where the master said, 'He had had from 40 'to 50 children at the school in winter when the snow was lying deep on the ground'" (D. 39).

96. It is satisfactory to find that even this class of small occupiers is desirous of doing their best for the education of their children. And of the better class of labourers in both these counties Mr. Portman is able to say (D. 38) that, as a general rule, they "are now beginning to see the evils resulting to their children from the loss of schooling "consequent on field work at so early an age, and will gladly forego, if possible, the "weekly earnings derived from their labour." There is at the same time "a very large "class of people who are entirely indifferent to the advantages of education, and would "sooner receive the money and totally disregard the future prospects of their children" (*ibid.*). Persons of this class are, "in too many instances" found even in Yorkshire, where, in any part of it, "poverty can hardly be pleaded" in excuse (D. 59). There is, Mr. Portman states, a decided indisposition on the part of some of the parents to forego

Many parents indifferent to their children's education, even in Yorkshire.

the weekly sum that is added to the family earnings by the child's labour. "In too "many instances there is, I fear, a tacit understanding between the employer and the "labourer that, in consideration of yearly and permanent employment for the father of "the family, the labour of the wife and children shall be placed at the employer's "disposal if required at any particular season" (*ibid.*).

Different views prevalent as to compulsory attendance at school. Some measure much needed.

97. Mr. Portman fully represents the different views which he found prevalent in these two counties as to the means of meeting by legislation these various circumstances, and the many other points which the problem involves.

98. In Cambridgeshire the children go out to work as young as 6 years old, many at 7 and 8 (D. 18). Even in Yorkshire, the Rev. T. Hedley stated in 1861 that the children "begin to leave school about 9;" and Mr. Watkins informed the Education Commissioners at the same date that 74 per cent. of the children in the schools of Yorkshire were under 10 years of age (D. 57 and 58). This state of things still continues in some parts of that county (D. 59). And Mr. Portman says, as regards Cambridgeshire (D. 46) that "the practical working of the system of field labour with "regard to educa-"tion is that now, as a rule, boys leave day school at 9 years of age never to return."

Employers would not object to exclusion of children from work up to the age of 10. How would such a rule affect labourers, where wages are low?

99. Can the duration of the school life of these children be prolonged? Can they, as many persons desire, be excluded from work up to the age of 10 years? As far as the interests of a large proportion of the employers in Yorkshire are concerned they could be. "Many parts of Yorkshire would not be affected at all by a restriction to 10 years" (D. 40). But even in Yorkshire such a rule must be subjected to important qualifications. It could not, Mr. Portman thinks, be applied to the small occupiers in the Dales, and elsewhere it would be necessary to relax it at certain seasons (D. 39, 41). The general question also presents itself in a different aspect from the labourer's point of view, where men's wages are on a low average, and children can add to the family earnings 2*s.* and 3*s.* a week, as in the southern parts of Cambridgeshire (D. 12).

How could school attendance before the age of 10 be enforced?

100. But even were children to be excluded from farm work until the age of 10, as so many employers, not only in these, but in other counties hitherto reported on by our Assistant Commissioners would not object to, and indeed would prefer, because it would create no interference with their demands upon juvenile labour, how is security to be taken that the years previous to the age of 10 will be given, to a satisfactory extent, to school instruction?

Difficulties attending the requirement of a certificate of school attendance previous to hiring.

The difficulties are well stated by Mr. Portman in the following paragraphs:—

"I have frequently submitted for the consideration of private individuals, as well as for discussion at public meetings, the question of the desirability of requiring the production of a certificate of a given amount of school attendance during the years previous to hiring, and on many, I may say most, occasions the scheme appeared to be acceptable, but the details appear more difficult of arrangement. On whom, whether employer or parent, the penalty for noncompliance should be placed? What would be the best means of enforcing such a system when you find so utter a disregard of character, as compared with physical strength, as now exists among the employers? I fear it would be somewhat difficult to enforce the school certificate without a very well organized system of registering and local inspectors" (D. 43).

"What would be the effect of the requirement of such certificate on the labourer himself? It is thought by some that it would be a spur and an inducement to the parents to take more heed of the education of their children, but by many other others that nothing short of compulsion will secure the desired amount of school attendance for the young" (D. 45).

101. It is evident that a compulsory school attendance "during the year previous to "hiring," although it has recommended itself to so many earnest persons who have considered the subject, is a matter not only involving the difficulties above pointed out, but, in the words of Mr. Portman, would require for its successful adoption "a very "well organized system of registering and local inspectors" (D. 44).

A plan founded on the Printworks Act, but improved, would be most suitable.

102. Mr. Portman notices (ss. 62–87) the various modes suggested in his district for meeting the difficulties of the case, and he concludes that "the evidence fairly justifies" him in saying that a plan "founded on the model of the Printworks Act, modified and "made 'elastic' enough to meet the necessities and vicissitudes of agricultural opera-"tions, would be found most practicable and most acceptable to the employer and "employed" (D. 78). He states:—

"The most feasible plan for obtaining continuous education appears to be to fix an age below which no child shall go to work for hire, with or without compulsory attendance at school, to require a certain amount of school attendance from that age to 13 or 14 years of age, and perhaps, in addition, the production of a certificate of such school attendance before hiring. Very few objections will be found to this plan, with the exception of the certificate; but I think that when a good system of registering, which might be combined with a register for farm servants, is once established, the supposed difficulties and inconveniences will soon vanish" (D. 77).

103. Mr. Portman directs attention to the evidence of Miss Simpson, of Baynton, "whose experience among farm lads and the children of the agricultural class is as "extensive as that of any one in Yorkshire," and who points to the defect of the Printworks Act in not securing to the extent desired, "the great desideratum," continuous attendance at school. If the intervals of attendance are long, it is manifest that much that has been acquired will be lost. "When a child is little he cannot exercise his mind "much on what he learns, and having no real grasp of it, it is the sooner lost before "he is of an age to know the real meaning of anything." Any knowledge, whether religious or secular, acquired in early childhood, if it is not kept up, fares in most cases "like the seed that fell by the wayside" (D. 61). The inference, therefore, naturally follows, which is embodied in Mr. Surtees's evidence (D. 58), that not only would it be desirable that greater continuity of school attendance should, if possible, be secured than that now required by the Printworks Act, but that the slight amount of knowledge acquired in the early years of childhood should be kept up and increased by attendance at night school wherever practicable, or by occasional returns to the day school when the boy's labour can be dispensed with, until a certain age, or until he can show, on examination, that he has acquired the elements of education in a manner likely to be durable.

Continuity of attendance to be aimed at as much as possible.

104. Mr. Portman quotes much valuable evidence obtained in his district on the subject of night schools, their difficulties, the modes of improving them and making them popular, and the errors to be avoided (D. 67–75). He draws attention to the want, "which was equally expressed in Cambridgeshire and Yorkshire," of further Government aid to the small rural schools (D. 53). He states also that it was suggested that "itinerant schoolmasters might with advantage be supported in some districts where "the population is scattered" (D. 73), that in such cases "it would be beneficial if "owners of isolated farms would provide a room for service and teaching, where the "the clergyman could occasionally visit" (*ibid.*); and that employers should acknowledge and act upon, to a greater extent than they now do, their sense of responsibility to the young men in their service, whether those who board with them or those who live in their own homes. The moral duty imposed upon a master, who places a youth under his own roof as a member of his family, appears unfortunately to be little thought of. From the time of commencing regular service in Yorkshire, the lads boarded with the employers "rarely got any instruction at all. No books are supplied to them, and "but little is done to encourage them to spend their evening profitably. The masters "take no heed about it, as was evident by the tone of the meeting at Howden, when it "was suggested that they might help to stimulate a desire for improvement by reading "aloud, &c." (D. 79). It appears to be even worse with the lads who live at home in the villages. These "too often spend their evenings in the pothouse, or idling about the "street, except where you find a considerate landlord, an energetic clergyman, or some "kind and benevolent people resident in the village, by whose aid a reading room or a "club room is kept up, where the labourer can spend his evening by a good fire with "books and papers, and free from the temptations of the beerhouse" (*ibid.*).

Night schools; their wants.

The farmers should encourage the education of the young men in their employ.

105. It is a forcible proof that in Yorkshire education is also greatly required in the class above the labourers that Mr. Portman is constrained to add the following:—

"The employer is too often worse educated than his labourer, and is utterly unaware of the responsibility of looking after those in his employ further than to see that they do their work" (D. 80).

Intellectual condition of the farmers in parts of Yorkshire.

106. The intellectual condition of the farmers in one part of Yorkshire is aptly illustrated by a fact mentioned by Mr. Portman in s. 83 of his report. He obtained the evidence of 63 farmers on Lord Wenlock's estate as to their opinion of the value of educated as compared with uneducated labour. The result was that of the 63 only six preferred the uneducated; but 21 said "they perceived no difference in the value of the "labour;" while 23 "preferred the educated man" (D. 83). Mr. Portman remarks upon this, that "as the use of machinery in agriculture is daily becoming more common, "it must surely be an advantage to the farmer to have in his employment men who, at "at any rate, are able to read those instructions which are necessary for the management "of the various implements with the care of which they are intrusted. Mr. Joseph "Barugh, a large farmer near Bridlington, spoke strongly on the subject at a meeting of "the East Riding Chamber of Agriculture, held at Bridlington, and gave his testimony "to the value of educated servants" (D. 84).

107. The four industrial schools for girls of which Mr. Portman gives an account in ss. 85, 87 of his report are extremely worthy of attention, as showing how the want may be supplied of that instruction in the ordinary domestic duties of washing, cooking, cleaning, needlework, &c. which used formerly to be obtained by the daughters of agri-

Industrial schools for girls.

cultural labourers by early training in the farmers' families, and which was an excellent preparation for higher service, or for their future duties as wives and mothers. The school at Harewood challenges observation, as it appears more capable of imitation. A building containing a kitchen and a laundry is attached to the "National School," and a certain number of girls from the first class are, week by week, taken from the school on fixed days to be taught washing and working, all having their turn. The satisfactory result is that "the money earned by washing goes far towards paying the expenses of "that branch of the school." Mr. Portman adds:—

"I have great pleasure in calling your attention to this school, as being at the same time an inexpensive and a most useful method of securing for girls a certain amount of industrial training. It is the only instance of the kind I met with, and it is quite worthy of imitation by those who have the opportunity with the view of drawing the tastes of girls away from the license of field labour, and fitting them for domestic service and their future duties in life."

Age at which girls should be excluded from field labour.

108. The difficult question of the age at which girls should be excluded, if at all, from field labour, is touched upon by Mr. Portman in ss. 32–35 of his report, and the same differences of opinion are recorded that have been found in other districts. If the public opinion of any district were to discourage the continuance of women at field labour after they were married, as has been shown to be the case in Northumberland (§ 45), doubtless much good would result. Mr. Portman observes that "the effect of this constant "field labour after a woman is married is that their cottages are in an untidy state, that "the families are neglected, and where there are small children they are left in charge of "an old woman on the payment of so much a day; and that this system has often led "to a serious evil, as it is a common habit to give the infants an opiate for the purpose "of keeping them quiet during the day." Mr. Portman proceeds to say:—

"It has been alleged by persons whom I have met that the cottage of the field woman is not more untidy than the cottage of the woman who remains at home all day; but from personal inspection I have formed the opinion, which is borne out by many clergymen and others, that field labour does lead to a want of care at home, and consequently to the bad bringing up of the children, and the driving of the husband to the public house when he comes home from work in consequence of the untidiness of his home" (D. 32).

Statute hirings.

109. The system of statute hirings, which has been described as dying out in many localities, is in full vigour in Yorkshire, and Mr. Portman describes its many disadvantages in a moral point of view and the efforts making in the county to substitute for it a system of register offices for farm servants. The principal obstacle to any change seems to be the unwillingness of the farmers to incur the trouble; indeed, Mr. Portman describes them as, in general, disinclined to make any exertion, either for changing the present mode of hiring for a better, or on behalf of the education or morals of those in their service. Mr. Portman says that—

"After the servants are hired little or no trouble is taken to keep them in the right way; I regret to say that the farmers, as a rule, pay little attention to the education of those engaged in their service; there is more thought for the physical than the moral. There are, of course, bright exceptions, such as Mr. Wells (No. 329), Mr. Wheatley (No. 223), and others, who have taken great pains with those living on their premises. The masters, taken as a whole, seem unaware that they are in duty bound to take some interest in the moral condition of their servants. The separation of the sleeping rooms of the two sexes is very often most incomplete. Mr. Broadley, of Welton, told me that in building some farm houses he had made a living room and a bed room for the boys entirely separated from the kitchen and sleeping room of the women, but that the farmer objected to have two separate living rooms, but preferred having them sitting altogether in one kitchen" (D. 65).

Agricultural Gangs Act well received.

The gang system would disappear if cottages more numerous.

110. On the subject of agricultural gangs, public and private, Mr. Portman informs us (ss. 18–26) that, on discussing at various meetings in the Isle of Ely, where the public gang system is in thorough operation, the provisions of the new Act, he found that it was as a rule most favourably received; that "the farmers themselves are anxious to get rid of "the evils existing under that system, and that they believe if proper attention is paid "by those in whom the authority is vested much of the evil would be done away with. "At a meeting of the Wisbeach Board of Guardians, No. 33, it was stated that the gang "system would vanish when there is a sufficiency of good cottages on each farm for the "number of hands required for the working of the land" (D. 24).

111. And with regard to the system of the private gangs, the evidence obtained by Mr. Portman leads him to think that if the age of 10 should be fixed below which a child should not be employed in field labour, there would not be "much need for applying to "it any such restrictions as are now placed on public gangs by the Act of last session" (D. 25).

Labourers' cottages.

112. In Mr. Portman's report, as in that of the other assistant commissioners, the subject of the cottages of the agricultural labourer assumes great prominence. The opinion seems to be universal that the bad state of the cottages and the overcrowding of the sleeping rooms is "the root of the demoralization of both sexes" (D. ss. 88–93).

113. At various meetings where the cottage question was discussed, Mr. Portman reminded those present that it was "a landlord's question;" but he very properly adds that, in giving the result of his inquiries into the general condition of the agricultural labourers—without a clear comprehension of which no legislation on the subject of his children's education could be safe or satisfactory—he feels it "no less his duty to set "forth plainly that which he finds to be in want of improvement," and to call our attention to that which "is in all cases said to be, more than anything else, the cause of "immorality and degradation" among that class, namely, the crowded and neglected state of their dwellings (D. 121).

114. Mr. Portman states that if his colleagues "have found the same strong feeling "on this matter existing in their districts" that he has in his, "it must surely show that "the evil is a great one, and much in want of a cure, and that it behoves the owners of "cottage property to bestir themselves (D. 120); and he asks (D. 117): 'What are "'the causes of the bad state of the cottages?'" Mr. Portman thus answers this question:—

"One of the principal ones is 'absenteeism,' under which I include not merely non-residence of the owner in the county where his estate is situated, but that which is equally bad, viz., non-attention to the outlying portions of that estate. On many occasions when, being struck by the poor state of the dwellings, I have inqured who is the owner, I have been told he is some one living perhaps in the county, but rarely, if ever, visiting the village, or taking any heed as to the condition of the people. On the estate of Mr. Montague, in Yorkshire, less care is taken of the cottages than on any other large estate that I visited. The contrast between the cottages at Marston belonging to him and those in the adjacent village belonging to Lord Wenlock was too marked to pass by without notice. In Marston (Evid. 355) it is true the actual rent paid is very small, but the tenements are wretched, the whole repairs have to be done by the cottager, and so the rent becomes, in fact, very high; and as one of them teld me, 'He' (the landlord) 'does not care if they all tumble down.' On other portions of his estate there was a great want of cottages, many having been pulled down and scarcely a new one built" (D. 117).

115. It is not indeed under the landowner only that the cottages are bad. The practice,—which all, Mr. Portman thinks, must now admit to have been a mistake,—of those "who formerly for the sake of keeping down the rates or making a co-called model "village pulled down cottages and drove the poor to distant villages, has had the effect "of leaving the field open to small tradesmen and other speculators, who have built "cottages in open villages, and to whom they are a property that is expected to pay" (D. 123). A rent is demanded in excess of what a field labourer can pay; the consequence is that he takes in lodgers, and crowds into as small a space as possible his perhaps numerous family" (*ibid.*). But as this is the direct result of the mistaken action of landowners of former years, the duty of applying a remedy devolves, as Mr. Portman points out, upon their successors. And although Mr. Portman refrains "from "suggesting any remedy or discussing the need or the form of legislation on the subject "until he has completed his share of the inquiry in other parts of England" (D. 122), he nevertheless draws attention to several practical suggestions from gentlemen of experience contained in his evidence, upon the amount of accommodation required, the disposition of cottages on an estate, the best mode of meeting it, the alterations required in the Lands Improvement Act (D. 127–28), the necessity and means of preventing overcrowding (D. 127, 130), and other subjects, the consideration of which may aid in the ultimate solution of the problem.

116. The question of the improvement of cottage accommodation appears from the evidence to be more pressing in Cambridgeshire than in Yorkshire. Of the cottages "in most parts of Yorkshire" Mr. Portman says there is much comfort in them, and that "although there may be reason to wish for improvement in some, an increase of "their number, or a change of situation in others, they are vastly superior to the "average dwellings in the southern counties." Gardens are almost universally attached "to them, and in default of those there are fields close to the village divided into allot-"ments for labourers; many also have a 'cow gate,' or run for a cow in the lanes" (D. 115–16). In fact in one part of Yorkshire at least the advantages enjoyed by the Yorkshire agricultural labourers generally in yearly hirings, high weekly wages, opportunities of piece work, and good gardens attached to their cottages, or allotments in default of them, are, according to the evidence of the Rev. S. Surtees (D. 137), made good use of towards securing a provision for old age. Mr. Surtees says that near Doncaster "it is the rule and not the exception for a labourer to leave at his death 50*l.* "to 100*l.*, and he quotes a case of one man who commenced life as a farm servant, and "had brought up and started in life a family, who left 350*l.* Another who died at 35 "years of age, an ordinary agricultural labourer, leaving 170*l.* These are no doubt, "special instances, but considering the high rate of wages in Yorkshire, the almost

Gardens almost universally attached to cottages in Yorkshire, or in default of them, field allotments.

Many labourers have also a "cow gate."

Great advantages of the Yorkshire agricultural labourer generally.

" universal possession by the labourer of a garden or allotment, and in many cases of a " cow gate or other advantages, I see no reason to doubt that a man commencing life " as a farm servant and exercising ordinary prudence can, by the assistance of a savings' " bank, lay up a fair provision for his old age" (D. 137).

Such circumstances much facilitate raising education to a proper standard.

117. Under circumstances so favourable as this there ought to be no difficulty in gradually bringing up the standard of education among the young, and of good habits and intelligence among the adult population, to that of Northumberland and parts of Durham, as described in Mr. Henley's report, the first impulse towards which, beyond the agencies now in action, must be such legislative measures to secure the education of the young as, on the conclusion of our inquiries, the legislature may think fit to adopt.

Mr. Norman's Report on Northamptonshire.

118. Mr. Norman having been appointed, as we have mentioned in § 6. to succeed Mr. Henley, proceeded in the month of February last to Northamptonshire, to which county his report refers.

119. Mr. Norman describes the character of this county, considered as affecting the employment of women and children in agriculture, as "generally uniform." He selected the centre of the county for special inquiry, and in other parts of it he collected and recorded a sufficient amount of evidence to explain any peculiar features which he found to exist.

Employment of females discouraged.

Employment of boys at an early age general.

Continuously employed after 10 years of age.

120. It appears from Mr. Norman's statement of what fell under his observation, that the characteristics of this county in regard to labour are the following:—The system of working by private gangs is very rare, and where it does exist the numbers of women, young persons, and children working together are so small as not to give rise to any objections "other than those which may be used against the employment of women, " young persons, and children individually" (E. 6). In no part of the county are females generally employed in field labour. "In 19 parishes, with a total population of 8,975, only 190 females are employed in field work" (E. 8). The employment is considered "to have a bad moral effect upon them," and upon young women "is said to be " most demoralizing; they get into loose and disorderly habits and are rendered unfit " for domestic servants, and badly trained for labourers' wives" (E. 20). It appears consequently to be discouraged both by employers (E. 9), and by the best of the labouring people themselves (E. 20). But the employment of boys at a very early age appears to be general. "They begin to work about the age of 8, a few as young as 7; and " almost all of them have been to work before they are 10" (E. 10). The youngest boys, and occasionally girls also, are employed in scaring birds, for about ten weeks in the spring, about three weeks in the summer, and about the same time in the autumn; also occasionally in dibbling beans or wheat in the spring, and singling turnips in summer (E. 13). Occasionally the work performed by them occupies them all the year round, "but after the age of 10 they are usually employed continuously throughout the whole " year" (E. 10), their principal occupations being to "go with the team," and to clean the stable, cut chaff, and do other similar jobs in the yard (E. 13). The boys who scare birds appear to be generally employed also on Sundays though "occasionally they are " relieved for a part of the day by another member of the family" (E. 17).

Bad effect of no education.

121. The facts recorded by Mr. Norman as to the distance to which the women and children have to go to their work, their hours of work, and meal times, show that no ill effects are produced on health. But the occasional employment of so many under the age of 10 years, and their continuous employment after that age, have manifestly affected greatly the state of education. The facts mentioned by Mr. Norman under this head, and his mode of testing them, leave no doubt upon this subject (E. 24). The deficiency arises from no want of schools, but, as a general rule, first, from "the indifference on the " part both of the parents and the employers" (E. 26), and, secondly, "to the unwilling- " ness of the parents to forego the earnings of their children" (E. 27).

Plans for school attendance.

122. The boys begin to leave school at about the age of 8, and leave altogether at 9 (E. 27), Mr. Norman discusses the various proposed modes of meeting this state of things. He points out the difficulties in the way of the half day and the alternate day system; and also the objections to requiring a child to pass an examination as the condition of being permitted to go to work (E. 28, 29).

123. The plan which in the words of one witness "had found most favour in that " county" was this: "Let the children be kept at school altogether until a certain age " (10 or 11) and for the next three years be required to attend school during those months " when they would not be wanted so much in the fields; during these months (say six " altogether) let them work and receive wages" (E. 30). And Mr. Norman proceeds to

show that the general opinion, in which he is disposed to concur, was that "the restriction "of labour up to the age of 10 could hardly throw any serious expenditure on the "farmers;" while, according to the best information he could obtain, the loss to the parents of the children's earnings, for the comparatively short time during which children between the ages of 8 and 10 are employed in this county, ought not to be held as a valid objection. This loss he estimates to amount in some cases to about 15*s.* a year, in others to 20*s.*; seldom to more than 20*s.* a year, wear and tear of clothing, and increased food being taken into account (E. 31, 32). This is, however, less than the loss to the parents in other districts, where the earnings of the children are much higher (C. 24). The average yearly earnings of boys between 9 and 11 "in Lincolnshire and great part of "Notts" are described by Mr. Stanhope as amounting to 4*l.* 7*s.* (C. 176). Against this Mr. Norman thinks is to be set the probability that "if children were prevented "from going to work up to a certain age, the wages of those just above that age would "rise," and that "if education were improved, the boys when they were allowed to go "to work would earn more than they do at present" (E. 33); also that "if the wife and "the children do not earn wages, the whole amount necessary for the support of the "family, must be earned by the husband," by an increase of his wages, otherwise the agricultural population would decrease, probably by emigration. Possibly these results may gradually take place, to the great benefit both of the labourer and the employer, but they will require to be very carefully estimated before they are accepted as a basis of legislation. Mr. Norman adds that,

Opinions in favour of exclusion from work to the age of 10.

Objections to.

"None of these points must be lost sight of in considering the effects upon the earnings of the family of a restriction imposed upon the labour of the children. The effect of moderate restriction would probably be that what was lost in wages by the younger children would be made up for by the increased earnings of the father and of the elder ones."

"These considerations lead me to the conclusion that the labour of children in the fields might be dispensed with up to the age of 10, without interfering seriously with the present system of cultivation on the one hand, or encroaching too much on the earnings of the family on the other. If this prohibition was enforced, the numbers at work now in the 10 parishes from which I received statistics, whose employment would become illegal, would amount to 88 boys and 10 girls out of a population of 8,975. If the labour of children were prohibited up to the age of 10, the parents would be unable to avail themselves of their children's earnings, and one of the main causes of the present defective state of education would be removed; and it is the opinion of the school teachers that a child who attended school regularly at least 200 days a year from the age of 5 to the age of 10, would fairly reach Standard V. of the Revised Code" (E. 33–4).

124. In connexion with this portion of the subject it is important to bear in mind the rate of wages in this county as given by Mr. Norman.

"The usual wages for a common day labourer are 12*s.* a week; in the south, around Towcester and Brackley, they are only 11*s.* (Evid. 178); and in the north they are 13*s.* or 14*s.* (Evid. 23). A great deal of work is done by the piece; and Mr. Pell calculates that when wages are at 12*s.* a good labourer will earn by piece work a sum sufficient to bring his average weekly wages up to 15*s.* 10*d.*, including all allowances (Evid. 136); women usually receive 8*d.* or 10*d.* a day, and in the north 1*s.* (Evid. 23). Boys when they first go to work at the age of 8 or 9 receive 3*d.* or 4*d.* a day; in the north 5*d.* or 6*d.* These wages are generally raised as the boys get older" (E. 14).

125. As a means of carrying on their school attendance to a certain extent after the children go to work, the improvement of night schools is urged to be desirable; but the majority of witnesses examined by Mr. Norman were unfavourable to any compulsory attendance at night schools. "They anticipated that the object in view might "be satisfactorily obtained by an extension of the present voluntary system" (E. 35, 7).

Improvement of night schools urged.

126. In Mr. Norman's account of the cottages in Northamptonshire the results of the system of "close" and "open" parishes, now happily passing away under the influence of the Union Chargeability Act, are strikingly exhibited.

Cottages in Northamptonshire.

127. In the close parishes the landowners have "already done a good deal" and "are likely to do more" to repair the errors of a former generation. They have built a great number of new cottages which are described as "excellent" in every respect, and improved a great number of old ones. They have been prompted to this, Mr. Norman says, "partly by feelings of benevolence," partly by becoming aware of "the "additional value conferred on their farms by a supply of labourers well housed and "near at home" (E. 39–59). But the number of cottages in the close parishes it still "very frequently," if not generally, quite insufficient (E. 47). The consequence is that the labourers necessary for the cultivation of the land have in many cases "to go two "or three miles to work" from their dwellings in the open parishes, which are of such a kind that "rarely if ever is the accommodation sufficient to provide for the health, "comfort, and morals of the inhabitants" (E. 42, 46). It is an additional disadvantage to the labouring man that the rents of these inferior cottages are "often, if not "generally, higher, notwithstanding the deficiencies in accommodation, than that of

"cottages in close parishes" (E. 43). But "the small speculator" to whom they generally belong would not have built them unless he could secure a proper rate of interest for that species of property. Mr. Norman observes that the worst class of these cottages are being left unoccupied, by the double influence, first of the increased building in close parishes, secondly of the tendency in many open parishes in the southern part of the county, where there is a large population of shoemakers, to remove, in consequence of the growing use of machines, from the villages to the towns (E. 47). But many remain occupied which cannot fail to be unhealthy from bad drainage, want of repair, want of common conveniences, and over-crowding; and it was urged upon Mr. Norman that these defects would be remedied if the provisions of the Act 29 & 30 Vict. c. 90. ss. 19 and 20 instead of being optional "were made compulsory" (E. 58).

128. Upon this and other portions of the subject of cottage accommodation,—the most desirable position for cottages, the best arrangement between landlord and farmer for letting them, the best plans for cottages, and other topics, Mr. Norman's remarks are of much value; as also is the information collected by him on allotments, and on co-operative stores (E. 60–78).

Mr. Culley's Report on Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire. Cost of labour per acre in these two counties compared with North Northumberland.

129. Mr. Culley has brought to the preparation of his report, in addition to his other qualifications, that intimate knowledge of the details of agriculture which befits the representative of a family to which practical agriculture is so much indebted. His account "of the position of the labouring class as affected by the agricultural requirements of the "two counties he is treating of" brings to light the striking fact, that the cost of labour is upwards of 7*s.* per acre greater in Bedfordshire than in North Northumberland. Of the reduced cost in Northumberland, "some part," Mr. Culley states, "may be due to "management, some part is due to the employment of a class of women almost equal "to the ordinary run of Bedfordshire male labourers, and the remainder, which is no "very small part, is due to the fact that the northern hind at a slightly higher wage is "a much cheaper article" (F. 10). And the results to the farmer, the landowner, and the labourer are as follows:—To the farmer "it amounts to an ability to pay about "7*s.* an acre more rent, besides escaping with a much smaller poors' rate; to the land-"lord, there is the difference of 7*s.* an acre greater rent as a compensation for building "eight cottages (an obligation he cannot escape in Northumberland), and letting them "rent-free, instead of building, or thinking he ought to build 14, for which, if built, "he would receive a rent amounting to a fair interest on the cost of eight" (F. 11). The net result to the landowners is an addition of 84*l.* in rent upon every farm of 400 acres (the basis of Mr. Culley's estimate), after deducting the "fair interest" of 7 per cent. on the cost of eight cottages. To the labourer the result is still more important. In Bedfordshire, the income arising from employment in agriculture on a farm of the size above named, "amounts to 603*l.* 4*s.*, to be divided among 14 families, giving about "43*l.* 1*s.* 9*d.* to each;" whereas in the other it amounts to 483*l.* 16*s.*, "to be divided "among eight families, giving 60*l.* 9*s.* 6*d.* to each" (*ibid.*).

Total family income of labourers compared.

130. In Buckinghamshire the cost of labour per acre is, in some cases, higher than in Bedfordshire, and the contrast greater with that of the north. While in Glendale, North Northumberland, the cost, as given by Mr. Culley (F. 10), is 1*l.* 3*s.* per acre, and in Bedfordshire 1*l.* 10*s.* 2*d.* per acre (*ibid.*), in Buckinghamshire cases are stated where "the cost of labour paid in wages on farms having the larger portion arable," was "over "2*l.* an acre; in the Valley of the Thames, in one instance, 2*l.* 10*s.* per acre, and in "another instance, where the labour books are well kept, and almost all the work is "done by the piece, it appears to be 2*l.* 5*s.*" (F. 19).

131. The difference between the net earnings per family (43*l.* 1*s.* 9*d.*) in Bedfordshire, and that of the north (60*l.* 9*s.* 5*d.*), as given above,—amounting to upwards of 17*l.* per annum,—has to be made up to the southern family, if it is made up at all, "by the far "less certain earnings of one grown up daughter in lace making or straw plaiting, and "the chance of having yonnger children employed in farm labour than would be the "case in the north; if 'plait was good,' the Bedfordshire girl of 18 would probably "make the 17*l.*, but how much of it would go to the family purse? And, unhappily, "plait is not always good" (F. 11).

Final result of the two systems on the labourers of the north and the south.

132. Taking the individual earnings of the heads of families in the south and in the north, it appears that the difference in favour of those of the north is not great. The southern labourer often adds considerably to his ordinary weekly earnings by piece work, by which "the earnings of industrious men are increased without adding to the actual cost "of work done, and by which, in these two counties, he brings his net receipts nearly "up to an equality with the labourer of the north" (F. 92–101). But the final result of the two systems of employment upon the capacity for labour, the character, conduct,

intelligence of the northern labourer, as compared with the southern, and upon his disposition and his power to allow his children the proper opportunities of education, are thus summed up by Mr. Culley towards the conclusion of his report. The earnings of the northern labourer, Mr. Culley says, "are very little higher than those of any "fairly industrious man in Bedfordshire or Bucks, and yet he is mentally and physically "a superior animal, treating his family in a manner which three or four times the diffe-"rence in wage would not account for. What then are the causes operating in his "favour? I take them to be chiefly the following:—

"He has no need of a club, his hiring is a yearly hiring, and his wages are paid "when he is sick as punctually as when he is at work.

"His own earnings, and those of his family all go to the family purse, and suffer "very little variation.

"And last, but not least, it is not his habit to drink beer, excepting at the annual "hiring; he hardly knows what a beershop means, and his children suck at the "milk-bowl instead of himself at the beer jug" (F. 104).

133. Mr. Culley rightly states that "the whole question, how by education or other-"wise to improve the condition of the agricultural labourer, depends so much upon the "removal of the causes which have tended to degrade him," and the comparative effect of those causes is so clearly shown by examining the results which follow their absence in the case of others of his own class, that this portion of Mr. Culley's report cannot fail to arrest most earnest attention throughout the southern counties. Read in connexion with Mr. Henley's report upon Northumberland and Durham, it will enable all persons to whom the subject is a matter of interest, to comprehend the causes of the greatly superior condition of agricultural life in the portions of the north referred to.

Total net earnings of the individual labourer in these two counties.

134. Mr. Culley has investigated with great care and minuteness the question of the total net earnings of the ordinarily efficient agricultural labourer in full employ throughout the year in Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire, inclusive of all extra earnings and allowances. He puts them as ranging on an average between 13*s.* 6*d.* and 14*s.* 6*d.* a week for the year through. In two portions of Bucks,—the Valley of the Thames and the Vale of Aylesbury,—including the value of an allotment, they reach 15*s.* and 15*s.* 6*d.* (F. 101).

Question of restriction of age for the purposes of education.

135. With these facts before them, the boards of guardians with whom Mr. Culley discussed the question of legislative interference on behalf of the young for the purposes of education,—bodies of men justly described by Mr. Culley as persons "who ought "thoroughly to understand the effect of such legislation on the supply of labour necessary "for the cultivation of the land, and the capability of the labouring class to bear such "pressure as is implied by restricting the age at which their children should be em-"ployed," were "pretty evenly divided in opinion as to the desirability of such inter-"ference" (F. 51). The considerations which seemed to influence them are thus described:—"On the one side there are the weaknesses and inequalities of the voluntary "system, and the duty of the State for its own sake as well as for theirs to help those who "cannot help themselves. And on the other, a certain amount of interference with the "liberty of the subject, the chances of an educational tax which may or may not be "levied as a poor rate, some doubt as to the ability of the parents to bear the necessary "pressure, and some fear of over-education" (*ibid.*).

136. Of the occupiers who approve of legislative interference, nearly all think, as has been shown to be the case in many other districts, "that it would be sufficient to prohibit "children from being employed under 10 years of age, and leave the maintenance of the "education then arrived at in the hands of the parents" (F. 53). This opinion, Mr. Culley says, "is very much shared by the magistrates and clergymen," whom he consulted.

137. The qualifications, however, to which this opinion is subject, which have been already adverted to above, are here again recognized. First, it assumes that regular school attendance, "from five, some say six, years of age up to 10," can be secured. If it could, it is believed that "a child of ordinary capacity would be able to read and write and use "the first four rules of arithmetic with facility," and that the work of keeping up or extending that amount of acquirement might be left to occasional instruction in night schools between the ages of 10 and 13 (F. 67). Secondly, it assumes that boys could be excluded from farm labour up to 10 years of age "without putting any serious pressure "upon the parents."

138. To this latter opinion Mr. Culley inclines, while at the same time he puts forward very fairly and distinctly the considerations that may be urged on the other side (F. 55).

139. The high rate of earnings in these two counties, obtainable by ordinarily efficient labourers in constant employ, favours this view. Again, the total number of boys under 10 years of age, included in our returns to 177 circulars from 130 different parishes in

Beds and Bucks, was only 141, or one-eleventh of the total males under 18 returned as employed (F. 28). It thus appears that boys under 10 years of age are, in these two counties, "very little employed in farm labour except in occasional jobs, such as field "keeping, twitching, stone picking, and the like" (F. 29). It appears also from Mr. Culley's inquiries that the most a labourer in those two counties "can expect to receive "from the earnings of such of his children as are between 8 and 10 years of age would be "1*s*. a week for the year, and which would, therefore, measure his loss if boys under 10 "were prevented from being employed in farm labour" (F. 102).

140. On the other hand, although the minimum loss to the labourer from the exclusion of his children from farm labour up to the age of 10 may be taken, as above, at 2*l*. 10*s*. a year, Mr. Culley shows that cases may occur in which the maximum loss might amount to 3*s*. a week, or 7*l*. 10*s*. a year, if the restriction was continued for four months in the year up to the age of 13 (*ibid.*). Such cases might occur; where they did occur, even although the father of the family might be in full employ all the year round, and consequently obtaining the full earnings of the county, 13*s*. 6*d*. and 14*s*. 6*d*. a week, Mr. Culley thinks that "it cannot be denied" that in such cases "aid in some shape would "have to be applied for (*ibid.*). But as in these counties weekly hirings are the rule, the earnings of the labourer are liable to be reduced by bad weather and by sickness. Mr. Fraser has pointed out on good authority that, where weekly hirings prevail, those two causes are apt to reduce the total earnings of the year to the rate of the average weekly wage. Again, the whole earnings of the family do not in these two counties, as Mr. Culley has shown, go into the family purse as they do in the north, and are also considerably less in amount per family, as has been described above, than those of the north. There is also the case of the "catch-work" labourers to be considered—men who, for various reasons, are not in constant employ. Of these, Mr. Culley says that in one large "open" parish (Toddington), "a large portion of the male population of the "so-called catch-workmen expect the female plaiters to maintain them throughout a great "portion of the year" (F. 12). It cannot be doubted that a restrictive law, excluding from farm labour all children under 10 years of age, in order that they might go to school, would often bear hardly upon families in all the cases last adverted to, and would "necessitate the aid of charity in one form or another" if such a law were to be carried into effect. But great unquestionably as would be the benefit to the labourer and to the in community of "such an elementary education as will suffice to put the labourer's career "his own hands" (F. 102), it is of the utmost importance to avoid "such pressure as might "tend to reduce still lower the feeling of self-reliance now existing" among the labourers in question. And doubtless, in the ultimate determination of this question by Parliament due force will be given to the consideration, as expressed by Mr. Culley, that "the great "lessons which the labourers of these counties require to be taught are independence and "providence" (*ibid.*).

School returns.

141. Mr. Culley's school returns were obtained from 46 parishes in Bedfordshire and from 32 parishes in Bucks. One of the principal results brought out by these carefully tabulated returns is that, in both counties, "farm labour does not," Mr. Culley thinks, "affect the school attendance of boys under 10 so much as is supposed, and that there "are a considerable number of boys over 10 years of age whose employment in farm "labour is confined to the summer months" (F. 42). And the general result of the returns is expressed by Mr. Culley as follows:—"I think there can be no reasonable "doubt that there are a great many young people of the agricultural labouring class "growing up without sufficient education, meaning by sufficient education the power of "reading and writing, and using for ordinary purposes the first four rules of arithmetic, "and that not a few are growing up without any education whatever in both the "counties to which these returns apply" (F. 50). The principle of the Printworks Act, with some modifications, is pointed to by many witnesses as most applicable to the agricultural districts, and most likely to effect with the least disturbance the required improvement of elementary education (F. 51–54).

The cottage question.

142. The cottage question is treated of very fully, and precisely to the same effect as by the other Assistant Commissioners. The difficulties in the way of entirely remedying the evils pointed out are illustrated by Mr. Culley's notice of what has been done on the estate of the Duke of Bedford.

"It has never been my good fortune to see any large estate upon which so much has been done for many years past, and is now being done for the comfort of all persons connected with it, as on that of the Duke of Bedford, and I have only cited this instance to show that even with a large purse and a willing hand the evil growth of past years has not yet been altogether overcome" (F. 15).

143. Mr. Culley adds that "The Union Chargeability Act will no doubt have its effect "in increasing the proportion of landowners' cottages;" and he points out that the power

of borrowing money on entailed estates, "for the erection and improvement of labourers' "cottages," under the authority of the Inclosure Commissionres, requires to be simpli- "fied and cheapened" (F. 16, 79). The whole of the facts collected by Mr. Culley on the subject of the cottages of these two counties, and his observations upon them in ss. 70 to 79 of his report, will be read with a very painful interest.

144. Mr. Culley has obtained much valuable information on the subject of allotments, as substitutes for cottage gardens where garden ground is not obtainable, showing their moral as well as their pecuniary value to the labourer; on benefit societies, and on the employment of children in making lace and plaiting straw in these two counties. The evidence on the subject of the lace and straw plait schools, obtained by the late Children's Employment Commission, led Parliament to endeavour to include them in the Workshops Regulation Act of last year. But as it appears by a letter quoted by Mr. Culley in a note to s. 88 of his report, from the Under Secretary of State, the Hon. A. F. O. Liddell, to the Rev. T. J. Ouvry, that the Attorney and Solicitor General are of opinion that the definitions employed in that Act do not bring the plaiting schools under the Act, some further attention must be directed to the question. The subject of benefit societies will, as we have intimated above, be treated of in our next year's report.

Allotments.

Lace and plait schools.

Benefit societies.

145. The evidence to which we have now called attention in the reports of our assistant commissioners cannot fail to have distinctly impressed the fact that in many of the districts to which our inquiries have extended the earnings of a considerable portion of the labourers in agriculture are so small that they are reluctant to deprive themselves of what can be added to the family income by the labour of their children from the earliest age at which their labour is available; and that, as a consequence, the children are not allowed to remain a sufficient time at school to enable them to derive the necessary benefit from their school attendance.

The evidence hitherto collected shows that earnings of labourer are often so small that his children's labour is of much importance to him. Consequent obstructions to school attendance.

146. It is manifestly, therefore, a matter of pressing public importance that full and earnest consideration should everywhere be given to the means by which, consistently with sound principles, the pecuniary resources of the agricultural labourer may be improved.

Important therefore that the means should be considered by which his pecuniary resources can be improved.

147. For many years past there have been able advocates of a high rate of remuneration to the agricultural labourer as the best means of obtaining a good day's work. Among the earliest of those advocates was Mr. Burke. "It is the interest of the farmer," Mr. Burke says, ("Thoughts on Scarcity," A.D. 1795,) "that his work should be done "with effect and celerity; and that cannot be done unless the labourer is well fed and "otherwise found with such necessaries of animal life, according to his habits, as may "keep the body in full force, and the mind gay and cheerful. For of all the instruments "of his trade, the labour of man is that on which he is most to rely for the repayment of "his capital." It is not to be inferred from these expressions of Mr. Burke that high wages may not in many cases be misused and spent in mere self-indulgence, or that high wages are justifiable where the labourer is inferior and cannot fairly earn them; but where fairly earned and properly used, the means they give of adding to the physical strength of the labourer are of much importance to the employer. It is very commonly noticed that ill paid labour is the least profitable from the defect of physical power which is its common accompaniment. The same result is found to be produced by a bad dietary, although the wages may be high, as in South Northumberland where the old nourishing dietary of the North has of late years been abandoned, in consequence of which "it "takes three men now to do the work of two" (Mr. Henley, B. 58). Mr. Culley also quotes excellent authority for the fact that the ill-fed labourers in the South are inferior in physical power to those he is accustomed to in the North in the same proportion as mentioned above, namely, as three to two. (C. 104, *note*). This is further confirmed by the experience of Mr. Blackburn in his communication quoted at p. 158 of the Appendix. The whole evidence indeed appended to our report places in strong relief the fact that the farmer best consults his own interests who gives his labourer the command of a nourishing diet and ample means of comfort by such a system of remuneration as is found in North Northumberland and in parts of Durham. (B. s. 58) or by the somewhat similar systems existing elsewhere (C. 21, D. 14). In such cases the farmer obtains a physically more capable labourer, and the labourer, if not pressed by the employer, willingly and eagerly performs his duty to his children by keeping them at school until the age of 11, 12, or 13 before he allows them to begin to work at farm labour. In their turn, these children bring a more awakened intelligence to their work; when they become men they are mentally as well as physically worth the high standard of remuneration they receive; and they desire that their children should not grow up without the advantages of instruction of which they themselves feel the benefit. And it is evident that these considerations are daily increasing in importance in conse-

It would be the interest of the employer to improve them.

And this improvement would tend to a greater amount of school attendance. General effects of; and their importance.

quence of the rapidly extending use of expensive machinery in agriculture, the right and economical use of which so much depends on the intelligence of those intrusted with its management (D. 84).

148. It is plain, therefore, that the condition of the agricultural labourer can and, under a better system of remuneration, would be greatly improved where it is now defective, and that such improvement would be in harmony with the best interests of his employer. It would also permit the Legislature, without any fear of inflicting hardship upon the labourer, to require that the early years of his children should be secured to them, free from premature toil, for the purposes of that mental and moral training which is calculated to be an inestimable benefit to them during the whole course of their lives, and which it is for the public interests to promote. But it is to the employer that the public must look for that more correct appreciation of his own interests which will lead him to place the labourer in a better position as far as it may be done by better wages fairly earned, and where requisite by a better system of remuneration.

Improvement from better wages or better systems must be left to private adjustment.

149. Where the labour market is overstocked there is unquestionably a strong temptation to the farmer to take advantage of it, and to pay a low rate of wages. Also where a particular mode of remunerating the labourer has been long in use, it is very difficult for both farmer and labourer to fall into a new one, even although it may be clearly brought to their notice that better modes exist in other parts of the country. It may be hoped that such evidence as Mr. Henley has collected on the rate and modes of remuneration in North Northumberland, and his report thereon, may have a considerable effect in leading the owners of land elsewhere to consider and if possible to adopt arrangements on the same principle as those of North Northumberland and parts of Durham which have so much contributed, first, to the physical welfare, and ultimately to the intellectual and moral improvement of the labourers in the north. Doubtless also the attention of agriculturists will have been attracted by the account given by Mr. Bailey Denton in his recent pamphlet entitled "The Agricultural Labourer" (Stanford, London, 1868), of his mode of enabling inferior labourers gradually to increase their earnings until some of them become equal to the best men employed in the extensive works of the "Lands Drainage and Improvement Company," under Mr. Denton's direction as their principal engineer. The same principle has also been acted upon by Mr. Grey, of Milfield (F. 104, *note*).

150. The most direct way of improving the resources of the agricultural labourer where they are low, namely, by higher wages and better modes of remuneration, being a matter with which the Legislature cannot deal, and which must be left to private adjustment, it remains to be considered whether there is any other way by which the pecuniary condition of the agricultural labourer, where low, can be improved directly or indirectly, or both, and to which the Legislature might give a salutary stimulus by simple and unobjectionable means.

The improvement of his pecuniary resources from cottage gardens or field allotments of a proper size.

151. Such a mode exists in the more general adoption of the practice of attaching such an amount of land to the labourer's cottage, or in default of that, in assigning to him such an amount of land as near to his dwelling as possible, as will profitably employ the leisure hours of himself and his family, without turning him into a small farmer, or leading him to place his chief dependence on the produce of his land and not on wages.

The Legislature might by simple means give a stimulus to this practice.

152. Our evidence already shows that the practice of attaching gardens of a proper size to cottages, although in some places pretty general, is far from being as common as its benefits, both material and moral, suggest that it should be. There is no difference of opinion as to the fact that a proper sized garden attached to the cottage is the best form in which the labourer can derive benefit from the occupation of a portion of land. But as it is not always practicable to attach land, or a sufficient portion, to a cottage, a field allotment as near as possible to his dwelling is to be regarded in the light of a substitute. All our Assistant Commissioners speak in the strongest terms of its value.

Great interest which this subject possesses for the labouring poor.

153. It is now 25 years since the subject of allotting small portions of land to the independent poor, in default of gardens attached to their cottages, came prominently before Parliament in the report of a Select Committee of the House of Commons which stamped the system with its most cordial approval. In the interval that has since elapsed the subject has fallen somewhat out of mind. It is one of very great importance, both in a physical and in a moral point of view, to the labouring poor. It is, indeed, difficult, without opportunities of referring to the great amount of evidence which exists upon the subject, to realize the deep interest which this question possesses for them. Landowners who have more recently adopted the system are unanimous in recognizing its benefits, which, in the words of the Report of the Committee of the House of Commons of July 1843, above adverted to, "are obtained without any corresponding disadvantages."

154. The very great importance of the subject to the large majority of agricultural labourers and their families, as well as through them to the public generally, in its bearing upon the question of the education of the labourer's children, will, we trust, be accepted as our excuse for presenting ample particulars regarding it, for tracing historically the rise and progress of the system, and for showing, by the large mass of evidence thus brought together, and which cannot fail to carry conviction, that the objections still expressed in some quarters against it have been founded on instances in which it has failed from errors of management, or from the allotments being too large; and finally for submitting considerations which we presume to think would justify Parliament in sanctioning the simple measures which seem desirable for its encouragement.

155. The Committee of the House of Commons of July 1843, on allotments of land for the labouring poor, was appointed "to inquire into the results of the allotment system, and "into the propriety of setting apart a portion of all waste lands which shall be enclosed "by Act of Parliament, or of any lands which under any Inclosure Act shall have been "appropriated to the benefit of the poor of the district, and also into the best means of "effecting the same."

156. The Committee state in their report (p. 1) that "feeling how important a bearing "the subject has upon the welfare of the labouring class of Her Majesty's subjects," they have inquired—

Committee of the House of Commons on the subject in 1843.

1st. Into the effects of the arrangements under which the labouring classes are now enabled to hold and cultivate land on their own account.

2ndly. Into such arrangements for that purpose as might be advantageously made in the inclosure of waste lands.

3rdly. Into any more general mode of extending the benefits of the allotment system.

157. The conclusion to which the Committee was led upon the first branch of their inquiry was "that the tenancy of land under the garden allotment system is a powerful "means of bettering the condition of those classes who depend for their livelihood upon "their manual labour;" and they add the important opinion "that its benefits are not "obtained at the expense of any other class, nor accompanied by any corresponding "disadvantage."

158. The Committee refer to the fact that "the practice of parcelling out fields in small "allotments for cottage tenantry may be traced back to the end of the last century, and "was advocated in the publications of Sir Thomas Bernard" towards the beginning of the present.

159. The Committee do not specify the instances to which they refer. As these instances are in themselves very instructive, and as allotments are noticed in Acts of Parliament previously to the General Inclosure Act of 1845, a brief reference to some of those cases, as well as to those Acts, will be found to throw light upon the subsequent growth of the system.

History of the field allotment system.

160. One of the earliest instances of allotments attached to cottages is referred to in a note by Sir John Sinclair, to the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Waste Lands, in 1795, p. 204. "The lord of the manor of some commonable lands, "near Tewksbury, had observed, a few years previously to the year 1770, that the occu-"piers of some cottages with land annexed to them" were remarkable for bringing up "their families in a more neat and decent manner than those whose cottages were without "land." He accordingly, about the year 1772, caused "an allotment of 25 acres to be set "out" for the use of "some of the poor." The excellent effects of that measure are then described in detail. "It had not in one instance failed of giving an industrious "turn, even to some of those who were before idle and profligate." The production of the land and the comforts of the cottagers were greatly increased; "the poor rates were "reduced to 4*d.* in the pound, while those of neighbouring parishes were at 2*s.* 6*d.* to "5*s.*" Sir John Sinclair adds, "who would not wish to see every waste in the kingdom "improved on such principles? and how much will not the situation of every cottager be "ameliorated if such a system were to be adopted?"

161. In accordance with that opinion the Committee recommended that in any general Inclosure Bill that might be passed some regulations should be inserted to secure for the cottagers as much "accommodation" in the use of land "as they may have occasion "for" * * "enlarging where circumstances will admit it, the garden annexed to

"their respective cottages, giving them a decided preference with respect to locality "over the larger rights, and throwing the burden of the ring fence upon the larger "commoners."

162. In the year 1800, among the premiums offered by the Board of Agriculture are two gold medals, one to the person who shall build on his estate "the most cottages for labourers' "families, and assign to each a proper portion of land, for the support of not less than a "cow and a hog; and also a sufficient garden;" the other to the person "who shall "explain in the most satisfactory manner the best means of rendering the allotment "system as general throughout the kingdom as circumstances will admit," which they assert to be "a great national object."

163. During the early years of the present century, the "Society for Bettering the "Condition of the Poor," among the earliest members of which were Mr. Wilberforce and Sir Thomas Bernard, urged in their annual reports the advantage of attaching suitable allotments to cottages, as one of the means by which the condition of the agricultural labourer would be improved both physically and morally.

164. Anticipating an objection commonly made, that where the allotment is too large the labourer is tempted to grow corn, which is generally a disadvantage to him, Sir Thomas Bernard says, "the possession of arable land is hurtful to the cottager." "But," he adds, "his condition is materially improved by possessing a garden," and by being permitted to rent grass for one or two cows. He proceeds to say (Report for 1810):

"The experiment has been extensively tried by the Earl of Winchelsea. There are from 70 to 80 labourers upon his estates in Rutlandshire, who keep from one to four cows each; and of all his tenants these men are the most punctual with their rents. Lord Winchelsea asserts from experience that nothing is so beneficial to them and the landlords as this system; that the labourers and their families, living better are consequently more able to endure labour; that they are contented with their situation and attached to it; that having acquired a sort of independence which makes them set a higher value upon their character, they are generally considered in the neighbourhood as men the most to be depended upon and trusted; that feeling the advantage of possessing a little, their industry is excited by hope.

"The experiment was also tried in Wiltshire, in a parish containing 140 poor persons, divided into 32 families, chiefly employed as labourers in husbandry," * * "half an acre of land was given to each. It had the best effect; the children are educated to husbandry and are better fed; the father employing in hopeful, and therefore willing occupation, hours which he would otherwise spend idly and injuriously."

165. In a subsequent Report Sir T. Bernard mentions an instance of a man obtaining a grant of a quarter of an acre of common, upon which he built a cottage and formed a garden. On being visited by his landlord, he said—

"Now, Sir, you have a pleasure in seeing my cottage and garden neat; and why should not other squires have the same pleasure in seeing the cottages and gardens as neat about them? The poor would then be happy and would love them and the place where they lived; but now every nook of land is to be let to the great farmers, and nothing left for the poor but to go to the parish."

Sir T. Bernard remarks upon this case that—

"Upon his rood of ground he had 15 apple trees, one greengage tree, three winesour plum trees, two apricot trees, currants, gooseberries, and three bee-hives; he reared also from this garden abundance of common vegetables, and about 40 bushels of potatoes annually."

166. Commenting upon instances such as these Sir Thomas urges that in endeavouring to improve the condition of the poor it is most desirable "to operate upon them by the "prospect of acquiring property."

167. In the year 1806, the Rev. Stephen Demainbray, rector of Broad Somerford, Wiltshire, suggested that a clause should be introduced into an Inclosure Bill then under consideration for the parish, assigning to every cottage in the parish, whether the owner had any common rights or not, an allotment of half an acre of land to be vested in trustees to secure its proper use. The Act was passed in 1806, "and the example "was followed by almost every adjoining parish in that part of Wiltshire" (s. 186 of evidence of 1843). Mr. Demainbray stated that the same thing had been previously "done" by the father of the present member for Oxford, Mr. Estcourt, at Newnton, near "Tetbury, Gloucestershire" (s. 189) "with the best results."

168. In the years immediately succeeding the peace of 1815, when the public mind was much perplexed on the subject of the Poor Laws, the alleviation of the condition of the poor derivable from allotments of land, was strongly adverted to in many able pamphlets. (Pamphlets on the Poor Laws, 1815–20.) Among other writers the Rev. W. L. Bowles, J.P. for the county of Wilts, in a letter to Sir James Mackintosh (Salisbury 1815), urges that "a small portion of land should be allotted to each cottager;" that such a measure

was, whenever practicable, "imperiously required;" and that landowners should reserve "in every lease a portion of land for that purpose." He complains that if farmers give up any of their land with that object it is "at double their own rent;" and he cites the example of Lord Peterborough who has acted upon the plan of reserving land for that purpose "to the great benefit of the labourers."

169. In 1817 Mr. R. Gourlay, at one time in the employ of the Board of Agriculture, in a pamphlet published at Bath, and addressed to Arthur Young, secretary to that board, among other remedies for the then state of the poor, forcibly advocates "half-acre allotments."

170. About the year 1820, the Bishop of London (Dr. Blomfield) while rector of Chesterford, Essex, adopted the system (s. 698 of Evidence of 1843).

171. Mr. Cobbett in his "rural rides" notices, in the year 1821, the benefit to the labourers of the good gardens which he observed in several parts of England, especially in the southern countries. There, he says, you see—

"That most interesting of all objects, that which is such an honour to England, and that which distinguishes it from all the rest of the world, namely, those neatly kept and productive little gardens round the labourers' houses, which are seldom unornamented with more or less of flowers. We have only to look at these gardens to know what sort of people English labourers are." (Edit. of 1853, p. 86.)

172. He speaks of the great advantages formerly possessed by the cottagers from the "cows, pigs, geese, and poultry," which they were able to keep on the wastes over which they had rights. He estimates that a pig at that time was worth to the cottager 1*l.* per annum at least besides the manure, and he adds that in Sussex he "saw, with "great delight, a pig at almost every labourer's house. The houses are good and "warm; and the gardens some of the best that I have seen in England." And he refers to the greater capacity for work of a labourer when can he "get some bacon."

173. As a contrast he refers to the disadvantage the labourers are often under "in "a purely corn country;" and to the "dismal and miserable" state of those districts of country "where every inch of land is appropriated to farming purposes." "No "hedges, no ditches, no commons, no grassy lanes, the labourer has not a stick of wood, "and no place for a pig or a cow to graze on." (P. 254.)

174. In 1827 a witness examined before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on emigration, Mr. B. Wills, stated (s. 3812.) "I could load the com-"mittee with information as to the importance of the cottagers renting a portion of "land with their cottages; it keeps them buoyant, and it keeps them industrious"; and he urges "that every agricultural cottage should have a piece of land"; enforcing his opinion of the duty of placing such land freely within their reach, on the ground that "since 1760 they had lost about 4,000,000 of acres of common, which they had formerly "the privilege of using for their pigs, geese, and a variety of other things."

175. In the year 1828 Mr. William Miles, M.P., caused some land that had been left to a parish in Nottinghamshire to be let in allotments to the poor (Evidence of 1843, s. 1823); and about six years after "he made allotments on his own land in "Gloucestershire to about 100 persons (*ibid.*, s. 1830.) In the year 1830–1 Captain George Treweeke Scobell introduced it into the parishes of High Littleton and Midsomer Norton in Somersetshire, and carried it into effect on a considerable scale, and with great success (*ibid.*, ss. 275–413). From those parishes it spread rapidly into 50 adjoining ones (*ibid.*, s. 338). Much favourable evidence was also given upon the subject of field allotments before the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Poor Laws in 1830–31.

176. Up to that period, two Acts of Parliament had been passed encouraging the letting of small portions of land to cottagers, with the view adding to their resources.

177. In 1819 the Act 59 Geo. 3. c. 19. ss. 12 and 13 empowered the churchwardens and overseers of any parish, with the consent of the inhabitants in vestry assembled, to purchase or take on lease on account of the parish any suitable portion of land not exceeding twenty acres, for the promotion of industry among the independent poor; they were directed by s. 13, to let any portion of such land "to any poor and indus-"trious inhabitant of the parish" to be occupied and cultivated on his own account and for his own benefit, at such reasonable rent and for such term as might be fixed by the vestry.

178. In 1831 the Act 1 & 2 Will. 4. c. 42., reciting that the limitation to 20 acres in the above Act having been found inconvenient in many parishes, extends the quantity of land that might be taken on lease to 50 acres.

179. It makes also the following important additions to the former Act. By s. 2 it enacts that "in order to extend the salutary and benevolent purposes of the Act," the churchwarden and overseers of the poor may enclose from any waste or common land in the parish, with consent of the persons having rights thereupon, any portion of such waste or common not exceeding fifty acres, * * and may let any part or parts of the same to any poor and industrious inhabitant of such parish, to be occupied and cultivated on his own account.

180. And in the following year (1832), another Act passed (2 Will. 4. c. 42.) having the same object in view. It is intituled "An Act to authorize (in parishes "inclosed under any Act of Parliament) the letting of the 'poor allotments' in small "portions to industrious cottagers."

181. The Act recites that "in parishes inclosed under Acts of Parliament there are, "in many cases, allotments (from the waste or common lands) made for the benefit of "the poor, chiefly with a view to fuel, which are now comparatively useless and "unproductive," and that "it would tend much to the welfare and happiness of the "poor, if these allotments could be let at a fair rent and in small portions to industrious "cottagers of good character, while the distribution of fuel might be augmented by "appropriating the said rents to the purchase of an additional quantity."

182. Clauses follow to secure that the land be preserved "in a due state of fertility," for the regulation of the letting, and for the exchange of allotments that may "be found "to be at an inconvenient distance from the residences of the cottagers * * for land "of equal value more favourably situated."

Action of Legislature in furtherance of allotment system, if necessary, proposed by Poor Law Commissioners, 1834.

183. In the year 1834 the attention of the Poor Law Commissioners was called to the subject, and in their report for that year (21st February) they state the "general "results" of their "inquiry into the allotment system" to be that, 1. "A labouring man, "even when his family is large, can seldom beneficially occupy more than half an acre," continuing to rely upon wages as his regular and main support. 2. "Where the "system is carried on by individuals it has been generally beneficial, but when managed "by parish officers it has seldom succeeded." They add "the immediate advantage of "allotments is so great, that if there were no other mode of supplying them, we think "it would be worth while, as a temporary measure, to propose some general plan for "providing them."

184. The Acts above adverted to, and the favourable opinion of the Poor Law Commissioners on the principle of allotments, called further attention to the system as a means of benefiting the independent labourer, and according soon after that time it made much progress in several parts of the kingdom.

185. In the year 1834 the magazine of the Labourer's Friend Society was established expressly "for disseminating information on the advantages of allotments of land to the "labouring classes." During the ten years of its existence it brought before the public many striking instances of the successful working of the system.

186. About the year 1836, Mr. Henry Martin, of Hadlow in Kent, advocated its introduction into that county. Mr. Martin was the first witness examined by the committee of 1843, and stated that at that time 3,000 families in the county of Kent had allotmnets (*ibid.*, s. 186). Sir George Strickland in Yorkshire (*ibid.*, s. 843), Lord Chesterfield, the Duke of Newcastle, and Lord Manners in Nottinghamshire (*ibid.*, ss. 1665, 1743, 1938), Lord Portman, Mr. Sturt, and Lord Rivers in Dorsetshire (*ibid.*, s. 2227) and other landowners in various parts of the country adopted the system previously to the inquiry of 1843, and as appears by the evidence, with most satisfactory results.

The leading facts and opinions elicited by the Committee of 1843.

187. The attention of Parliament not having been called to the subject since the inquiry by the committee of 1843, it is desirable to reproduce in this place, as briefly as possible, some of the valuable facts and opinions elicited by that committee.

188. The arrangements and regulations under which the allotment system is most advantageously carried out are thus stated by the Committee (Report, p. iv.):—

1. As it is desirable that the profits of the allotment should be viewed by the holder of it in the light of an aid, and not of a substitute for his ordinary income accruing from wages, and that they should not become an inducement to neglect his usual paid labour, the allotment should be of no greater extent than can be cultivated during the leisure moments of the labourer and his family. The exact size which would meet this condition must of course vary according to the nature of the soil, the strength and numbers of the family, and their leisure time; but

one quarter of an acre is the size usually adopted, and best suited to the average of cases.

2. The allotment should also be near the dwelling of its occupier; much of its benefit depends upon the facility afforded to the man, his wife, and his children of devoting spare moments to the care of their ground, and being able to visit it frequently without fatigue.
3. Though the land will yield larger profits under this mode of cultivation than under the usual method of tillage, the proprietor who wishes to benefit the poor man should not exact more rent than he could expect to receive if he let it out to be farmed in the ordinary way.
4. Tithes, parochial rates, taxes, and all other charges should be included in the rent, and paid by the owner and not by the occupier, for the purpose of saving trouble in the collection, of preventing the accumulation of arrears, and of guarding the tenant against frequent and sudden demands for payments which he might not be prepared to meet.

189. These regulations and suggestions were founded on the evidence of the gentlemen from various parts of the country, who had given to the Committee in full detail the results of their experience on the subject.

190. With regard to the size of the allotment, although a quarter of an acre was said to be that best adapted to average cases, a steady and skilful man, with the aid of his family, could well manage half an acre (Evidence of 1843, §§ 119, 185, 298, 707, 845), and as much as an acre and even two acres had been given with great advantage to old men, or men not sure of constant employment (*ibid.* §§ 99, 258, 1443).

191. The net profit of a quarter of an acre was found to be, for poor land, 4*l.* (*ibid.* 18–20); for good land, 5*l.* (1508). The value of a quarter of an acre is stated in other words by one witness as 13 week's consumption, or "one-fourth of a man's subsistence, "with a large family" (1657). By another it is estimated at "2*s.* per week on an "average to each family" (344).

192. The most profitable employment of the land is in vegetables (*ibid.* 36, 289), by which the labourer obtains also the advantage of a variety of food for himself and his family. It is often the only mode by which any vegetables are procurable by him; their price, or his distance from shops, places them out of his reach.

193. "I have known children," says one witness, "of 10 and 11 years old announce that "they had tasted vegetables since they had these grounds which they never saw on their "father's table before; they go almost daily to fetch something for the dinner, even "throughout the winter, for winter crops are very much cultivated" (*ibid.* 309). The land "is necessary to the rural labourer; he cannot get vegetables without it" (397).

194. To these direct pecuniary benefits those also are to be added which flow indirectly from the system. In the words of Sir Henry Fletcher, Bart., "the good is seen not only "in the money it puts into the pocket of the labourer, but in the money it keeps there, in "inducing him to go to his allotment instead of the public-house." "It creates domestic "habits very much." "A man and his wife and children work at it together." "It "raises their moral character" (*ibid.* 191, 303, 314, 355, 1522, 1864), and causes a marked improvement "in the internal economy and management of their cottages" (309).

195. If it should be urged that any direct pecuniary advantage to the labouring man from his allotment would be neutralized by its value being taken into account in the rate of wages offered to him, the answer is found in the evidence of 1843. It is stated on the best authority that an allotment has no effect upon wages; that the allotment has been a clear addition to the labourer's resources (281–282). No witness before that Committee suggested or apprehended that an allotment would operate in diminution of wages or would be otherwise than a clear gain. Still less could any such apprehension be entertained at the present day in the face of the increased demand for agricultural labour.

Net annual value to labourer of garden or allotment of a quarter and of half an acre.

Moral benefit in addition.

196. That being so, the possession by the labourer of a cottage garden or of an allotment of the proper size has manifestly a direct and immediate bearing upon one of the principal questions with which this Commission is concerned—the school attendance of the children. If a quarter acre allotment is of the net value to a labourer of 4*l.* or 5*l.*, according to the quality of the land, and if, having a family, he can be advantageously trusted with half an acre by which that net return would be doubled, he is at once enabled to dispense with the addition to the family income which would arise from the premature employment of his children. And it is highly probable that the cultivation of land will lead him, if uninstructed himself, to appreciate the value of the power of reading and writing and keeping accounts, and will thus increase his desire that his

Effect of this on school attendance of his children.

children should be educated; while, as mentioned by Sir Henry Fletcher (§ 71), the moral effect of giving him the means of rational employment and amusement during his leisure hours will often be, that a portion of his earnings now squandered will be husbanded for the benefit of his family.

197. It has been urged that the 4*l.* or 5*l.* so added to the labourer's income would be more legitimately added in the shape of wages. It is doubtless very desirable that it should be in the labourer's power to command a rate of wages which will enable him to dispense with such aid as is attainable from a garden or field allotment of the proper size. But under existing circumstances it is not often in his power. Neither is the money value of the garden or field allotment the only matter to be considered. Their moral advantages have been shown to be great. The question is thus raised above the rigid rules of supply and demand. And such a supplement to the labourer's wages as arises from the garden or the field allotment is similar in kind, and similarly justifiable on moral grounds, to the very common supplement of another kind, namely, that which arises from giving him a dwelling at a rate of payment much below that which constitutes a proper return for the outlay on such dwelling; a benefit often far beyond what the labourer could acquire by payment out of his wages.

Presumed obstacles to general adoption of system not valid.

198. The presumed obstacles to the extension of the allotment system, in default of cottage gardens, are not such as ought to weigh against its acknowledged benefits.

199. On the part of landowners it was apprehended there would be much trouble in collecting the rent from so many small tenants, and that there would be loss from arrears.

200. The whole tenor of the evidence of 1843 shows that such apprehensions were groundless. The great desire that the labourers felt to possess this means of adding to their resources made them careful not to lose it. The testimony was unanimous in 1843 as to the punctuality with which the rents were paid (Report, p. v.). "In 12 years "witness had not lost a quarter per cent." (Ev. 287). "Witness never had a difficulty "about a farthing of rent" (1880). "There has not been a defaulter to the amount "of a penny" (2120). "Tenants bring the money on the appointed day without being "called upon."

201. On the part of the farmers there was at first a fear that the men would give up too much of their time to their allotments, working at them in the early morning or late in the evening, and so exhausting their strength. But that had not been found to be the case. There are occasional spare hours which can be so occupied without detriment to the employer; and it is noticed in practice that the farmer will tell a man that he is not wanted for a half or a quarter of a day, and may go and work upon his allotment (*ibid.* 181–3). Much also of the work is done by the wife and the children.

202. It was apprehended further that it would make them too independent, and cause the men to rely too much on the produce of their own ground. But this apprehension also soon ceased. In Kent the committees managing the allotments were "in several "parishes composed entirely of farmers" (*ibid.* 29). The fear that it would induce them to steal straw where they kept a pig was, on experience, entirely repudiated (30, 2241). There is no suggestion in the evidence of 1843 of a fear that the labourers would steal corn if permitted to grow corn upon their allotments.

203. Two objections raised by the farmers in some localities were of a kind which ought not to have been allowed to weigh with them, and if still existing anywhere ought to be overruled. The first was that the allotment system diminished their facilities for getting cheap manure (*ibid.* 693). The second was the very high rent which they obtained from any piece of land let to a labourer as potato ground, and manured by him, and the great additional benefit to the land, which appeared in the succeeding crops. If the land was dug as well as manured by the labourer its value to the farmer was quadrupled. Mr. William Miles, M.P., stated: "The farmers are in the habit of letting "their land for 8*l.* an acre for potato ground." "If one of these poor people worked very "hard on those pieces of land the consequence was he not only quadrupled the rent the "farmer paid to the proprietor of the land for the use of it, but at the same time he "established the best possible fallow for the after crop" (1841). Sir George Strickland, Bart., M.P., stated the same as the result of his experience in Yorkshire (849). Captain Scobell said (360), "Before they had these gardens they were paying the "farmer 6*l.*, 7*l.*, and 8*l.* an acre for rent for potato ground." Captain Scobell further stated (422–4) that the average quantity of manure which the holders of allotments got together and put upon the land is at the rate of from 14 to 17 two-horse cartloads per acre, or four times the quantity which on an average the farmers in his neighbourhood place upon their land.

204. That the majority of farmers are ready to forego these advantages for the sake of the benefit conferred on their labourers by these allotments, whenever the landlords encourage the system, is proved by the evidence of 1843. There can indeed be no doubt that the farmers are benefited by the system in various ways. The effect of the allotments is to keep labourers and their families off the rates (*ibid.* 1896, 744). "The tenants are "frequently kept off the poor rates by consuming the produce of their allotments" (294–297). Their moral character, their steadiness and industry, and their skill as labourers are greatly improved (301–307, 359, 1977). Crime becomes less frequent (79–82). Their feelings towards those above them are improved (303–306), and, what is of much importance to the farmer at times when labour is scarce, the attachments to home are increased, and the motives of the labourer for seeking the means of bettering his condition elsewhere are diminished (402). Farmers benefit by the system.

205. The allotment system in the hands of the landlord relieves the labourer from the liability of being obliged to submit to the high rent sometimes charged for his allotment by the farmer as above mentioned. All the witnesses are of one mind as to the importance of the general practice that the allotments should be held directly from the landlord. The landlord is more likely to adopt the sound view urged by all the principal witnesses in 1843, that in no case should a higher rent be charged for an allotment than ordinary farmer's rent, plus the tithes and rates for the sake of the facility of collection (*ibid.* 300, 850, 1830, 2277). A better feeling is also produced in the mind of the labourer when he holds immediately from the landlord (303–306, 876–877). It increases his self-respect when he finds himself in possession of "a little lease" from a landowner (1878), and it operates as a great inducement to industry and good conduct, that he may not forfeit it (1867). Mr. Miles, M.P., stated (1878):— Allotments should be held directly from the landlord.

"I think it very desirable that there should be an agreement drawn up; the tenants like to have an agreement; a little lease; the tenant and myself both sign; he has a copy, and I keep a copy, and he looks upon it as the title deed of his estate as long as he acts up to the conditions."

206. The mode of proceeding recommended by Captain Scobell to any gentleman disposed to adopt the allotment system is thus admirably described by him (*ibid.* 378): Mode of proceeding in adopting the allotment system.

"The regulations I would recommend from experience are these, and which I have never known to fail, although applied in very many parishes under different circumstances: Announce your intention of letting field gardens in your parish. Ascertain the number of labourers, the size of each family, and the quantity of garden ground then in the occupation of each. Exclude none for previous bad character; they may be reclaimed. Do not include any pauper. Let no parish officers have anything to do with the arrangements. If your population is scattered or large fix on two or more fields rather than one large one; the quality of the land should be good and fresh. The quantity to each family from 20 to 50 poles. If a man occupies more than he can permanently uphold by manure, the land will be losing stamina. Divide the fields in stripes, from top to bottom, abutting against the highway. All manure should be carted in the winter months when it can be done without injury. Let the parties who are to have the same sized gardens draw lots. Have no favourites. The fields should be as near as practicable, and easy of access. The hedges should be cut low and kept so, and an additional gate or style added. The rules should be few and clear; be explained by yourself to your collected intended tenants previous to giving possession of the land. These rules should be signed by yourself and themselves whilst all assembled together, and each have a copy. The rent should be precisely that which a farmer would or does pay per acre for similar land. If more they may suspect your motive, if less you injure their proper independence. Whatever charges besides rent are made, such as tithes and rates, should be distinguished from the rent itself. The whole year's rent should be made at one payment, in the autumn. Condition not to dispossess your tenants except on conviction by law of some crime, or a wilful breach of the regulations. The effect of this guarantee will astonish you, even in the worst characters before. If you give any rewards for good cultivation let it be in tools, or seeds or clothes, and not in money. For the first year or two contract, if you can, for some one to cart the manure provided by the tenants, at the lowest possible price, making them pay by the measure of their field-garden, and not by the load. Cause an account to be kept of the quantity found by each; you will find it ample to uphold good or even fair land. There should be a condition that if any tenant subjects himself to removal he will surrender up his occupation on being so required to do. Have no fear of the trouble, it will be but a light amusement. If you cross the fields but twice in the year and see your tenantry once in the year assembled together, the system will work quietly and well."

207. This exposition of the easy manner in which the allotment system can be introduced is well calculated to afford encouragement to all persons having the means of carrying it into operation. It justifies the strong opinion in its favour, as the result of his own experience, expressed at the same period by Mr. Miles, M.P., in the words following:— "The more I think of it the more I am astonished that all proprietors do not invariably "adopt it upon their estates."

208. Two years after the very favourable Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the allotment system,—namely in 1845,—a Bill, amended from one of the previous Session, was brought into the House of Commons by the Honble. Bill of 1845 to promote allotment system.

W. Cowper, entitled, "A Bill to promote the letting of Field Gardens to the Labouring "Poor." That Bill passed through the House of Commons (with amendments), and also passed a second reading in the House of Lords, but did not go to a third reading. Its object was to enable any parish that might adopt the Act to appoint a parochial board consisting of the officiating minister for the time being, and two elected trustees, to be styled "field-wardens," with authority to hire land to be let out in field gardens and allotments to the labouring poor.

Discussion on.

209. Mr. Cowper in the course of explaining his reasons for introducing this Bill (Hansard, vol. 78, p. 310), stated that—

"It appeared from history that before the land of England was brought fully into cultivation, almost all cottagers had land for tillage. All those above the condition of serfs had land in their own occupation, and in addition to that had common right over the waste lands. * * He believed that previous to the 16th century all the peasantry drew portions of their maintenance from the soil. * * * * Since 1800 no fewer than 2,000 Inclosure Acts had passed. The amount of acreage was not set forth (in the returns); but it must form no inconsiderable portion of the land of the country. The consolidation of small farms, so extensively adopted during the war with France, had contributed to deprive the labouring man of his opportunities of holding land. The giving up the tenure of leases on lives also had the same tendency. The result of these combined causes was, that until the allotment system was revived the English labourer was severed from all connexion with the land. * * *

"* * What he particularly valued in the system of allotments was the moral effect on the holder. The management of a garden was an important ingredient in his happiness. It was just the amusement which suited the labourer and for which he was suited. This amusement was elevating in its tendencies; and many idle, careless, lawless individuals would be converted into steady, sober, industrious men, simply by having the means of harmless, rational, and profitable employment. The desire among the labouring classes to possess gardens was almost universal. The wealthy were not more desirous to become landed proprietors than the poor were to become occupiers of such tracts."

210. On the second reading of the Bill Sir James Graham thus expressed himself in favour of its principle—

"The principle of the Bill was in favour of making allotments for the use of the poor. He believed that it was admitted on all hands that the appropriation of portions of land in aid of the comforts of the labouring population of this country was an object most praiseworthy and desirable. The sole intention of the Bill was to facilitate such an arrangement. The Honble. Member who had introduced this measure might not altogether succeed in obtaining his object, but a more desirable one could not exist."

211. Sir James Graham proceeded to take exception to the clause making the rates a security for the rent, which was afterwards expunged. He also doubted the policy of constituting the proposed parochial trust. Mr. Roebuck and other members opposed the Bill on the ground that "the labouring classes ought to depend *solely* for their existence "upon their wages," and that the field allotments under the proposed arrangement might be used to reduce wages, to introduce the cottier system of Ireland, and to increase the dependence of the poor. Sir James Graham stated (July 2) that in his opinion the labouring man should depend for support *mainly* on wages, an opinion in which Sir Robert Peel agreed, but he did not think that the measure would have the effect of reducing wages. Sir Robert Peel considered the Bill "entitled to favourable con-"sideration." "He thought that giving the labouring classes small allotments of land "might conduce to their welfare and comfort." Mr. Bright, while thinking that "attaching small gardens to the cottages of the agricultural labourer was desirable," said (July 2) that "the voluntary system of arrangement would do all the good which was "expected to accrue from the allotment system;" and although the Bill passed the House of Commons, and was read a second time in the House of Lords, that opinion appears to have prevailed, the Bill not having been proceeded with.

Passed the House of Commons, and read a second time in the House of Lords.

A modification of one of the clauses might be now adopted.

212. But it may be worthy of consideration whether a modification of one clause in that Bill (Clause XI.) might not be adopted with useful results.

213. That clause recites that "obstacles sometimes arise to the letting of land to "cottagers for field gardens by reason of the land most conveniently situated for such "purpose being under lease for a term of years." In such cases if a portion of the land so leased was to be given up by the lessee even with the consent of the lessor, unless under a fresh deed, the covenants of the lease would be disturbed, and questions might arise which might be a source of litigation (Woodfall's "Landlord and Tenant," 9th ed., 1867, p. 135).

214. To prevent this the Bill in question provided, by the 11th clause, that—

"When any lands are held under any lease for a term of years, it shall be lawful for the lessor, with the consent of the lessee, to resume possession of any portion of the said demised lands for and during the residue of such term, without in any way affecting, disturbing, or making void the said lease, or the covenants, conditions, and provisions therein contained, or any of them, so far as the same relate to

the residue of the lands therein contained; and the amount of rent payable on behalf of the said portion of demised land of which possession is resumed shall be endorsed in a memorandum on the said lease; and the said lessee, his executors, administrators, and assigns, shall be discharged and exonerated from so much and such part of the rent reserved in the said lease as is mentioned and set forth in the memorandum."

The allotment system discussed in 1858 at meeting of Central Farmers' Club.

215. Fifteen years after the inquiry before the Committee of the House of Commons in 1843, and their favourable Report, the question of the allotment system was discussed at a meeting of the London Central Farmer's Club (39, New Bridge Street, Blackfriars), and a full report of the discussion was published in the number of the journal of the club for November 1858.

216. The members present comprised many well-known practical agriculturists both of the neighbourhood of London and of distant counties.

217. The subject was so ably dealt with that we have deemed it right to add in the Appendix copious extracts from the report of the discussion (Appendix, p. 139).

218. The objections which had been occasionally urged against the system were fully stated, and were shown to have arisen from its abuse and not from its proper and judicious use. In some cases the allotments had been too large. Some farmers had objected to the allotment tenants growing wheat, on the ground that it offered temptations to the cottager to steal the farmer's corn. But it was thought undesirable to limit the discretion of the cottager as to what crop would be most profitable to him, and unjust to him to act on the assumption that he would feel himself so tempted, and if so, would be unable to resist the temptation. The cultivation of the allotments on Sunday was noticed as habitual in some places; that however was a practice "upon which the owner "should put his veto."

Very strong opinions in favour of the system.

219. But it will be seen from the whole tenor of the discussion that it would be difficult to express more strongly the general benefits of the system, or the value attached to it by the farmers and landowners present, than was done on that occasion; and a perusal of the opinion given in its favour resulting from such large and varied experience will be calculated strongly to commend it for much more general adoption.

Evidence as to its continuing good effects conclusive.

220. Our evidence brings down the history of the system to the present time, in the counties hitherto visited by our Assistant Commissioners, and is conclusive as to its continuing good effects wherever it has been introduced.

221. We have, in particular, the pleasure of being able to refer to a series of answers from Mr. Sotheron Estcourt to our inquiries relative to the allotments at Newnton (Appendix, p. 145), and to an interesting letter from Captain Scobell (Appendix, p. 146), describing the satisfactory manner in which the system which he commenced in 1836 continues to work.

The extent to which it has been adopted throughout the country unknown.

222. The extent to which the allotment system has been adopted throughout the country is unknown. The evidence which has come before us raises the presumption that it has extended considerably since 1843; but it is equally clear that the total quantity of land thus allotted falls greatly short of that which might most usefully be thus applied.

Estimate in 1843 of the quantity of land required to give every agricultural labourer an allotment of a quarter of an acre.

223. The total quantity of land which might be thus applied in England and Wales in giving to each labourer in agriculture an allotment of a quarter of an acre, was stated by Captain Scobell, from calculations with which he furnished the Committee of 1843, at 200,000 acres; and the increased value which would be given to that number of acres if employed in allotments instead of under ordinary farming cultivation, he calculated at a large sum per annum. The Committee accepted the statement as a reasonable approximation, without challenge (§§ 419–421). In an estimate given in the volume of The Labourers' Friend Society for 1834, p. 117, the quantity of land so required, at the average of three-eighths of an acre for each agricultural labourer's family, was given as 315,000 acres.

224. The census of 1861 affords the means of checking these calculations, as regards the quantity of land required to give every labourer in agriculture a cottage garden, or, in default of that, an allotment, of a proper size; and the result arrived at, although by a different process, is almost identical with that of Captain Scobell.

Estimate founded on the census of 1861.

225. According to the census of 1861, there were in England and Wales—

Agricultural labourers of 20 years of age and upwards (out-door)	725,318
Shepherds do. do. - -	20,659
Total agricultural labourers of 20 years and upwards -	745,977

226. It may be assumed that one-fourth of these (745,977 ÷ 4 = 186,494) would, by reason of their skill and industry, and the size of their families, be able to manage profitably half-acre gardens or allotments, while for the other three-fourths, or 559,483, the quarter-acre allotments would be the most desirable size.

227. Thus 186,494 half acres (=93,247 acres) and 559,483 quarter acres (=139,870 acres) give together 233,117 acres as the number required for the above purpose.

Increased annual value of that quantity of land so applied.

228. It has been shown that in the opinion of the witnesses before the Committee of 1843 the net annual value of a quarter-acre allotment to a labouring man, let to him at the ordinary farming rent, was from 4*l.* to 5*l.*, according to the quality of the land (§ 191). The land allotted being usually of good quality, the higher sum may be fairly taken to represent the value in a large proportion of cases.

229. But if the lower rate, equalling 16*l.* an acre, be taken, the total net value given to those 233,117 acres, in gardens and allotments, would be (233,117 × 16 =) 3,729,872*l.**

Of that total quantity, how many acres are so applied?

230. The question suggests itself,—of these 233,117 acres necessary to give suitable cottage gardens or field allotments to the 745,977 out-door agricultural labourers in England and Wales above 20 years of age (most of them presumably heads of families), how many acres are so allotted?

Gardens or allotments still far from general.

231. Mr. Cowper, in introducing his Bill of 1845 (§ 209), stated that "notwithstanding "all that had been done, he believed that a generation might be expected to pass away "before there would be a general allotment of garden grounds for labourers."

232. A generation has now passed away since that expectation was uttered, and still gardens or allotments of a proper size are far from being general. The time, therefore, appears to have arrived when the opinion of the Poor Law Commissioners, expressed on the allotment system in 1834, may with propriety be acted upon by Parliament giving the system such aid from legislation as may be shown to be expedient (*supra*, § 183).

A return of the quantity should be made in the annual agricultural returns.

233. It would be highly desirable that a return of the quantity so allotted should be made from each agricultural parish; and such a return would probably be attainable, with very little additional trouble, at the same time that the annual agricultural returns are collected by the officers of the Inland Revenue Department under direction of the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade.

234. The officers of the Inland Revenue Department now issue forms to every occupier of land for obtaining the acreage under agricultural crops.

235. One more form would enable them to collect the information required; and the total for each county would find an appropriate place in Table No. 5 of the returns as given for 1867, under a heading of "Acreage in Cottage Gardens and Field Allotments."

236. A statement of the total acreage in each county occupied by cottage gardens and in field allotments would enable any person to see, by reference to the column in Table No. 3 of the agricultural returns, giving the total area in statute acres under farm cultivation in each county, whether or not the proportion occupied by cottage gardens and field allotments was satisfactory, regard being had to the total number of heads of families engaged in agriculture in the county (which is approximately ascertainable from the census), and to the proper average size for a cottage garden and field allotment.

237. Such a comparison in some counties, as in Nottinghamshire (C. 32), Yorkshire (D. 115), Nottinghamshire (E. 60), and Bedfordshire (F. 80), would be eminently satisfactory; while on the other hand it would call attention to deficiencies elsewhere, and produce a desire to remedy them.

A return as to cottage gardens and allotments made in 1831

238. A return of this kind was in fact obtained in the year 1831 from every parish in the county of Cambridge, "pursuant to an order made at the adjourned quarter sessions "for that county, held 10th December 1830." The return is given *in extenso* at pp. 316–333 of the evidence taken before the Select Committee of the House of Lords on

* It is not the labourers in agriculture alone who are interested in this question. The working men in towns have shown the greatest desire to avail themselves of similar allotments whenever they have had the opportunity. Land near Nottingham has been let in this manner for the last fifty years (§ 1747). There were in 1843 "about 400 gardens held under the Corporation of Nottingham" (§ 1746). The Northern and Midland Counties Artisans' and Labourers' Friend Society "had at that date caused 853 acres to be let in "allotments in the neighbourhood of large towns." Societies were formed, each member of which "put by "a penny a week to form a fund to meet the outlay upon first entering upon land" (§§ 1613–16). A large portion of the evidence in the inquiry of 1843 is devoted to pointing out the benefit derived by the artisans, in regard to health, comfort, and rational enjoyment, as well as in additions to their pecuniary means, from the possession of small plots of garden ground on the outskirts of towns; and urging that provision should be made for the allotment of land for such purposes in any future Inclosure Bills.

the Poor Laws in 1830–31. The answers from each parish are generally somewhat vague, but they show on the whole that, while perhaps the majority of the parishes were "well" or "tolerably well" provided with gardens or allotments of a fair size, the agricultural labourers in many parishes at that time had either no gardens or allotments, or very small ones.

by order of quarter sessions for the county of Cambridge.

239. The late Sir George Nicholls, in an admirable prize essay on the condition of the agricultural labourer, published in volume vii. of the Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society (1846), in expressing a strong opinion in favour of good-sized gardens or allotments, as one of the essentials towards the improvement of the labourer's condition, quotes the following sentence from the "Farmer," which he describes as a work published by Mr. Charles Knight in 1844, expressly for the use of the agricultural classes: "The "possession of a quarter of an acre of garden ground may make and often will make to "the labourer and his family all the difference between want and sufficiency, between "privation and comfort." Sir George then proceeds to ask "Why this boon to the "labourer has not become general? Why are not cottage gardens of a proper size, and "in default of them, allotments as near the cottages as possible, universal?" He answers, "In consequence of the difficulty of so fixing the attention and working upon "the convictions of the landowners and the employers of labour as to arouse them to "exertion with sufficient earnestness for overcoming local impediments." He then adds the words following: "That it is expedient, if not absolutely necessary, that some effort "for accomplishing this object should be promptly made, every one who attends to the "temper and circumstances of the times will admit" (p. 21 of Prize Essay). We beg leave to submit that such a return as we have ventured to suggest in § 110 would be calculated to fix that earnest attention to this subject which it so eminently deserves.

Opinions in Prize Essay of Royal Agricultural Society as to why allotments not general.

240. It must be borne in mind that there is all the greater reason for encouraging this system in consequence of the gravity of a subject which is adverted to by many persons whose opinions are quoted in this Report, (§§ 174, 209, 260, 262, 270, 301, 302, 305, 312, 313–316), namely, the gradual alienation of the class of labourers in agriculture from the soil, which has been going on for the last century and a half, but chiefly during the last hundred years (§ 263).

Greater reason for encouraging the allotment system; alienation of labourers from the soil during the last 100 years.

241. This is a subject which cannot be overlooked or treated otherwise than with the deepest sense of its importance, in any inquiry having for its object the material, as intimately connected with and essential to the intellectual and moral benefit of the agricultural labourer.

242. To the full and clear comprehension of this subject a brief historical retrospect is necessary.

243. The report from a Select Committee of the House of Commons on waste lands in the year 1795 comprises, in its Appendix (p. 203), an address by Sir John Sinclair, Bart., President of the Board of Agriculture, to the members of that Board, in which address Sir John Sinclair, with the view of illustrating the rights of cottage tenants to portions of the waste in cases of inclosure, and the condition of the small tenantry and of the labourers in husbandry in former days, shows that the condition of the agricultural labourer relatively to the other classes of the community, cannot be fully understood without reverting to the mode in which land was held and occupied in feudal times, which he thus describes.

Select Committee on waste lands, 1795.

Rights of cottage tenants to portions of the waste.

244. It was held, as is well known, in large masses, by grants from the Crown; and as the importance of the feudal landholder depended upon the number of his tenantry capable of bearing arms, it was his interest to divide as much of his land as he could find tenants to cultivate, into a number of small farms, and to grant certain rights of common over large portions of the rest, in order to enable each family to be supported in comfort.

245. By the middle of the 14th century not only a large body of small tenants but also of free labourers had grown up in England. The mass of the English labouring people had passed from the condition of serfs to that of freemen. The great plague of 1348, which is said to have carried off half the people, very much improved the condition of the labouring class. The recital of the first "Statute of Labourers" (23 Edw. 3. c. 1., A.D. 1349) states that a great part of the people, "and especially of workmen and "servants, had late died of the pestilence." Accordingly the wages of "carters, plough-"men, drivers of the plough, shepherds, cowherds, reapers, mowers, threshers, and other "labourers in husbandry" rose "to the double or treble of what they were wont "to take."

High wages and common rights of labourers in the middle of 14th century.

246. At the same time they were in the enjoyment of rights of pasture, and rights to cut turf or wood for fuel, over the lords' wastes. Professor James E. Thorold Rogers in

his history of agricultural prices in England from the year 1259 to 1793 (Oxford 1866), a work "founded on facts collected from the muniment rooms of colleges and cathedrals " and from the Public Record Office," states,—

"In the 14th century the land was greatly subdivided, and most of the inhabitants of villages or manors held plots of land, which were sufficient in many cases for maintenance, and in nearly all cases for independence in treating with their employers. Most of the regular farm servants, the carter, the ploughman, the shepherd, the cowherd, and hogkeeper were owners of land, and there is a high degree of probability that the occasional labourer was also among the occupiers of the manor (287–8).

"The mediæval peasant had his cottage and curtilage at a very low rent, and in secure possession, even when, unlike the general mass of his fellows, he was not possessed of land in his own right held at a labour or a money rent, and he had rights of pasturage over the common lands of the manor for the sheep, pigs, or perhaps cow which he owned."—(P. 290.)

Prosperous condition of labourers up to close of 15th century.

247. This state of things placed the labourer in husbandry, in the latter half of the 14th century, in a condition described as "one of rude abundance." A hundred years after this the Act 23 Hen. 6. c. 12. (A.D. 1444), proves the increased value of the servant to his master, by enacting that "a servant in husbandry purposing to depart from his " master must give him half a year's warning," and that "a carter and a chief shepherd " shall have for his services no more than 20*s.* in money, and vesture to the value of 4*s.*, " with meat and drink; a common servant in husbandry 15*s.* in money, and vesture to " the value of 40*d.*; a woman 10*s.* and vesture to the price of 4*s.*, with meat and " drink; and an infant below the age of 13 years, 6*s.* and vesture to the value of 3*s.*, " with meat and drink." As it appears by an Act passed eight years previously (15 Hen. 6. c. 2., A.D. 1436) that wheat was then "at 6*s.* 8*d.* the quarter," twenty shillings in money at that time would purchase the value of three quarters of wheat at the present day. It is evident, therefore, that these money payments, in addition to his food and clothing, placed the labourer at that time in a situation of ease and comfort. "To the peasantry it was a period," says Professor Rogers, "of comparative opulence" (p. 676).

248. But towards the close of the 15th century both small tenants and labourers were great sufferers in the course of the gradual changes effected by the civil wars, and by the contemporaneous rise of manufacturing industry, which severely affected some parts of the country. The course of legislation during the following century affords clear evidence on this point.

Civil wars and rise of manufacturing industry for a time injuriously affected his condition.

249. The breaking up of the feudal system consequent on the Wars of the Roses put an end to the motives which had led to the encouragement of a numerous race of small tenantry; and at the same time the increase of the woollen manufacture, by raising the price of wool and making the rearing of sheep more profitable in some counties than the production of corn, caused extensive tracts, that had been in tillage as common fields, to be converted into pasture, and enclosed in order to keep the sheep and cattle from straying. At the same time, as much less labour was required for these pasture lands, an extensive pulling down of cottages and of almost entire villages took place, causing a great amount of depopulation and consequent distress. Petitions to Parliament and the Statutes at large during the course of two centuries testify to the amount of suffering with which this step in the course of social progress was in many places attended, and to the frequent and earnest endeavours by the legislature to apply a remedy. A petition was presented to Parliament in the year 1450, stating that 65 "towns (villages) " and hamlets" within 12 miles of the town of Warwick had been destroyed. An Act of the year 1487 (4 Hen. 7. c. 16.), recites that the Isle of Wight "is lately decayed " of people by reason that many towns and villages have been beaten down, and the " fields ditched and made pastures for beasts and cattle, and also many dwelling places, " ferms, and fermholds have of late time been used to be taken in one man's hold and " hands that of old time were wont to be in several persons' holds and hands, and many " several households kept in them, and thereby much people multiplied, and the same " isle thereby well inhabited, the which now, by the occasion aforesaid, is desolate, and " not inhabited, but occupied with beasts and cattle, so that if hasty remedy be not " provided, that isle cannot be kept and defended, but will be open and ready to the " hands of the King's enemies, which God forbid."

Efforts to improve his condition during 16th century.

250. To counteract the effect of these changes remedies were attempted by this and many subsequent Acts during the succeeding century and a half, which, although entirely at variance with the principles of sound legislation, were nevertheless dictated by the desire to benefit the labouring population according to the best knowledge of the day. The remedy attempted by the Act above quoted was that no one should take more than one farm, and that its value should not exceed 10 marks yearly A general Act passed in

the same year (1487, the Act of 4 Hen. 7. c. xix.), aiming at the same object, by imposing a penalty for not keeping up "houses of husbandry," and for not laying convenient land for the maintenance of the same. This was the Act eulogized by Lord Bacon, who said, in accordance with the ideas then prevalent, that "its wisdom was "admirable," and that it "did wonderfully concern the might and mannerhood of the "kingdom." (Life of King Henry VII., vol. 3 of edit. of 1825, p. 235). In the year 1533 an Act was passed even more at variance with the maxims of political economy, which, after attributing the sufferings of the "poor husbandman" to the accumulation "of great portions of the land of the realm" in few hands, "by reason of the great "profit which cometh of sheep," attempts to limit the number of sheep that should be kept by any one "at one time." Acts also, similar to that of 1487, by which it was sought to enforce the maintenance of "houses of husbandry," were passed in 1535, 1552, 1562, 1593, and 1597 (39 Eliz. c. 2).

251. Two other statutes also are noticeable which aimed at the same object. The Act 3 & 4 Edw. 6. c. 3. (A.D. 1549), after reciting the statute 20 Hen. 3. c. 4. (A.D. 1235). to the effect that "the freeholders of small tenements should have as much pasture upon "the lord's waste as did suffice unto their tenements," (a statute that is said in § 3 to have been "thought beneficial for the commonwealth of this realm of England,") and after reciting that "in divers counties in this realm there hath been builded upon com-"mons or waste grounds, certain necessary houses with ground under the quantity of "three acres," * * "enclosed to and with the same, and that in some places there is enclosed "a garden, orchard, or pond out of or in such wastes or grounds which exceed not the "quantity of two acres or thereabouts, which doth no hurt, and yet is much commodity "to the owner thereof and to the others," secures such portion of land to the occupant of such house or ground, free from any disturbance by the owner of the waste. The Act 31 Eliz. c. 7. (A.D. 1589) aims also at attaching land to agricultural cottages where such cottages were necessary. It requires by § 1, that no person shall "build, "convert, or ordain any cottage for habitation or dwelling for persons engaged in "husbandry," unless the owner "do assign or lay to the same cottage or building four "acres of ground at the least." The object was to restrain the excessive building of cottages, unless there was a certainty that the occupiers would always be able to have the means of maintaining themselves in default of employment for wages (Select Committee of the House of Commons on Emigration, A.D. 1826, § 1416). It appears not to have been fully acted upon; but as the sixth section of the same Act provides, (with a view to sanitary purposes, and especially to the prevention of fevers, see note to the Act,) "that there shall not be any inmate, or more families or households than one, dwelling or "inhabiting in any one cottage, made or to be made or erected, upon pain of forfeiting "to the lord of the leet the sum of 10*s*. for every month that any such inmate or other "family than one shall dwell or inhabit in any one cottage," it must be presumed that, with the increase of the agricultural population, the number of cottages must have increased to some extent, and the specified quantity of land have been attached to many of them. That it was not inoperative is proved by the notice of it in 1648 (*infra*, § 254), and by the reason given for its repeal in 1775 (§ 258).

252. Contemporaneously with the Acts above referred to efforts were made in accordance with the opinions of the time to improve the condition of labourers in husbandry. The Act of 5th Eliz. c. 4. (A.D. 1562) was passed, regulating their wages anew, in order to raise their "wages and allowances, which in divers places had become too small and "not answerable to the advancement of prices of things belonging to the said servants "and labourers." Although at variance with the more enlarged experience of the present day in regard to the fixing the rate of wages by general regulation, that Act was in its intention benevolent towards the labourers, both in that and in other particulars. It fixed the hours of work for "labourers hired for wages by the day or week," and secured them "two hours and a half in a day" for meals and rest (§ 12), and by § 14 empowered the justices of the peace and other persons having regard "to the plenty or scarcity of "the time and other circumstances," * * "to rate and appoint the wages by the year, or "by the day, week, month, or otherwise, with meat and drink or without meat and drink, "and what wages every workman or labourer shall take by the great for mowing, "reaping, threshing," and all other occupations in husbandry. And indeed the whole spirit of the legislation of the four successive centuries above referred to was, as described by Mr. Froude (History of England, vol. 1, pp. 28–87,) one of "equity;" in which an effort was made, although in a manner often at variance with the principles of political economy, to protect employers against labourers and labourers against employers, and "to maintain the physical well-being of all classes at the highest possible degree."

253. All these Acts, together with the continued existence of the ancient rights of common, are referred to by competent authorities as having greatly contributed, before the end of the 16th century, to replace the small tenantry, and also the labourers for the most part, in a condition of comfort not much inferior to what it had been at the latter end of the 14th century. The increase of security and the increase of industry had caused a considerable increase of wealth and population. The "new occupations" that had arisen from the inclosures, namely, "setting of quickset, ditching, hedging, "plashing," had benefited the labourers, who "enhanced their wages, as well as the "farmers their corn and cattle;" "the counties where most inclosures be" were become the most wealthy, as Essex, Kent, Northamptonshire, &c.; and the general effect upon the condition of the labourers and small tenants in husbandry, as described by contemporary authorities towards the latter end of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th centuries was, that they had "grown to be more powerful, skilful, and careful, through "recompense of gain, than heretofore they had been," and had obtained proportionately a greater command over the necessaries and luxuries of life. (Hollingshed's Chronicles, ed. of 1586, p. 166. Knight's History of England; the chapters on the condition of the people). Also the class of independent yeomanry became numerous and powerful. (Macaulay's History of England, vol. 1, p. 335).

Prosperity of labourers in agriculture towards end of 16th century checked by the civil war of the 17th.

254. The civil war of the 17th century checked the prosperity of the labouring class. But in one particular in which the means of comfortable existence of the class of labourers in agriculture had been aimed at, it is remarkable that even the civil war did not prevent attention being paid to it. The duty of observing the Act of Elizabeth requiring four acres of land to be allotted to every agricultural cottage was enforced upon the grand jury of the county of York in a charge delivered to them on the 20th March 1648. The officiating judge (Sergeant Thorpe), addressing the grand jury, called upon them to inquire, among other things, "touching common nuisances and offences "done against the general easement of the people."

Act relating to cottages enforced during the civil war.

"If they erect a cottage and do not lay four acres of ground to it, to be occupied "with it."

"If they continue such unlawful cottages."

"If they keep an inmate or under-sitter in any cottage." (Harleian Miscellanies, vol. ii. p. 1, 4to. 1774.)

255. And it is further observable that this Act was not repealed until the year 1775 (by the Act 15 Geo. 3. s. 32.), and then only on the ground that it was operating "inconveniently to the labouring part of the nation" by restricting the number of cottages. It will be seen, however, in subsequent paragraphs (§§ 322, 323) that its repeal did not have the effect of producing any adequate increase of cottage accommodation.

Prosperous condition of labourers in agriculture during the first half of 18th century.

256. Of the condition of the agricultural labourer from the beginning to the middle of the 18th century Professor Rogers remarks that it was "a golden age" to the labourer (p. 10).

257. In the volume for 1831 of the Magazine of the Labourers' Friend Society, p. 40, is the following statement, "founded on evidence taken from parish account books, and "the testimony of old and trustworthy labourers."

"Previously to the American war, which commenced in 1775, the agricultural labourer was in a most prosperous condition. His wages gave him a greater command over the necessaries of life; his rent was lower, his wearing apparel was cheaper, his shoes cheaper, his living cheaper than formerly; and he had on the common and wastes liberty of cutting furze for fuel, with the chance of getting a little land and in time a small farm."

Change for the worse became visible in 1775.

258. The year 1775 is noticed as the period from which a marked change for the worse in the condition of the agricultural labourer began to be visible. The change was attributed to the inadequate wages compared with the cost of the necessaries of life, the prices of which were raised by taxation, to the consolidation of small farms, to the loss of privileges by inclosures of common, and also to the loss of small portions of land which had contributed to the labourer's resources, and which his necessities compelled him to sell.

Effect of inclosures of waste lands and the consolidation of small farms.

259. About the commencement of the reign of George 3. it began to be remarked that the progress of improvement in the system of husbandry and the bringing in of waste lands, although unquestionably beneficial in many respects in a public point of view, was producing the same effect upon the small tenants and the labourers as the inclosures of the 16th century. In the year 1764, in a comment on the Act of 4 Hen. 7., the effects of displacing small tenants "of moderate circumstances," and throwing their farms into one, was noticed, and it was "submitted to public consideration"

whether some provision was not requisite at that time, similar to that adopted by the statute of Hen. 7. (Statutes at Large, vol. ix. p. vii.) The remedy proposed,—that of "preventing the engrossing of large farms into one hand,"—would, indeed, had it been adopted, have been, in the words of Lord Bacon, "to forbid the improvement of the "patrimony of the kingdom," and "to strive with nature and utility." But as it is conceded that "the patrimony of the kingdom" has been greatly improved, the "utility" and advantage of many large classes greatly promoted, and the public wealth vastly increased by the modern system of husbandry, and the consequent enlargement of farms, and also by the immense additions made of late years to the cultivated area of the country by the inclosure of waste lands, it is of urgent concern not to overlook the effect of those changes upon the labourers in husbandry.

Displacement of small tenants and labourers from occupation of or interest in the land.

260. In a pamphlet entitled "The Case of the Labourers in Husbandry," by the Rev. D. Davies, Rector of Barkham, Berks, published in 1795, it is stated that,—

"Cottages have been progressively deprived of the little land formerly let with them, and also their rights of commonage have been swallowed up in large farms, by inclosures. Thus an amazing number of people have been reduced from a comfortable state of partial independence to a precarious state as mere hirelings, who when out of work come immediately upon the parish." (Volume of the Labourers' Friend Magazine for 1835, p. 12.)

261. These causes of the distressed condition of the agricultural labourer during the great continental war, together with the injurious effects produced on him by the maladministration of the old Poor Law, are strongly commented upon by Professor Rogers in pp. 10 and 693–4 of his work above referred to (§ 246).

262. The society "For bettering the Condition and Improving the Comforts of the "Poor," set on foot in the year 1796 by Sir Thomas Bernard and Mr. Wilberforce, had for one of its main objects the restoring the cottager to the land, with which, as has been seen (§§ 243–259,) he had,—except during an interval, and then in some parts of the kingdom only,—been for many generations so much connected. They state that their desire is to give the cottager "the opportunity of acquiring property, and the means and "habits of improving it" (Baker's Life of Sir Thomas Bernard, pp. 162–3, London, 1819). This they describe as "their first duty and their nearest interest," inasmuch as by so doing they would "sweeten and encourage the labourer's toil, and attach him to his "condition and situation."—(*Ibid.*) The same question also, at that period, and on several occasions since, has attracted the attention of the Legislature, as will be seen in subsequent paragraphs (§§ 274–281).

The object of the society set on foot in 1796 was to restore the cottager to the land.

263. The manner in which the waste lands of the country have been dealt with since the first Inclosure Act in the reign of Queen Anne (A.D. 1710), is a subject which requires the fullest exposition in so far as it bears upon the means still available for improving the condition of the agricultural labourer, and therefore for enabling him to dispense with the labour of his children for a certain portion of their time, with a view to their acquiring a sufficient amount of education.

The manner in which the waste lands of the country have dealt with since the first Inclosure Act in 1710.

264. According to the estimate made by the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Emigration in 1827, and the calculations of Mr. Porter in 1843 (Progress of the Nation, title Agriculture), 7,175,520 statute acres had been inclosed in England and Wales since the first Inclosure Bill in the year 1710 up to the year 1843. To these, since 1843, have been added 484,893 acres, as appears by the annual report of the Inclosure Commissioners for 1867; making together 7,660,413 statute acres added to the cultivated area of England and Wales since 1710, or above one-third part of the total of 25,451,626 acres in cultivation in 1867, as given in the agricultural returns for that year recently presented to Parliament. Of the total of 7,660,413 acres inclosed since 1710, only 334,974 were inclosed between 1710 and 1760, leaving 7,325,439 acres inclosed between 1760 and 1867. Some particulars regarding this large amount of inclosure will be referred to in a future page; but the bare statement of the total is sufficient to call attention to the fact of the vast extent of land which has within the last century and a half been placed in a condition which for the most part removes it out of the reach of the agricultural labourer, and prevents his acquiring any benefit from it except that which he may derive from employment at day wages.

265. Now it is made abundantly manifest by the evidence appended to this report, as indeed it has been long since by evidence on former occasions presented to Parliament, and otherwise brought before the public, that, beneficial as the extensive inclosure of waste lands, and the system of large farms, have generally been in providing better remunerated and more employment for the labourers in agriculture (while the public interests have been thereby, and at the same time, greatly promoted), other circumstances have arisen in conjunction with those great changes which have been pointed to as in

Effect of this large amount of inclosure upon the condition of the agricultural labourer.

some places greatly diminishing, in others entirely putting an end to advantages which the agricultural labourer formerly possessed.

First, the inclosing of waste lands has often, and in various ways, prejudicially affected the condition of the cottager.

Secondly, the absorption of the small farms in larger ones has, in proportion as it has advanced, lessened his opportunities, and tended to deprive him of the hope, of rising out of the condition of a day labourer into one of comparative independence.

266. In very many, probably the great majority of cases, the inclosure has deprived the cottager of the benefits he had enjoyed from the waste, without any compensation. The cases are those in which the cottager was merely a tenant. Compensation for the privileges attached to the tenement would, at the time of the inclosure, be awarded to the landlord. The plot of land so assigned to the landlord might be immediately thrown by him into an adjoining farm or otherwise disposed of without reference to the tenant of the cottage. It will be seen in future paragraphs (§§ 312–316), that such losses of what had been valuable privileges to the cottager have been of frequent occurrence.

267. Again, if the cottager was the holder of a freehold cottage, and as such had enjoyed rights over the waste, or if he had obtained rights by user, which after an enjoyment of twenty years are recognized by the General Inclosure Act (8 & 9 Vict. c. 118. § 50), a portion of land would indeed, on his proving the value of such rights, be assigned to him at the time of the inclosure; but he is immediately subject to the temptation to sell his portion to the owner of the farm which it may adjoin, and the temporary benefit of the proceeds is a small compensation for the permanent privileges which will have been extinguished (§ 313).

268. Further the inclosure of wastes puts it out of the power of all future generations of agricultural labourers to acquire, as their forefathers did, new rights and privileges over the waste by grant or user; a loss of advantage which is not fully compensated for by the increased employment which the inclosures create.

269. With regard to the disappearance of the small farms, adverted to in § 265, it has been well remarked that while they existed the labouring man might look onward to one as the reward of his industry and good character; it was to him "the attainable point of "hope," (Quarterly Review, April 1816). Since their extinction over many wide districts of the country, and the great reduction of their number everywhere, an accessible step in the social scale has been taken from him, and "a wide gap has been created which no exer-"tion on his part can surmount." The possibility of rising into a better condition kept "him buoyant" (§ 174), and gave him motives for self-denial. An illustration of this may be seen in the evidence at pp. 158–160 of the Appendix to this Report. The loss of that hope is admitted to have acted in very many instances with most prejudicial effect upon his moral character not less than upon his physical condition.

270. The remarks of Sir George Nicholls on the altered condition of the agricultural labourer, in his Prize Essay above adverted to (§ 239), are as follows: "The "frequent consolidation of small farms into farms of a larger extent, doubtless to the "general benefit, by the increase of produce it has given rise to, has occurred without a "corresponding improvement in the condition of the agricultural labourer. Indeed, "upon him it has had a contrary effect, for the application of more capital and skill to "the purposes of cultivation, and the consequent increase in the size of farms, have "tended to increase the distance between the farmer and the farm labourer, elevating "the one, and relatively depressing the other" (p. 4). It has "increased the difficulty "to the labourer of emerging from his position, and rising into a higher grade." "How-"ever industrious and provident, he can hardly hope to raise himself by his own efforts "to the condition of a small tenant farmer," * * "and is practically restricted from "rising above the condition of a day labourer;" * * "his position, though not "actually, is relatively worse." * * "Hence the duty to impart to him all the "improvement of which his condition is susceptible; to strive to increase his comforts; "and to endeavour by every means in our power (in accordance with sound principle "and without weakening his reliance on his own exertions) to make him happy and "contented in his position" (*ibid.*).

Opportunities and means of bettering his condition lost, and in very many cases his

271. The better remunerated and more constant employment which the system of large farms and the inclosure of waste lands usually produces, has not, except in the most favourable cases, compensated the agricultural labourer for what he has lost, as above mentioned. But high wages and more constant employment are not always associated with large farms. Many districts where large farms prevail are named in the evidence where the total earnings of the year are, for a certain, sometimes a large, portion of the labourers, comparatively low (A. 30, C. 8, D. 12, E. 14, F. 9, 12). Upon the whole, and

taking the country generally, there are many individual families, even in districts where wages are on an average high, and very many more elsewhere, whose earnings with difficulty enable a labourer to maintain himself and his family, especially if it is a large one, in comfort.

pecuniary resources low.

272. The general conclusion therefore that follows from this review of the condition of the agricultural labourer is, that he has lost opportunities and means of bettering his condition which belonged to his class in former times, and that his actual pecuniary resources are, in very many cases, so low that, unless in all such cases his condition can be improved, it would be unjust altogether to deprive him and his family of the power of adding to his weekly stock of earnings by such small sums as can be contributed by some portion at least of the labour of his children from the earliest age at which that labour is profitable to him, provided that the age and the duration of the work are not such as to produce physical or moral injury to the child.

He cannot therefore be deprived of the earnings of his children unless his condition is improved.

273. In preceding paragraphs (§263–7) it has been stated that the inclosure of waste lands to the extent to which it has arrived since the first Inclosure Act of 1710, namely, to the extent of 7,660,413 statute acres (§ 263), in very many cases without any compensation to the smaller commoners, has withdrawn from the agricultural labourer means which would otherwise have been open to him of adding to his resources by the exercise of ancient rights attached to his dwelling, or by the acquisition of new rights and privileges upon the waste by grant or user in connexion with new dwellings, as new dwellings increased with the increase of the agricultural population; and the withdrawal of those means and opportunities has been urged as a reason for replacing them, as far as is possible under the circumstances, by attaching gardens of a proper size to agricultural cottages, or, where that is not practicable, by supplying their place by field allotments, with a view not only to increasing the moral and physical well-being of the agricultural labourer, but of better enabling him to dispense with the earnings of his children at an age when it would be for their advantage that they should be at school (§§ 150, 195, 240).

It has been shown that one mode of improving his condition is to replace as far as possible the opportunities he has lost by good size cottage gardens or field allotments.

274. The report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on waste lands in 1795, coupled with the evidence taken before a Select Committee of the House of Commons on emigration in 1827, the report and evidence of 1843 on the allotment system already quoted, the general Inclosure Act of 1845, and the reports of the Inclosure Commissioners from 1845 to the present time, afford materials for exemplifying and enforcing the statements of the last paragraph.

Reports of Select Committees, &c. enforce that view.

275. The general advantages in a public point of view arising from the inclosure of waste lands are nowhere undervalued. In the words of the report of a Committee of the House of Lords on the dearth of provisions in 1800, "infinite benefit" results from it (Parl. Hist. § 35, p. 853); to the cottagers it secures a better market for their labour; to the capitalist a remunerative employment for his capital; to the community at large a more abundant supply of food.

276. But the report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons of 1795 above adverted to very strongly insists that in procuring for the public these general benefits by the aid of a legislative enactment, the particular interests of the labourers in agriculture having common rights were not to be overlooked. The report lays down the principle in the following words:—

"If a general Bill for the improvement of waste lands were to be passed, every possible attention to the rights of the commoners would necessarily be paid."

277. And towards carrying out that principle it states in effect that in any general Bill regulations should be made—

1. To annex gardens to the respective cottages of the commoners.
2. To enlarge their gardens where circumstances require and admit of it.
3. To allot where it is necessary a certain portion of the common for the special purpose of providing the cottagers with fuel.

The Report then adds:—

"If by such means the interests of the cottagers are properly attended to, if their rights are preserved, or an ample compensation given for them, if their situation is in every respect to be ameliorated, it is hoped that the Legislature will judge it proper and expedient to take such measures as may be best calculated to bring into culture so large a portion of its territory."

278. The general Act of 1801 (41 Geo. 3. c. 109.), as far as its provisions extended sought to give effect to these principles. Sections xiii., xiv., and xv. relate to the small allotments of persons interested in open common fields, commons, and wastes, and to the exchange of such allotments for ground more conveniently situated.

279. But as that Act fell far short of what was required in a general Inclosure Act, the Committee of the House of Commons of 1843 on the allotment system and the

inclosure of waste lands took a wider view, and had regard in their recommendations not only to the interest of the commoners then existing, having rights over the waste or common to be inclosed, but to the prospective interests of the future labourers in the locality and of the general public.

280. They state (p. vi.) that—

"It has been maintained that the increased value which the passing of a general Inclosure Act would confer on the property possessed by individuals in common lands renders it equitable for Parliament to make provision in such an Act for the benefit of the industrious poor, and of the ratepayers; more especially as the inclosure of most common lands deprives some poor persons of advantages which they would otherwise enjoy, either by sufferance, by payment, or by rights which have been extinguished."

281. They add that "under the difficulties of the case they are not prepared to suggest "a compulsory enactment to that effect."

282. But in lieu of a compulsory enactment they recommend that very wide discretionary powers should be given. They suggest that "in any general or even private "Inclosure Bill that may hereafter pass into a law, facilities for garden allotments should "be afforded."

Public allotments over and above those set out on behalf of rights of commoners recommended by Committee of 1843.

283. In explanation of their meaning in regard to such facilities, they do not say that the quantity of land to to be set apart for such garden allotments should be limited by the estimated value of any rights of common to be extinguished by the inclosure, but they recommend that "powers should be given to the majority of the parties interested "to set apart such portion of the land to be inclosed as they might think fit for the "purpose of being so let out to the poor." The land thus set out would therefore be over and above what might be set out in behalf of the rights of the commoners. It would be a portion of the inclosure to be dedicated to the use of the labouring poor generally, including those who had been in possession of common rights, and is designated by the Inclosure Commissioners, by way of distinction, as a public allotment for the purposes of cottage gardens.

284. The Committee suggests also that these public allotments should be vested in trustees, who should have power to manage them according to their discretion.

285. And as regards the persons who should compose the trust, they recommend that it should consist, among others, of the beneficed clergyman of the parish, and two persons to be selected for the purpose by the ratepayers in vestry; the body so constituted to be styled the *allotment wardens*.

That recommendation embodied in the general Inclosure Act of 1845.

286. These suggestions were carried into effect in the general Inclosure Act of 1845 (8 & 9 Vict. c. 118. §§ 31, 108), the Act now in force; but in case the Commissioners shall not have required the appropriation of a public allotment for the labouring poor, they are directed in their annual general report to "state the grounds on which they "shall have abstained from requiring such appropriation."

287. In cases where allotments are made it is directed, by § 82, that due regard is to be had "to the situation of the respective houses and homesteads of the persons interested "in the land to be inclosed," and "to the quantity and quality of the land to be allotted "to them;" and particularly "to the convenience of the persons interested in the smallest "estates" in the land to be so inclosed.

288. Power is given, by § 92, "to exchange land allotted to the labouring poor" * * "for other land in the parish, or in any adjoining parish," "which may appear more "suitable and convenient for the labouring poor."

289. Where the public allotments are made the allotment wardens are directed by § 109, to let them "in gardens not exceeding a quarter of an acre each" to such poor inhabitants of the parish, and on such terms, as they shall think fit. They are empowered to frame regulations for letting them; and they are to let the gardens at the rent that the land would be worth "to be let by the year for farming purposes, all tithes, rates, and taxes "being borne by the landlord."

290. By § 112 they are to receive the rents, which shall be applicable, first, to the payment of all rates, taxes, &c.; secondly, to the payment of all expenses incurred by them in the execution of their trust; thirdly, "the residue of any of such rents shall be "paid to the overseers of the poor, in aid of the poor-rates of the parish, and be "applicable in the same manner as, and subject to, all the provisions concerning the "monies assessed to the relief of the poor."

291. The prospective interests of all the inhabitants of the parish in which any inclosure takes place are thus had in view, not only in this latter provision, requiring that any surplus accruing from the rents of the allotments shall be paid over to the overseer of

the poor in aid of the poor-rates of the parish, but further in the provision by § 30 of the Act, which enacts that in their provisional order concerning the inclosure of any waste land of any manor, or of any land subject to rights of common, the Commissioners may require, as one of the conditions of such inclosure; "the appropriation of an allotment "for exercise and recreation for the inhabitants of the neighbourhood," to the extent of either four, five, eight, or ten acres, according to the population of the parish.

292. The reports of the Inclosure Commissioners annually laid before Parliament afford the materials for ascertaining how this Act has operated in regard to the portion of it falling within the scope of the inquiries of this Commission, namely, the public allotments for the labouring poor.

The reports of the Inclosure Commissioners show how this Act has operated.

293. It appears by the 27th report of the Commissioners (the report for 1867) that up to that date, from the year 1845, when the Act passed, 484,893 acres had been inclosed under the provisions of the Act.

294. We have endeavoured to ascertain how many of these 484,893 acres inclosed since 1845 have been assigned as public allotments for gardens to the labouring poor.

295. As no summary of the number of acres so allotted is given in the annual reports of the Commissioners we have endeavoured to ascertain the number, by careful examination, from each report since 1845.

296. The result, we believe, is approximately as follows:—

				Acres.
Acres inclosed since 1845 - - - - - - - -				484,893
Number of acres coming under s. 31. of the Act which gives power to the Commissioners, where common rights were unstinted, to require public allotments for gardens to be assigned to the labouring poor - -			Acres. 320,855	
These 320,855 acres were disposed of as follows:—				
Assigned to the lords of manors and other persons having titles to a portion of the land inclosed, and out of which public allotments for gardens were made to the labouring poor - - - - - -		Acres. 261,255		
Of those 261,255 acres, only 2,119 acres were assigned as public allotments for gardens to the labouring poor.				
Assigned to lords of manors and other claimants without any public allotments for gardens being made to the labouring poor - - - - - -		59,600		
Reasons given why, in the case of those 59,600 acres, no public allotment was made to the labouring poor:—				
Because the poor have gardens already -	Acres. 19,516			
Because the land was distant from the cottagers' dwellings, elevated, or otherwise unsuited for garden allotments -	30,103			
For other specified causes, such as inclosure very small, &c. - - -	9,981			
	59,600	320,855		
Number of acres not coming under § 31. (the common rights being stinted), and in respect of which the Commissioners have no power to require public allotments for gardens for the labouring poor - - -			164,038	
				484,893

Small number of acres assigned in public allotments since 1845.

297. The Inclosure Commissioners inform us that their Assistant Commissioners, having before them the Clauses of the Inclosure Acts, in advising as to the quantity of land that should be assigned in public allotments for gardens for the labouring poor, in each instance take into consideration various circumstances, namely, whether the people are already sufficiently provided with ground for cottage gardens; whether the common land is of such a quality and in such a climate as to be worth cultivating in garden allotments; whether it is so conveniently situated as to make it likely that any large quantity of land, if so assigned, would be used; or whether the cottagers in the neighbourhood value the opportunities they already have of obtaining gardens or allotments. In remarking therefore upon the small proportion of land assigned in public allotments or gardens to the labouring poor we do not presume, and have no intention in any way to question the discretion that has been exercised by the Inclosure Commissioners or by Parliament in regard to the manner in which the general Inclosure Act of 1845 has been carried into effect. We are also not unaware that in each case of inclosure land has

The greater reason why the owners of those inclosed lands should take care that the labouring poor should be in possession of cottage gardens or field allotments of suitable size.

been set apart representing the common rights heretofore exercised by cottagers. But as a matter bearing upon the physical condition of the labourers in agriculture, it falls within our province to remark that, as between 1710 and 1843 no less than 7,175,520 acres have been inclosed in England and Wales (§ 264), with, in the opinion of persons of great authority, very inadequate precautions to secure the rights of the smaller commoners (§§ 301, 302, 312, 313, 314); that, as since the passage of the general Inclosure Act in 1845, out of 320,855 acres inclosed, subject to the discretion of the Commissioners as to whether public allotments for gardens for the labouring poor should be assigned, only 2,119 acres have, for the reasons above given, been so assigned; and that, as the value and the sources of utility and enjoyment of that great extent of land have been much increased by its being inclosed, strong reasons exist why care should be taken that the labouring poor, working on those lands, should, wherever practicable, enjoy those benefits, physical and moral, both for themselves and their families, which accompany the possession of cottage gardens, or, in default of these, of field allotments, of the size acknowledged to be most suitable to their circumstances.

298. Where no public allotment has been made for the labouring poor, or where only a small one has been thought necessary, among the reasons assigned by the Inclosure Commissioners one is (§ 197), that by the general custom of the locality gardens are already attached to the cottages, and that there is a reasonable presumption that the custom will continue.

The annual return suggested in § 233 would afford the means of seeing whether this was done.

299. An annual return such as that suggested in § 233 would ascertain whether the custom continues, and whether the quantity of land occupied by cottage gardens, or in their default by field allotments, corresponds with or falls short of the quantity necessary to afford that desirable accommodation and resource, in ample measure, to the labourers in agriculture.

The spirit in which the general Inclosure Act was intended to be carried out.

300. The above considerations (§§ 297–9) are supported and strengthened by the opinions expressed both in Parliament while the Inclosure Bill was under discussion, and before the Select Committee on the Bill, by persons of great weight, clearly exhibiting the spirit in which the general Inclosure Act of 1845 was intended to be carried out.

301. On the 1st of May of that year the Earl of Lincoln, in moving for leave to bring in the general Inclosure Bill, stated—

"This I know, that in 19 cases out of 20 committees of this House sitting on private (Inclosure) Bills neglected the rights of the poor. I do not say that they wilfully neglected those rights—far from it; but this I affirm, that they were neglected in consequence of the committees being permitted to remain in ignorance of the claims of the poor man, because, by reason of his very poverty, he is unable to come up to London to fee counsel, to produce witnesses, and to urge his claims before a committee of this House." . . . "The examination on the spot provided by this Bill would afford a more certain security to the poor man."

302. On the introduction of the previous Bill of 1844 Mr. Aglionby said (June 5, 1844):—

"Inclosure Bills had been introduced heretofore and passed without discussion, and no one could tell how many persons had suffered in their interests and rights by the interference of those Bills. Certainly those Bills had been referred to committees upstairs, but every one knew how these committees were generally conducted. They were attended only by honourable members who were interested in them, being lords of manors; and the rights of the poor, though they might be talked about, had frequently been taken away under that system. Under this Bill a much greater control would be exercised over commons and waste lands." (Hansard, vol. 75, p. 301).

303. And on the same occasion Mr. Charles Buller, who suggested the plan adopted finally in the Act of 1845, that the recommendations of the Commissioners should be embodied annually in a general Bill, expressed his belief that "under that system there "would be full opportunity afforded to the friends of the poor of defending their "interests in Parliament."

304. In the course of the evidence given to the Select Committee of the House of Commons on "Commons Inclosure" in 1844, and in the debates that followed in the succeeding year on the general Inclosure Bill founded on the report of that Select Committee, various opinions were expressed in regard to the value of common rights to the labouring poor. The most generally received conclusion appears to have been stated by one witness (72), that "a great distinction was to be made between large and small "commons in their effect on the character of the people." Persons living "on the edges "of large commons," or of "extensive uninclosed tracts," were usually found to be irregular in their habits, and by placing "an improvident dependence" on their common rights, were often the most distressed and needy of the surrounding population (230). But the rights over the smaller commons and the commonable greensward driftways were generally recognized as valuable and unobjectionable, for feeding pigs, geese, and

other of the smaller animals. "The rights may have been small, but nevertheless "compensation should be given; the greatest consideration should be shown to the "smallest rights" (Ev. 5084, Select Committee of 1844). "I know that a vast number "of small cottagers have obtained their rights of common by grants from the lord." * * "It is a very general custom of most lords of manors with which witness is acquainted." * * "And cottagers take turf and furze although not strictly entitled to it, but no "notice is taken" (Mr. R. Bray, Land Agent, Surrey and Sussex, *ibid.* 5345). But whether those rights were large or small, the decision of Parliament, as expressed in the general Inclosure Act, has been that they should be respected, and that where extinguished an equivalent should be secured for them, not to the actual possessors only among the class of labouring poor, but as far as possible to their successors, and to the general class of agricultural labourers resident or likely to be resident on the land inclosed.

305. This is the opinion expressed by Sir Robert Peel on the second reading of that Bill, March 13, 1844:—

"As to the actual right, the House must be cautious how they dealt lightly with these rights. It might be a matter of feeling. Honourable members had their feelings, and the poorer class of the community had feelings on this subject. The right of common connected them with the soil; the right of turning a goose on a common made a man feel interested in the tenure of land. It might be more beneficial to a tenant that he should accept 2*l.* or 3*l.*, but recollect that you were not dealing with the rights of the individual, *but with that of his successors.*" (Hansard, vol. 73, p. 976.)

306. Lord Lincoln in introducing the Bill expressed himself to the same effect. "Parties now in possession of rights of common could alienate them without reference "to those who may come after them." "The Bill provided additional securities to guard "the rights of the poor;" "it provided for the maintenance of every right now existing "or compensation in place of it. It secured the poorer classes throughout the country "a more extensive and effectual protection in their rights of common lands than they "have heretofore enjoyed" (Hansard, vol. 80, p. 280). The security was that "nothing "should be done without the previous sanction of Parliament," where that sanction was required (*ibid.*, p. 29), and that the land assigned to the labouring poor as a public allotment should be vested in trustees, that it might be preserved to their successors.

307. And this was in accordance with the opinions of the two gentlemen, the first witnesses examined by the Select Committee of 1844, who at that time were leading authorities upon the subject, the Rev. Richard Jones and Mr. William Blamire, the Tithe Commissioners.

308. Being asked as to the effect of inclosures in excluding the *future cottagers* throughout England from the advantages now derived from the vicinity of commons, Mr. Richard Jones says (68) that, "carrying forward the economical views of a general measure to a "future time he would wish to *secure*" "a garden to every cottage in respect to which the "rights of common have been exercised," * * "a garden to their cottage, not so much "land as to enable them to do without labour elsewhere."

309. Again (70), "I think it very desirable for Parliament to retain power to give to "the poor (having common rights) a certain portion of land, such as they may cultivate "without interfering with their character of day labourers." Mr. R. Jones further says he would require that in the case of everyinclosure "half an acre of land should be reserved "*for every cottage in the parish that had not that quantity already affixed to it,*" subject to limitation as to the proportion of land so to be consumed, and subject to payment of rent to the persons declared by the Commissioners of Inclosure to be entitled to it.

310. Mr. Blamire stated (561)—"I am quite alive to the importance of the system (of "field gardens) as applicable to the southern districts of the country, and I am quite aware "of the great advantages resulting from it under certain restrictions and under certain "circumstances."

311. And it was said by Mr. J. S. Woolley, land agent, Midland Counties (4161)—"I "think it extremely desirable that *in all inclosures a certain portion of land should be* "*let in allotments for gardens to the labourers;* the more I see of that system the more "I am convinced of its good effect on the character and comfort of the population. It "is not a matter of pounds, shillings, and pence purely, but it gives them a greater "interest in the land." "I would not give less than a quarter of an acre" (4171).

312. Mr. Cowper thus expressed this view on the second reading of the general Inclosure Bill, March 13, 1844:—

"In former times every cottage almost had some common rights, from which the poor occupants derived much benefit; the privilege of feeding a cow, a pig, or a goose on the common was a great benefit to them, and it was unfortunate when the system of inclosing commons first commenced that a portion of the land was not set apart for the benefit of every cottager who enjoyed common rights,

and his successors; but the course adopted had been to compensate the owner of the cottage to which the common rights belonged, forgetting the claims of the occupier by whom they were enjoyed. He believed that if a portion of the inclosed lands had been allotted to every cottager enjoying common rights when the inclosure took place, the agricultural labourer would have been in a far better condition than he was at this time." (Hansard, vol. 73, p. 972.)

313. Mr. Hume stated to the same effect, in committee on the Inclosure Bill of 1844.

"By means of those Inclosure Bills small portions of land had been allotted to poor parties having rights of common, but the result had been in very many, he might say in most of those cases, to take from the poor and give additional portions to the neighbouring squire; for large numbers who had got their allotments were not able to bring them into cultivation, and they sold them to some neighbouring landowner, and thus one great object of many Inclosure Bills was defeated as regarded the poor, and made useful only to the rich." (Hansard, vol. 75, p. 298.)

314. Viscount Sandon said,—

"They had this difficulty to contend with, as had been pointed out by the honourable member for Montrose, that the portion allotted to the poor man who had a right of common would probably be soon absorbed by his rich neighbour;" "care should be taken to prevent this."

315. Mr. Aglionby pointed out that the waste lands "were originally granted to lords "of the manor, not for their own benefit, but for the benefit of those who held lands "within the manor."

316. A witness before the Committee of 1844 (584) "considers it a matter of great "regret in the case of an occupying tenant having the privilege of putting stock upon a "common and having the whole use and enjoyment of the common right, that after "inclosure his landlord would have the power of dispossessing him; and it constantly "happens that landlords do take from the cottages the allotments that have been so set "out, and either build upon them or get several of them laid together and convert them "into a little field."

The opinions thus expressed upon the subject, both in and out of Parliament, strengthen the suggestion of § 233.

317. It appears to us that these opinions relative to the frequency with which it happens that land given to cottagers as compensation for common rights passes away from the class to which it had been assigned, give further strength to the suggestion which we ventured to make in a former paragraph (233) as to its being desirable to procure a return of the quantity of land occupied in cottage gardens and field allotments.

318. Such a return also would afford the means of ascertaining whether the 108th and 109th clauses of the general Inclosure Act (vesting in trustees the land assigned as public allotments to the poor) had been properly carried into effect. At present nothing is known upon that subject. Parliament has provided the machinery for securing the land in question permanently to the poor, but whether they are in the enjoyment of it the public is in ignorance. Prospectively also the question is one of great interest to the labourers in agriculture, inasmuch as the waste land still capable of improvement in England and Wales was held in 1827, according to evidence laid in that year before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Emigration (p. 358), to be 4,000,000 acres. By the same authority the wastes incapable of cultivation were estimated at 4,361,400. The total corresponds with the estimates of "from 8,000,000 to 10,000,000 of waste land "in England and Wales, including all wild mountain land," given by the Tithe Commissioners, Mr. Jones and Mr. Blamire, in their evidence on Commons' Inclosure, 1844. Since that date the more general introduction of artificial manures has rendered a much greater amount of wild land susceptible of cultivation.

The second great question in relation to the moral improvement of the agricultural labourer is the state of his dwelling.

319. There is also another great question which must be fully borne in mind, and satisfactorily dealt with before the moral good that may be expected from the school attendance of the children can be realized, namely, the state of the agricultural labourer's dwelling.

Immense sums expended within the last 30 years in improving labourers' dwellings.

320. The evidence received by our Assistant Commissioners in every county hitherto visited by them proves that many landowners, both large and small, have, especially within the last 30 years, expended in the aggregate immense sums of money in improving and enlarging old and providing new cottages on their estates.

A large proportion of the labourers in agriculture still badly housed.

321. Nevertheless it is lamentably evident that, although much has been done towards remedying the omissions and the errors of past generations in that respect, a large proportion of the agricultural labourers throughout the country are still under the disadvantage of being housed in dwellings in which they cannot fail to be subjected to great and serious discomfort, and in which the decencies of life are often impossible. Their dwellings are also in numerous cases so far from their work as to cause them much inconvenience and much profitless expenditure of strength, both to themselves and their wives and children, in going to and returning from their field labour.

322. In a preceding paragraph (§ 255) we adverted to the repeal, in the year 1775, of the Act of 31 Eliz. c. 7., which required four acres of land to be attached to each agricultural cottage; the ground of the repeal being that it "operated inconveniently to "the labouring part of the nation" by restricting the number of cottages. About 20 years afterwards Sir Frederick Eden, adverting to the repeal of that statute of Elizabeth, says (p. 361 of the edition of 1797 of his work on the State of the Poor): "There "does not seem to be much danger at present of cottages becoming too numerous. I "know several parishes in which the greatest difficulty the poor labour under is the "impossibility of procuring habitations." And in the preceding year Mr. Whitbread, in a debate on a Bill to regulate the wages of labourers in husbandry, said, on the existing state of agricultural cottages (Parl. Hist., Feb. 12, 1796): "There is just one "circumstance to which I shall advert before I conclude, namely, the wretched manner "in which the poor are lodged. It is such as ought not to be suffered in a country like "this, fond of its freedom, and boasting of the equal rights of all its subjects." * * "Landlord and farmer equally neglect the cottages; consequently, dismantled and "mouldering to decay, they afford neither warmth nor shelter to the poor inhabitant, "who is left exposed to the fury of the elements and the inclemency of every "season."

Bad state of labourers' cottages noticed at the latter end of last century.

323. In the year 1800 the Board of Agriculture offered the prize of a gold medal "to "the person who shall build on his estate the most cottages for the labourers' families" (*see* also *suprà*, § 162), and the prize of a silver medal "to the person who shall "from authentic sources and actual enumeration report to the Board the most satisfac-"tory account of the houses * * of any one hundred," with a view to drawing attention to the need of efforts for the sufficient supply of good cottages.

Prizes offered by the Board of Agriculture in 1800 for improvement of cottages.

324. In the evidence given before Select Committees of the House of Commons on emigration in 1826 and 1827, strong comments are made upon an illegal mode of stimulating the building of cottages by the payment of the whole or a portion of the rents out of the rates, a practice that "had been gaining head in many parts of the country." Witnesses (1184–5 and 1961–3) state that "a great abuse prevails in many parts of "the country of cottage rents being paid out of the poor rate." Cottages were built on that understanding, and parishes paid the rent of 5*l.* and frequently more; so that the occupiers of the land derived a great benefit from it. One person justifies himself by saying, "My neighbour has a high rent and I must have the same." "I do not think "that a parish pauper lives in a cottage at a less price than 5*l.* a year rent generally" (1861).

Abuse arose of paying cottage rents out of poor rates, and existed up to 1834.

325. In the report of 1827 on the same subject a witness is asked if it would not be "extremely convenient to pass a declaratory law stating the payment of the rent of "cottages out of the poor rate to be illegal" (4136).

326. Although this illegal mode of stimulating the building of cottages may have been to a certain extent successful in adding to their number, contemporary accounts show that cottages built with this aid were often of a very inferior description (evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons on the Poor Laws, 1830–1, p. 19). The practice and its results are adverted to as still existing, and are strongly condemned in the First Report from the Poor Law Commissioners, February 1834, p. 9, Appendix, p. 380A.

327. Legitimate and very earnest efforts to encourage the supply of good cottages have been made for several years past by the principal agricultural societies, and by other societies, both in the country and in London. The first prize essay on cottages for the agricultural labourers in the Journal of the Agricultural Society was published in vol. 4 of that journal, in 1843. It was followed by a paper on the same snbject by Mr. John Grey, of Dilston, in vol. 5, 1845; by a valuable prize essay in vol. 7, in 1846, on the condition of the agricultural labourer by Sir George Nicholls, in which the question of cottage accommodation is very prominent; by a prize essay in vol. 10, 1849; by a description in vol. 15, in 1854, of the improvements in cottages made by a large number of landowners in Dorsetshire; by a prize essay in 1856 in volume 17; by a description of Lord Palmerston's arrangements in regard to his cottages in volume 22, in 1861; and by an account in 1863, vol. 24, of Mr. John Taylor's mode of building cottages with his "patent faced concrete walls." In the West of England, in Scotland, in Northumberland, in Suffolk, and in many other parts of the country great attention has been given to the same subject, and in London the Society for improving the Condition of the Labouring Classes, and the Central Cottage Improvement Society, have made great exertions to procure and publish satisfactory plans for agricultural cottages that can be executed at a moderate cost.

Great efforts made since 1834 to supply good cottages.

The obstacle to more rapid progress has been its great expense.

328. Although, as is manifest from the preceding paragraphs, it has long been recognized as a duty by those whom it more immediately concerns, and also as a matter of pressing national importance, to provide proper dwellings for the labourers in agriculture, the obstacle to a more rapid progress in the work has been its great expense.

329. In exceptional cases, as appears from some instances given in the prize essays above referred to, and in our evidence, cottages satisfying the requirements of health, decency, and comfort have been constructed for 100*l.* or even less, where a judicious use has been made of local materials, or where the ordinary materials, and labour, are unusually cheap; but in general the cost has ranged from 105*l.* to 120*l.*, 130*l.*, and 140*l.* The price of good bricks, and the facilities for obtaining lime, timber, and building sand, greatly influence the cost in different localities.

330. In volume 10 of the Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society (1849) Mr. Pusey remarked (note to p. 411), that a builder had engaged to build him a pair of cottages for 160*l.*, "but the labour" was to be provided for him, "and also rough timber." In volume 24 of the journal (1863) Mr. Bailey Denton observed (p. 564), "that he did not "see how cottages were to be built for less than 120*l.* each, supposing they were to be "built in pairs with three bed rooms, that sanitary requirements were respected, and "that the requirements of the Inclosure Commissioners for cottages built on entailed "estates (to secure substantiality), were also fulfilled." It is this view which constitutes the objection to the use of the less durable though cheaper materials sometimes resorted to. Returns obligingly furnished to us by the Inclosure Commissioners show that in the four years 1863–4–5–6, the sum of 73,044*l.* 3*s.* 8*d.* was sanctioned by them to be expended in the building of 509 agricultural cottages, and that thus the average cost was 143*l.* for each.

331. It is superfluous to add that the amount of rent usually within the means of an agricultural labourer is insufficient to pay more than a very small and inadequate percentage on these outlays. It is estimated that the proportion of rent that a cottager can afford to pay is one-seventh of his income; that consequently with 9*s.* a week he might pay a rent of 1*s.* 6*d.*, with 14*s.* a week 2*s.*, and that the highest rent the ordinary agricultural labourer can afford to pay is 2*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 9*d.*, the mean being 2*s.* a week. As 6*l.* per cent. is required as a fair return on cottage building, 7*l.* 10*s.* would be the proper rent upon an outlay of 125*l.*; but 2*s.* a week gives only 5*l.* 4*s.* (Journal of the Agricultural Society, vol. 24 (1863), p. 562). It is evident therefore, as is stated in the prize essay for 1856 above referred to (p. 495), that "although many benevolent persons have erected cottages "and let them at sums that scarcely pay 2½ per cent. upon the outlay, yet, as a general "rule, we may be sure that there will be no lasting improvement in the dwellings of the "agricultural labourers unless they yield a remunerative interest." Doubtless moral as well as business considerations may suggest that a full commercial return for the money expended on good cottages is obtained, not so much by a direct money payment as from many indirect but obvious sources. But such incidental advantages are not appreciable by all persons, and consequently it is essential to any rapid progress in cottage building that a direct and satisfactory return upon the outlay should be shown to be attainable.

332. It does not admit of doubt that with the mode of building hitherto in general use such a return can very seldom be realized.

Hope expressed by Sir F. Eden in 1797 that improvements in useful arts might supply a good and cheap dwelling.

333. Sir Frederick Eden, writing in 1797 on the state of the poor, and recognizing the same difficulty in regard to the possibility of supplying them to an adequate extent with proper dwellings, thus expresses himself (p. 554):—"It seems likewise deserving of "consideration whether the improvements which of late years have taken place in the "useful arts offer any means of supplying the labourer with a cheaper though not less "comfortable dwelling than that which he at present inhabits." And as recently as the year 1861 the writer of an essay in volume 22 of the Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society (the Rev. John Wilkinson, Rector of Broughton Gifford, Wilts,) very truly says that "whoever discovers a mode of erecting cottages that shall give sufficient "accommodation to a labourer and his family, and yet yield a fair per-centage in rent, will "confer a great boon on all connected with agriculture, from the highest to the lowest."

Fair probability that Mr. B. Nicoll's new mode of construction may secure that result.

334. The new application of concrete, in slabs of a peculiar construction, brought into notice by one of the members of the Council of the Central Cottage Improvement Society, Mr. Benjamin Nicoll (of 42, Regent Circus), would seem to hold out very considerable expectations that this great result may be secured.

335. Our attention having been called last autumn, by Mr. Edwin Chadwick, C.B., to Mr. Nicoll's mode of construction, of which Mr. Chadwick had formed a high opinion in the course of his inquiries as a juror at the Paris Exhibition, we deemed it our duty to

make the most accurate inquiries in our power respecting it. We sought for the opinion of gentlemen practically conversant with subjects of this kind, and found them, in reference especially to its use in cottage building, to be very encouraging, supposing always that further experience shows that the invention fulfils what it promises in regard to economy and durability.

Description of Mr. Nicoll's mode of construction.

336. Mr. Nicoll informs us that he directed his attention, for the purposes of his business, to giving increased power to the ordinary sewing machine, and that in 1864 he obtained a patent for a machine, worked by steam, by which he is able to sew twelve separate articles at once. His mode of proceeding in constructing the framework of a cottage or other building is a development of that invention of his, and is fully described in the evidence of his architect, Mr. Sharp (Appendix, p. 150). Its principle is briefly as follows:—A slab is formed, of a size varying with the purposes for which it is to be used in the building, but commonly 9 feet by 3, and 3 inches thick. The slab is composed of several layers, which together form the thickness of three inches. The centre consists of a fabric of straw sewn together by a large sewing machine, and compressed at the same time by rollers to one inch in thickness. It is steeped in a silicate to render it incombustible, and then set in a frame of one inch angle-iron, strengthened by cross bars of iron which go through it at intervals of 8 or 12 inches, and which are welded to the iron frame. A coating of small gravel held together by Syssell asphalte, is laid on each surface of the straw, a quarter of an inch thick, small spaces being left clear at intervals (but afterwards covered up) to admit of nut screws being inserted to screw the slabs together when put into their place in the building. When so fixed in the building,—the lower edge having been first firmly imbedded in a foundation of concrete,—an external coat is applied of concrete made with the best Portland cement in the proportion of one of cement to six of broken stone or any other hard material, and then an internal coating of the same is added half an inch thick. There is thus formed a fabric three inches thick, which is represented, and we believe truly, to have as great strength as 9-inch bonded brickwork. Although only three inches thick, the interior layer of straw so obstructs the conduction of heat, that such a wall has been found by experience, as it might be expected in theory to be, both warmer in winter and cooler in summer than 9-inch brickwork. The very hard and durable nature of the best Portland-cement-concrete properly mixed causes such a wall to resist frost and damp. It is also quite impervious to vermin (Appendix, pp. 150–155).

337. As the success of Mr. Nicoll's mode of construction so much depends on the fact of the very hard and durable nature of the Portland-cement-concrete, of which the external surface of his slabs is formed, and as Portland-cement is a discovery of comparatively recent date, and its properties, as distinguishing it from ordinary weak lime-concretes, comparatively little known, we thought it desirable to give, in the Appendix (p. 155), an abstract of the papers of Colonel Scott and Mr. Grant, the two best authorities upon the subject, adverted to by Mr. Sharp in his evidence (p. 152). The following paragraph from that abstract is sufficient in this place to draw attention to the difference of the two materials. Colonel Scott remarks that Sir Charles Pasley—"Who had doubts as to the position which concrete should "hold as a mode of building, was only acquainted with the quick setting Sheppy and "Harwich cements, and with that of his own manufacture, which was similar in character; "and it is evident from the results he obtained that he had no opportunity of judging of "the results of which concrete is capable. The wonderful strength of that which has "been produced with cement introduced since his time, has indeed quite changed its "position as a building material. Instead of merely equalling or somewhat exceeding "the strength of brickwork in mass, it may be now so made as to rival or even surpass "that of the individual selected bricks of a structure."

338. The upright angle-irons at the corners and those across the line of the floor and roof are made of somewhat larger dimensions for a cottage with an upper floor than when all the rooms are on the ground floor. But in either case, as the iron frames of the slabs are all screwed to each other and to the uprights, a structure results of great strength.

339. The slabs forming the roof are only required to have an external coating of concrete of half an inch thick; the internal coating of concrete is dispensed with, the layer of fine gravel or powdered stone, and asphalte, being sufficient; and as it is capable of receiving a wash of any colour it becomes a ceiling.

340. In order to render the cost of a cottage as low as possible Mr. Nicoll has adopted several contrivances by which he materially reduces the amount of joiner's and

glazier's work; and by an application of the form of flue perfected by Mr. Douglas Galton, C.B., and General Morin, as described in p. 153 of the Appendix, he secures what appears to be a very satisfactory mode of economizing fuel, and at the same time provides increased warmth and effectual ventilation, together with a hot-air closet for drying clothes, the value of which to an agricultural labourer may be inferred from the remarks of Mr. Henley on the results of cheap fuel in Northumberland (B. 60).

341. We give at p. 158 of the Appendix a description of the requirements of health, decency, and comfort for an agricultural labourer's cottage, compiled from the best plans published by the Societies for the Improvement of Cottage Building, and from Dr. Hunter's report to the medical officer of the Privy Council on the state of the dwellings of rural labourers, laid before Parliament in 1865. We submitted that list of requirements to the Central Cottage Improvement Society, of the council of which Mr. Nicoll is a member, and to his architect, as above mentioned (§ 336), and we addressed to them the following passage:—

"In reference to the question of designs for cottages, we desire to direct attention to a point which has come before us very prominently. A great preference appears very generally to be given by the wives of the agricultural labourers to cottages having all the rooms on the ground floor. They say they are better able to look after the children or the sick when they are in rooms adjoining the living room. When the mother is upstairs for any domestic purpose the younger children cannot be so safely left alone, and other obvious risks and inconveniences are likely to ensue. Some influential landowners are therefore returning to the plan of having all the rooms on the same floor, although at increased cost to themselves.

"The designs for improved cottages published by the various societies are for the most part on the plan of an upper story, the obvious reasons being the saving of cost in the roof, the smaller quantity of ground occupied, and the presumed greater comfort of the occupants.

"When the value of the ground is no great object, it would seem that Mr. Nicoll's mode of construction affords the means of providing, at a very moderate cost and in a satisfactory manner, full sized cottages having all the rooms on the ground floor, and therefore more acceptable to the females who are to dwell in them. Mr. Nicoll's material, being impermeable to damp, prevents any objection on that score, except in very wet and low situations, to having sleeping rooms so near the ground level."

342. Accordingly Mr. Sharp, on behalf of Mr. Nicoll, transmitted to us a series of plans for cottages with all the rooms on the ground floor, with statement of cost of each. We append copies of them to this report (*after* p. 169), as they seem to us likely to be of great service to all persons connected with agriculture, inasmuch as by this mode of construction Mr. Nicoll states that he can build a cottage with living room and three bed-rooms, of ample size, and fulfilling all the requirements of health, decency, and comfort, for 85*l.*

343. Being of great solidity and strength, proof against fire, and impervious to damp, no appreciable sum need be calculated upon as necessary for repairs; therefore, as Mr. Sharp points out in his evidence, a rent of 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, =78*s.* a year, would pay within a fraction of 5*l.* per cent. per annum on such a building, which may fairly be considered a full return, on the presumption that the structure is as durable as alleged.

344. Cottages having but one bed-room, and others having two bed-rooms only, being often wanted on an estate, for the aged, or for couples having no children, in certain proportions to those having three bed-rooms, as pointed out by Dr. Hunter in his report to the medical officer of the Privy Council above mentioned (§ 341) on the dwellings of rural labourers, we have given Mr. Sharp's plans for these also (*after* p. 169); the cost of the first being 50*l.*, and of the second 65*l.*, upon which the rent of 1*s.* and 1*s.* 3*d.* a week respectively would pay an interest of 5*l.* per cent.

345. Mr. Nicoll's very ingenious mode of making his floors, by which, while much cheaper than those of the ordinary kind, they are entirely protected against damp, meets one of the objections to cottages having all their rooms on the ground floor. The object of securing greater privacy for the females, which is mentioned by Mr. John Grey of Dilston in his essay above mentioned (§ 327) as the principal motive for having bed-rooms in cottages on an upper floor, is met in Mr. Sharp's plans by giving an entrance to one of the bed-rooms well separated from the rest. But if any landowner, willing to try the experiment of Mr. Nicoll's method, should prefer the arrangement of bed-rooms on the upper floor, cottages can be built of Mr. Nicoll's slabs on plans similar to those published by the Cottage Improvement Societies, but at a cost, as Mr. Sharp informs us, somewhat above what they can be built for when all the rooms are on the ground floor.

346. Specimens of Mr. Nicoll's cottages can be seen at Twickenham, and near the Fulwell Station about two miles from Twickenham. The one most recently erected at Twickenham contains the flues on Mr. Galton and General Morin's principle.

347. Other persons also have endeavoured to point out modes of constructing agricultural cottages at a cheaper rate than is now common.

Other endeavours to construct cottages at a cheaper rate than is now common.

348. The Central Cottage Improvement Society has very recently published a plan for a cottage with living room and three bed-rooms all on the ground floor. They state that "the estimated cost of erection (excluding the formation of the platform on which "it is suggested that the cottage might be built), with the use of brick and timber in "the ordinary way, is about 110*l*. When concrete or cheaper materials can be used the "cost of course would be less than that sum." They have also recently signed a contract for a pair of four-roomed cottages to be built as an experiment of small concrete blocks, for the sum of 200*l*.

349. An apparatus has been patented by Mr. Tall (Falstaff Yard, Kent Road, Southwark), for constructing walls, houses, and other buildings in Portland cement, and for which Mr. Tall obtained the gold medal at the Paris Exhibition of 1867. The question of permitting the use of concrete in the construction of houses within the area of the Metropolitan Building Act has recently been considered by the Metropolitan Board of Works, on Mr. Tall's application; and a report upon the subject was presented to them on the 17th December 1867 by their superintending architect, Mr. George Vulhamy, and by Mr. John Grant, whose pamphlet on cement is referred to above (§ 337).

350. Those gentlemen state that they had "inspected several houses built with "concrete walls on the principle advocated by Mr. Tall," and although they have "no hesitation in saying that buildings may be erected of Portland-cement-concrete as "strong as ordinary brickwork in mortar, or even stronger," yet they found that under the powers of the present Building Act there is not sufficient provision for the inspection of such buildings during construction "as would insure the concrete being "made in proper proportions, and of good materials, nor of the work being executed as "it ought to be in order to secure perfectly sound and safe structures." They therefore suggest that special licenses should be issued by the Board to anyone wishing to erect buildings with cements "on his satisfying the Board that he will adopt such precautions "as to the composition of the concrete and the mode of using it as would ensure "strength and soundness in the work."

351. They also state that Mr. Tall in his description of his process does not in their opinion "allow sufficient either for the cost of materials, or the labour required in using "them." They add that "the cost of his patent apparatus would, in the case of a "single house, form a large item in the estimate (varying much for different designs), "but it might happen, where a great many houses of the same dimensions and form are "to be built, that the price of his apparatus added to the cost of the concrete would "come to less than the price of brickwork."

352. Mr. Tall in a paper read by him to the members of the Architectural Association on concrete dwellings, refers to the example set by the Prince Consort in 1851, "in "endeavouring to provide the labouring classes with dwellings, substantial and con-"venient, and at a price not above their means."

But the cottages which the Prince caused to be constructed with this benevolent object, opposite the Exhibition, did not, unfortunately, fulfil those conditions. Mr. Tall was led by that experiment to turn his attention to the subject; and being struck with the great strength of "the beams of brickwork jointed with Portland cement" exhibited at the same time, which beams "when severe strains were applied, broke in the bricks, "while in not a single instance was the Portland cement joint fractured," he determined to apply Portland-cement-concrete in a cheap and practical manner, to the construction of buildings for the labouring class, and he has done so with considerable prospect of ultimate success.

353. Mr. Newton, C.E., of Chancery Lane, who has constructed buildings under license from Mr. Tall, with his apparatus, informed us that he did not think it applicable to agricultural cottages unless built in considerable numbers together.

354. The only other modern material which has been brought to our notice, is the "artificial stone," invented by Mr. Allen, of 61, Tabernacle Walk, Finsbury. This is another application of Portland-cement-concrete, and is, as he has explained to us, used chiefly in conjunction with brickwork in supplying the place of stone, at a cost much below it, for ornamental work, arches, beams, &c., but it is not likely to have much effect in reducing the cost of ordinary agricultural cottages.

Other subjects will be dealt with in our next report.

355. Other important subjects, and in particular that of benefit societies in the agricultural districts, which have been adverted to by the Assistant Commissioners in their inquiries of this year, will be dealt with by us in our next report, when further information relating to them will be before us.

All this we humbly certify to Your Majesty.

Given under our hands and seals this 31st day of October 1868.

HUGH SEYMOUR TREMENHEERE,
EDWARD CARLETON TUFNELL.

2, Victoria Street,
Westminster.

APPENDIX.

PART I.

REPORTS

FROM

THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS

AND

MISCELLANEOUS EVIDENCE.

APPENDIX.

PART I.

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REPORT.

SIR,

A. 1. I HAVE the honour to submit to Her Majesty's Commissioners appointed to ascertain the possibility of extending the principles of the Factory Acts to the regulation of the employment of women, young persons, and children in agriculture, specially with a view to the better education of such children, the following report of the results of my inquiry in those districts of the country that were assigned to me.

Territory visited. 2. The counties which I was instructed to visit were those of Norfolk, Essex, Sussex, and Gloucester. I further visited two detached districts in Suffolk, in accordance with the Commissioners' wish, that any instances which might fall under the Assistant Commissioners' notice of efforts having been made in any way to raise the physical, mental, or moral condition of the agricultural population, should be observed and recorded in detail. The two districts visited for this purpose were the Eye estate of Sir Edward C. Kerrison, Bart., and the parish of Assington, near Sudbury, where for upwards of 30 years, though I do not believe that even now the results of the experiment are very widely known, the co-operative principle has been applied with apparently very successful results to farms.

Time occupied. 3. The period of time occupied by me in the inquiry was exactly 24 weeks, between the 8th July 1867 and the 30th January 1868. I returned home for the harvest month (from August 12 to September 9), during which it would have been impossible to prosecute the inquiry with any vigour; and I took a further holiday of a fortnight at Christmas (from December 14 to December 30). The whole of the rest of the time indicated I spent in my district and upon my work.

Selection of districts. 4. The four counties which I had undertaken cover so wide an area, and are inhabited by such large populations, that the first problem which presented itself to my mind was how I should attempt to deal with them.* It was obviously impossible to carry the inquiry to every farm, or even to every parish, and the only practicable mode of procedure appeared to be by the method of selection. The method of selection, however, is always open to the objection that the selector has probably followed his own convenience, or indulged his own partialities; or that he has addressed himself exclusively to persons holding strong opinions, or known to be influenced by strong biases; or that he has picked out exceptional, or over coloured ordinary, phenomena; any one of which allegations, made good, would be sufficient to destroy the value of his evidence, and to weaken, if not annihilate, the force of his conclusions.

Mode of conducting the inquiry. 5. The course of proceeding which, after it had received the sanction of the Commissioners, I finally resolved to adopt, was the same as that marked out for me when employed under the Duke of Newcastle's Commission of Inquiry into the Condition of Elementary Education in 1858-59, and which appeared to me to produce very satisfactory results. I selected a certain number of poor law union areas in each county, as sample districts; visited these parish by parish, and endeavoured, through the medium of public meetings convened by the parochial authorities for the purpose of discussing the various points of interest embraced in the inquiry, to give to every person who had either thought about or was acquainted with the subject, an opportunity of expressing his opinions and imparting his information. Above all things, I was anxious to avoid the suspicion of holding, or seeming to desire to hold, packed or partizan meetings.†

Ground of selection of Unions. 6. In selecting poor law unions, my aim was to choose those which might be considered typical; that if agricultural operations were carried on under different conditions in different parts of the county, those conditions should be fairly represented; that variations in the soil, in the staple produce, in the size of the farms, in the mode of cultivation, in the greater or less density of the population, in the residence or non-residence of the owners of the land, in the reputed intelligence both of the employers of labour and the employed, should be taken note of and appreciated. Before my choice was finally made, therefore, I took the best local advice I could get upon each of these points. It ended in my selecting four poor law unions to represent the county of Norfolk, two to represent Essex, three for Sussex, and three for Gloucester.

Details of area. 7. The subjoined table exhibits this territory in detail: the names of the union districts, the number of parishes (in the ecclesiastical sense) which they contain, their aggregate population, acreage, and rate-

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Statistics of the four counties. * Norfolk contains 23 Poor Law Unions, 1,354,011 acres, and 430,319 inhabitants; Essex contains 17 Poor Law Unions, 1,060,549 acres, and 426,767 inhabitants; Sussex, 15 Poor Law Unions, 936,911 acres, 380,126 inhabitants; and Gloucester 17 Poor Law Unions, 805,120 acres, and 501,955 inhabitants. No two accounts of acreage, whether of a parish, a union district, or a county, ever seem to agree; but the above figures are taken from the Agricultural Returns for Great Britain (1867) published by the Board of Trade, the population being estimated to the end of the year 1866.

Circular used in reference to parochial meetings. † The following is the letter which I addressed to the clergyman and churchwardens of each parish in reference to these meetings:—

"Gentlemen,—Under the authority of the above Royal Commissioners, I am charged with the duty of collecting the facts pertinent to the inquiry which her Majesty has intrusted to them in this county. For this purpose it is my intention to visit the parishes in the union of A., and to apply for information to such persons resident in them who may be able or disposed to give it to me. You will appreciate the importance both of the inquiry itself and of my deriving the information bearing upon it from the most trustworthy sources.

"It has been suggested to me that the object which I have in view would be most easily attained by my having the opportunity of meeting in conference in each parish the persons mainly concerned in the employment of labour or interested in the condition of the poor,—the owners and occupiers of land, the clergy, the magistrates, the overseers and guardians of the poor, the medical and relieving officers, &c., at which conference questions could be freely interchanged, opinions frankly expressed, and the knowledge and views of one party supplemented, or (if necessary) corrected, by those of another. I have been led to believe that if I addressed myself, as I now venture to do, to the clergyman and churchwardens of each parish, they would take the trouble, in furtherance of so important an inquiry, to call such a meeting, and try to secure the attendance of all persons interested in or acquainted with the subject. I wish the evidence I collect to be complete, and the report which will be founded upon it to represent all classes of opinions. I propose, therefore, to visit B. on next at o'clock, and shall consider myself under a great obligation if you will so far co-operate with me as to call such a meeting as I have described.—I have the honour to remain, &c. &c."

My sincere thanks are due, almost without exception, to the clergy and churchwardens for the readiness with which they complied with my request, and aided me in carrying out my plan.

able value, and the ratio both of the acreage to each unit of the population, and of the rateable value to the statute acre. A.

TABLE I.*

County.	Union.	No. of Parishes.	Population.	Area in Acres.	Rateable Value.	No. of Acres to each Unit of Population.	Rateable Value per Acre.
					£		£ s. d.
Norfolk -	St. Faith's	29	11,749	48,304	69,808	4·1	1 8 0
	Depwade - -	41	25,248	72,681	133,191	2·8	1 16 0
	Docking -	31	17,589	101,136	108,375	5·7	1 1 0
	Swaffham - -	31	13,747	81,200	89,835	5·9	1 2 0
Essex -	Halstead -	16	18,482	38,913	78,592	2·1	2 0 0
	Witham - -	16	16,324	38,938	85,954	2·3	2 2 0
Sussex -	Horsham - -	10	15,313	57,023	66,080	3·7	1 2 0
	Hailsham - -	11	12,668	54,365	56,292	4·2	1 0 6
	Westhampnett -	37	14,811	74,913	98,850	5·0	1 6 0
Gloucester	Cirencester -	39	20,934	85,366	129,565	4·0	1 10 0
	Thornbury -	19	16,409	65,840	113,342	4·0	1 14 0
	Newent - -	18	12,420	45,281	75,191	3·6	1 12 0
Totals -	12	298	199,694	763,960	1,105,075	3·8	1 9 0

8. My first business in entering upon a district was to obtain permission to attend the ordinary meeting of the board of guardians, with the view not so much of eliciting opinions, or procuring information, as of giving publicity to the fact of the inquiry. In every case, I believe, the matter was considered by the chairman, to whom I addressed myself, of sufficient importance to induce him to issue a special invitation to the members of his board, who usually mustered in considerable strength, to hear what I might have to say. It was at the first meeting of the kind that I attended, that of the guardians of St. Faith's Union, that the plan was suggested to me of holding the parochial meetings which I have already described. Conferences with Boards of Guardians.

9. In St. Faith's Union, these meetings, with one exception,† remained simply parochial in their character, were seldom attended by more than half a dozen persons, and occupied not more than an hour and a half or two hours of time; so that I always held two, and sometimes as many as three in the same day. Parochial meetings.

10. But, when entering upon my second selected district (the Depwade Union), I adopted what proved a much more effective arrangement, by classifying the parishes of the union into a certain number of manageable groups, and holding a collective meeting for each group at the most convenient centre, to which representatives from all the parishes belonging to the group were invited. I thus obtained much fuller meetings, and much more vigorous and sustained discussions, the business opening at 11 o'clock, and often not terminating till 3 or 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

11. I have held altogether 96 such meetings, attended by 1,164 persons of the classes indicated in my circular. I reduced the proceedings, as they went on, into the form of a *précis* or minutes, which when read over to the meeting before it broke up were signed at first by all the parties present, but afterwards (as this mode involved a loss of time) by the chairman, as a voucher for their accuracy. These minutes are all printed in the appendix, and contain, I venture to think, a very valuable body of evidence, both upon matters of fact and upon matters of opinion. In reading them critically, allowance will, I hope, be made for the circumstancess under which they were composed. I have not thought that I had the right to retouch them since they were read to the meeting, further than to correct an occasional clumsiness of expression, or obvious slip of the pen.‡ The minutes of these meetings an important body of evidence.

12. Besides endeavouring to ascertain through the medium of these meetings the condition of things in relation to this inquiry in every parish in the selected unions, I further left in 257 of the 298 parishes a copy of the Commissioners' circular of questions either with the clergyman or with some other responsible and intelligent person, accompanying it with a request from myself that the information asked for might be given as fully and accurately as possible. Of these 257 forms so distributed, Distribution of "Circular of Inquiries."

* Of the 39 parishes in the Cirencester union, five, viz., Kemble, Marston Meysey, Poole Keynes, Sharncote, and Somerford Keynes (with an aggregate population of 1,266) are in the county of Wilts. Of the 18 parishes in Newent, two, Redmarley and Staunton (population 1,772), are in the county of Worcester; and two, Aston Ingham and Linton (population 1,483), are in the county of Hereford. Outlying parishes.

The number of parishes, in the Poor Law sense of the word, that is districts maintaining their own poor, is 312.

The area and population are taken from the figures in the "Union and Parish Officers' Almanack." The rateable value was furnished to me by the clerks to the different Boards of Guardians (who in all cases were extremely obliging), except in Norfolk, where it is taken from the county valuation.

Speaking in round numbers, I am prepared to report upon the employment of women, young persons, and children in agriculture, in 300 parishes, containing 200,000 population, and three-quarters of a million acres of land, of the estimated rateable value of 1,100,000*l.*

† The meeting at Spixworth, No. 12.

‡ The notes of the meetings at Spixworth (No. 12), Starston (No. 25), Fundenhall (No. 34), Burnham (No. 41), North Creake (No. 44), Halstead (No. 53), Earl's Colne (No. 56), Horsham (No. 64), North Mundham (No. 73), Fairford (No. 79) Siddington (No. 82), Olveston (No. 84), Cromhall (No. 87), Berkeley (No. 89), Dymock (No. 93), and the two at Newent (Nos. 95 and 96), are, I think, specially worthy of perusal, as representing the opinions of some of the most influential persons in the respective localities. In one or two instances, as at Tivetshall (No. 30), and Great Burcham (No. 40), ladies were present, and even took part in the discussion; and as an important branch of the inquiry touched the employment of their sex, I should have been glad if they had ventured to attend in greater numbers, and had enabled me with greater fulness to report their views. Notice of the more important meetings.

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only 156 have been returned to me. Possibly many gentlemen who undertook to make the return found the labour greater than they expected, or more than they were willing to undergo: possibly also, they may have thought that the information that they had already given me at my meetings was all that I could require. Anyhow, 101 returns which I had hoped to receive have not come in.*

Difference in value of these returns.

13. Of those which I have received, the value varies infinitely in degree. Some must have cost their compilers many hours of trouble; others not more than as many minutes. Some are models of conscientious accuracy and completeness; others are so loose and apparently conjectural as to be almost worthless for purposes of tabulation. In particular, I had pressed for accurate numbers of the boys and girls employed in field labour, and of the children attending school in each parish, which would have enabled me to exhibit to the Commissioners a trustworthy conspectus of the state of my district under both these aspects. I have tabulated in the Appendix all the figures with which I have been furnished; but they are by no means so complete or so exact as I could have desired.

Information contained in these returns classified in the Appendix.

14. I have also printed in the Appendix, classified under convenient heads, the various answers that have been given to the Commissioners' questions under each leading branch of this inquiry. It will be found that these answers are characterized, on the whole, by a remarkable unanimity of opinion; and this very unanimity, however monotonous to the reader, is itself of weight in determining the value to be given to such opinions, considered as evidence.

Evidence obtained from individuals.

15. Further, as I was directed to do, I eagerly seized every opportunity that came within my reach of obtaining the opinions of "the landed proprietors, clergy, farmers, farm-labourers, medical practi-"tioners, officers of health, relieving officers, and other public functionaries or private individuals, who "are conversant with agricultural life under its various conditions." Of course, with my days so constantly occupied by public meetings, I had fewer opportunities than I should otherwise have had of conversing upon the subjects of my inquiry with individuals. But in the Appendix will be found four collections of evidence made in this way: one from medical men and sanitary officers, a second from school managers and teachers, a third from farm labourers or their wives, and a fourth from various independent persons whose opinions and views I have grouped together under the general head of "miscellaneous evidence."

Resolutions of Chambers of Agriculture.

16. Lastly, I have attended the meetings of four Chambers of Agriculture—at Norwich, Cirencester,† Gloucester, and London. At each meeting the subject of this inquiry was very fully discussed, and I append the resolutions arrived at, as well as a summary of the arguments and opinions of the principal speakers.

17. Out of these various materials I have constructed the following report.

Description of selected districts.

18. It will be proper to preface my account with a brief notice of the characteristic features of the 12 districts from which it has been gathered.

NORFOLK.

19. The four Norfolk districts represent the central, southern, northern, and western portions of the county respectively.

Union of St. Faith.

20. The Union of St. Faith, containing 29 parishes, 48,000 acres of land, and a population of about 12,000, touches the city of Norwich on its northern side. It contains a considerable portion of poor, sandy soil, some of it letting at as low a rent as 5*s.* or 10*s.* per acre. The best land lets as high as 2*l.*; that of medium quality would fetch perhaps from 20*s.* to 30*s.* The population is almost exclusively agricultural; though in two or three parishes the Taverham paper-mills create a demand for labour, while in a few others there is a slight, and I believe lessening, intermixture of families who get their livelihood by weaving. The occupations are generally of moderate size; 400 acres would be a considerable farm. The cultivation is chiefly arable, not more than a fourth or a fifth of the farm being ordinarily in pasture. I only heard of one gang having its *habitat* within the union, and that was in the parish of Weston; but into some of the northern parishes a gang from Reepham is occasionally imported. The supply of labour generally is adequate, but it is not in all cases well distributed. There are several "close" parishes, inadequately supplied both with cottages and with resident labourers. About 2½ cottages to the 100 acres is considered to be a sufficient supply. The wages of a day labourer last summer were in general 12*s.* a week; but in one parish they were only 11*s.*‡ A woman's wage

List of parishes from which no return has been received.

* The parishes from which no return has been received are the following:—

In the county of Norfolk:—Weston, Taverham, Brandistone, Salhouse, Hapton, Alburgh, Earsham, Burston, Scole, Billingford, Brockdish, Stratton St. Michael, Tasburgh, Fritton, Hardwick, Shelton, Tivetshall, Forncett St. Mary, Forncett St. Peter, Carleton Rode, Tacolnestone, Fundenhall, Ashwellthorpe, Dersingham, Snettisham, Rudham, Houghton, Bircham Newton, Burnham Westgate, Burnham Sutton, Burnham Deepdale, North Creake, South Creake, North Pickenham, South Pickenham, Ickburgh and Langford, Necton, Foulden, Cockley Cley, Beechamwell, Shingham, Narburgh, Swaffham.

In the county of Essex:—Pebmarsh, Gosfield, Castle Hedingham, Sible Hedingham, Great Yeldham, Witham, Great Braxted, Wickham Bishops, Ulting, Hatfield Peverell, Coggeshall, Markshall, Messing.

In the county of Sussex:—Warnham, West Grinstead, Shipley, Nuthurst, Heathfield, Felpham, Madehurst, Graffham, Sidlesham, Selsey, West Itchenor, Pagham, Slindon, Westhampnett.

In the county of Gloucester:—Elkstone, Daglingworth, Badgington, Duntisbourne Rouse, Sapperton, Rodmarton, Fairford, Kempsford, Hatherop, Quennington, Amney St. Peter, Siddington, Driffield, Preston, Alveston, Tytherington, Oldbury, Tortworth, Charfield, Rangeworthy, Falfield, Berkeley, Staunton, Tibberton, Rudford, Upleadon, Dymock, Kempley, Linton, Newent, Oxenhall, Pauntley.

† When I attended the meeting at Cirencester on Dec. 9, 1867, the corporate title of the association was "The Cirencester Farmers' Club." It has, however, been subsequently elevated to the rank, and has assumed the name, of a "Chamber of Agriculture."

To the resolutions of these Chambers of Agriculture I further append notes of two considerable meetings of clergy, in which the same subject was discussed, in the first instance six months before this Commission was issued:

(1) On Sept. 18, 1866, by the clergy of the rural deanery of Redenhall in the diocese of Norwich, at their ruri-decanal meeting.

(2) On Feb. 4th, 1868, by the clergy forming the Chichester Clerical Association.

I also add reports of two interesting discussions of the same subject at the meetings of two farmers' clubs in my own county (Berks).

I was not present myself at any of these four last-named meetings.

‡ I would remark once for all that when I speak of the rate of wages, I refer to the rates paid at the date that I made my inquiry, to the ordinary able-bodied day labourer. I have seen in the papers that this spring there has been a general rise in Norfolk wages of 1*s.* a week.

was 8*d.* for a day of eight hours; a boy of 9 or 10 would earn from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week; a boy of 11 or 12 from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* A few of the smaller parishes are deficient in the means of education. A.

21. The Union of Depwade (41 parishes, 73,000 acres, 25,000 population), lies in the southern part of the county bordering upon Suffolk, from which it is separated by the Waveney river, and is cut through by two lines of railway, from north to south by the Norwich main line, and from east to west by the Waveney valley line. It contains the two small market towns of Diss and Harleston, and about an equal number of large and small parishes. The population is principally agricultural; but in one parish (Scole) there is a flax mill; in another (Brockdish) a neighbouring drabbet factory provides employment for a considerable number of hands; in Bunwell and Carleton Rode there are, perhaps, 200 looms; in three or four more parishes there is a large number of a class of men called "dealers" or "truckers," who appear to be anything but a desirable element in the social system. The land generally is heavy and rich, employing a good deal of labour, and requiring careful cleaning. For this latter purpose women and children are largely in demand. The gang system, however, is dying out. Thirty years ago it was widely used in several districts; now, I only heard of three gangs (at Pulham, Gissing, and in the neighbourhood of Stretton); and in some parishes I was told that the people would not know even the meaning of the term. The farmers generally are substantial and intelligent, and the cultivation is high. The supply of labour throughout the union is adequate to, and in some parishes considerably in excess of, the demand. Women, though largely employed in weeding and other agricultural operations, strange to say are not ordinarily in the habit of taking part in the wheat harvest. A very large proportion of the cottages are built of what is locally called "clay lump," huge bricks, 12 or 14 inches square, of sun-dried clay, which when kept clear of rain and damp and frost, forms an excellent material, but perishes rapidly when ingress has been once given to the elements of decay. In some of the parishes these dilapidated cottages present a most wretched aspect. In several large parishes in this union, *ex. gr.* Gissing, Tivetshall, Hempnall, Pulham St. Mary the Virgin, there is a lamentable deficiency in the means of education; and in some of the smaller parishes, *ex. gr.* Needham, Thelveton, Shimpling, there is no school at all. In other parishes, of which Starston and Denton may be taken as a type, the opportunities of education are as abundant, and the appreciation of those opportunities by the people is as earnest, as one could desire. Union of Depwade.

22. Docking Union, containing 31 parishes, 101,000 acres, and 17,500 people, lies in the north-west of the county, having for its northern boundary the German Ocean, and for its western the estuary of the Wash. Along the shore a considerable portion of the population, including a large number of women and children, gain their livehood indirectly from agriculture, by collecting mussels and other shell-fish which are largely used as manure. It is a district of light land, sparse population, large farms. The gang system exists, but to a smaller extent than might have been expected under the circumstances. The land requires much cleaning, having a tendency, as one farmer described its qualities, "to grow almost everything it ought not to grow," and women and children, therefore, are largely employed; yet some of the largest occupiers in the district cultivate their land without female labour at all; * and one gentleman farming 2,000 acres, Mr. Bonner, of Rudham, proposed, though he did not carry, a resolution at one of my meetings,† that girls under 16 should be prohibited from working on the land. There are some large and improving proprietors in the district; notably, the Marquis of Cholmondeley in the south, and the Earl of Leicester in the north. There are, however, several considerable estates utterly, or almost utterly, without the proper provision of cottages; ‡ and the parish of Docking is an instructive type of the demoralization introduced into an over-peopled 'open' parish of limited acreage, hemmed in by neighbours who expect it to furnish them with the contingent of labour that they require for their land. There are several parishes in the union, *ex. gr.*, Thornham, Docking, Ingoldisthorpe, Hunstanton, Great Burcham, Rudham, well supplied with schools; but, speaking generally, the standard of education in the district is not high, owing to the frequent demands for child labour, and the early age at which in too many cases the school-life ends, and there are not a few parishes, some of them important ones, inadequately provided with efficient schools. Union of Docking.

23. Swaffham Union (31 parishes, 81,000 acres, 14,000 population), lying on the south-western side of the county, in many respects repeats the phenomena exhibited by Docking. It is, however, the one of the four Norfolk districts most purely agricultural in its character, and it is also the one of the four in which the gang system has most extensively prevailed, and is still most deeply rooted. The parishes of Ashill, Saham Toney, Great Cressingham, Gooderstone, and Swaffham, are all homes of gangs; and touching the district on its northern side, though not within its bounds, is the too celebrated parish of Castleacre, which has almost given to the system a local and distinctive name.§ Many of the parishes are "close," and most insufficiently supplied with cottages; in more, the cottages, if adequate in number, are very deficient in bedroom accommodation.‖ In most of the parishes, the cottages are clustered into a village; and as the area of the parish is frequently large, the labourers in too many instances have to travel long distances to their work. Of 500 cottages in the parish of Swaffham, with an area of 7,500 acres, not more than 25 are stated to be outlying upon the farms. It struck me that Union of Swaffham.

* See notes of Hunstanton meeting, No. 37.

† Rudham meeting, No. 39.

‡ In Sedgeford, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have an estate of 2,000 acres, on which there does not exist a single cottage; in Snettisham the corporation of Lynn own 800 acres of land, distant three miles from the heart of the parish, on which there are only two cottages. The estimate given me in the Union was that a double cottage (two tenements) to the hundred acres was about the proper supply. At this rate, the estate of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners ought to have 40 cottages; that of the Corporation, 16.

§ "Castleacre gangs are an abomination," writes one of my correspondents.

‖ The chairman of the Board of Guardians has been obliging enough to furnish me with a return, made by the relieving officers of the Union, of the cottage accommodation of every parish in the Union, the number of inmates and the number of bedrooms. I have printed it in the Appendix; and it is a very instructive document.

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a rather unusual proportion of parishes in the union were provided with efficient schools; but the gang system, and the continuous demand for juvenile labour, frustrate the efforts of educators.

Essex.

Unions of Halstead and Witham.

24. Passing lightly through Suffolk, and entering Essex, the first district that I visited was the Union of Halstead. It contains 16 parishes, 39,000 acres of land, 18,500 people. I did not find any essential difference between the condition of things here and in the other Essex union which I selected, that of Witham, which contains the same number of parishes and of acres, but 2,000 fewer inhabitants. These two unions have the densest population of any of the districts which I visited; in Docking and Swaffham, there are nearly six statute acres to each unit of the population; in Halstead and Witham there are but little more than two. Of course, this fact affects both the employment and condition of the population. The cultivation is chiefly arable, and much of the land is of a high quality, growing superior wheat; but there are also considerable tracts of inferior soil. The inferior land lets at from 15*s.* to 25*s.* per acre; the better sort at from 30*s.* to 2*l.* The occupations, in general, are not large; 300 acres would be the average size of the bigger farms. The labour employed, particularly in the Halstead Union, is almost exclusively that of men and boys; the latter go to work, particularly in draining operations, where they assist their fathers and relay the turves, at an excessively early age. In some parts of the district females are not employed even in haymaking or harvest. In Halstead, women find employment in their homes at straw-plait and slop-work; in Witham, the straw-plait, which of late years has not been remunerative, has nearly died out, but a little slop-work still remains. A few hops are grown in Halstead; and peas for the London market are largely cultivated in Witham; women and children are employed to pick these, the moral and physical accompaniments of the work being analogous to those of hop-picking.* In the neighbourhood of Kelvedon, Coggeshall and Hedingham, many parcels of ground are used to grow garden-seeds, and upon these a great quantity of labour is employed. I found a much greater variety in the rate of wages in these two unions than in Norfolk, where a nearly uniform rate prevails. The rates I heard of were 10*s.*, 11*s.*, 12*s.* and 13*s.* a week; 10*s.* at Hedingham; 11*s.* at Halstead; 12*s.* at Colne; 13*s.* at Witham. Proximity to the Metropolis may be one of the elements influencing the scale. To cultivate a farm in the best way is estimated to cost from 30*s.* to 35*s.* an acre; and about four and a half men to 100 acres is considered to be an adequate supply of labour-power. This is higher than the Norfolk rate, in consequence of the smaller number of women employed. The cottages are built either of brick or of lath and plaster; and the rent does not often exceed 4*l.* a year. You hear on all sides the usual complaints of dilapidated tenements, and insufficient bedroom accommodation. The straw-plait in the case of girls, and early employment on the land in the case of boys, are found to be very serious hindrances in the way of education; the straw-plait is further thought to have a very unfavourable influence upon conduct. A peculiar feature in Halstead are the plaiting schools, which compete victoriously with the more legitimate institution, though places of education only in name. The physical evil they produce is great; their intellectual benefits are small; but they are popular with shortsighted parents, who cannot or will not understand that a penny got is not always a penny gained.

County of Sussex.

25. The three districts which I selected in Sussex represent the conditions of agricultural employment in the northern, eastern, and western parts of the county respectively. The market towns of Horsham, Hailsham, and Chichester are the central points of each.

Union of Horsham.

26. Horsham Union (10 parishes, 57,000 acres, 15,300 population) lies in what is called the Weald of Sussex, still a thickly wooded district with a stiff, tenacious clay soil. Small farms are the rule; and small farms imply a less intelligent race of farmers. Many of the occupiers are what is called "round-frock" farmers, with little capital, and working the land in great part by themselves and their family. Three hundred acres would be a large occupation. The land, as already described, is a stiff wet clay, takes three or four horses to plough, and requires thorough draining. To cultivate 100 acres demands the constant employment of four able-bodied men, a big lad, and a boy of 12 or 13 to drive plough. Females, whether old or young, married or single, are rarely employed by the farmer: not to a tithe of the extent that they were 20 years ago. They help their husbands, however, during the "flawing" season in the woods.† Much of the land is cleaned by the expedient of a summer fallow. Boys are not wanted till they are strong enough to drive plough: on this heavy land a boy under 11 or 12 would not have strength to get through the day. Single men are still in some instances taken into the farm houses, and form part of the farmer's family; but the custom is dying out, the masters dislike the trouble, and the youths dislike the restraint. The bark harvest in May and acorn harvest in the autumn, the one just preceding the hay season and the other just following corn harvest, and each lasting about a month, are the two hindrances that are most felt in dealing with the education of the younger children. But for these, the schools would have an unusually good chance of producing satisfactory results, as young girls are not wanted at all, and boys not till a later age than elsewhere, upon the land. In consequence of the smallness of so many of the holdings, there is a good deal of precariousness in the employment of the population. Many of the single men migrate in the summer; and there is an unusual proportion of what the farmers call "shifty" labourers. The soil is too stiff to grow many roots, and so the men have to seek their jobs of hoeing elsewhere. The rate of wages is

Case of the pea and hop pickers.

* There is a great difficulty in attempting to deal with these pea pickers. The mode in which the work is done is described in Notes of Meeting, No. 57. It is a parallel operation to hop-picking, with this difference, that the workers are hired, not by the farmer who has grown the crop, but by the dealer who has purchased it. In the case of hop-pickers, I consider that the farmer, who does not seem to consider himself charged with any moral responsibility in the matter, should be required by law to provide sleeping accommodation compatible with the possibilities of decency, for his imported workers; and as he grows the crop, even though he does not harvest it, it might not be thought unreasonable that the same requirement should be fulfilled in behalf of those who pick the peas. The evil of promiscuous herding at night might also be prevented by limiting the distance within which pea-pickers might be hired, so as to enable them to return to their own homes when the day's work is done; but a limitation of this kind might be thought to interfere harshly with the freedom of labour, and, besides, would be very difficult of enforcement. I am no lawyer, and it is a matter of interpretation; but it seems to me that pea-pickers and hop-pickers are each practically gangs; and if so, would come under the operation of the Act regulating them. The provisions of that Act as regards the age of the children employed and the separation of the sexes are quite as necessary in these field operations as in any other.

† "Flawing" is described in the "Notes of the West Grinstead Meeting," No. 63.

13*s.* a week, women earning 1*s.* a day. The poor-rate is high; in 1867 it was 4*s.* 4*d.* in the pound. Cottage rents also struck me as ranging high; seldom less than 4*l.*, and more frequently 5*l.* A modified form of the gang system exists in the district, though probably not recognized by the inhabitants under that name. It is used for the purpose of dibbling beans and peas. The job is taken by a man at so much per acre, and he engages the services of as many children, boys or girls, as he considers necessary. The man dibbles the holes and the children drop the peas or beans. One man will require to be attended by five or six children. Little children between 7 and 10 are generally employed, and the job lasts perhaps a month, in February and March. A.

27. In Hailsham Union (11 parishes, 54,000 acres, 13,000 population) there are great varieties of soil; some a light sand, other a stiff clay. There are large tracts of wood, and towards the sea extensive and valuable stock pastures. The occupations vary widely in size; but 500 acres would be a very large farm. There are a considerable number of hop-gardens; the labour at the picking season is entirely done by the resident population.* Though neither girls nor boys are wanted at an early age by the farmer, the former, indeed, being hardly required at all except for haymaking, corn-harvest, and hop-picking, education labours under its own peculiar difficulties in the district. Hop-pole shaving employs both boys and girls at a very early age in the winter. Almost every cottager in some of the parishes fattens chicken for the London market; and here again the services of children are useful. The small farmers, who are numerous, are always ready to pick up a boy at the lowest rate of wages, that is at the earliest age. Added to which, the area of the parishes is large, and the population is scattered. Several of the parishes labour under the further difficulty of adequate local support being withheld from the school. The wages in the district are good—for men, 13*s.* 6*d.* a week; for women, 1*s.* and 1*s.* 4*d.* a day. There is also a great deal of work put out by the piece; so that it was estimated that an able-bodied labourer's weekly wage throughout the year, if in constant work, would average 16*s.* But cottage rents, as in Horsham, are high, and provisions generally in the neighbourhood, from its proximity to London, are dear. Union of Hailsham.

28. The Union of Westhampnett, containing 37, generally small, parishes, with 75,000 acres of land and a population of 15,000, almost surrounds, though it does not include, the city of Chichester. The principal landowners within the area are the Duke of Richmond, who is Chairman of the Board of Guardians, and the Hon. Mrs. Vernon Harcourt. They are both of them large builders and improvers of cottages. The union may be divided into two districts, in respect of soil—the chalk land of the hills and the hazel loam of the plain. The size of the farms varies from 100 to 1,000 acres, and the rent of the land from 10*s.* to 40*s.* an acre. Most of the farms are in a high state of cultivation; and the farmers are men of capital and intelligence. Female labour, once largely used in the district, is now scarcely employed at all except at haymaking and harvest, or for an occasional job of trimming roots; boys are not much wanted, unless for a turn of rook-scaring, before 10, and are scarce in some parishes through the counter attractions of the sea; young girls, it may be said generally, do not work upon the land at all. The relieving officers assured me that the people generally live in tolerable comfort and competency. Wages are 12*s.* and 13*s.* a week, carters and shepherds, as usual, taking 2*s.* or 3*s.* more. Women, when at work, earn 8*d.*, 10*d.*, and 1*s.* a day. Cottage rents exhibit remarkable differences; many of the large landowners let theirs at 1*s.* a week; some of the smaller proprietors take as much as 2*s.* 6*d.* It is a district of contrasts in several respects; and among others, the means of education are very unequally distributed. One difficulty arises from the number of small parishes, which must either coalesce and form a combined school, or use the schools of their neighbours. One school, called from the name of the hundred in which it is situated the "Manhood School," founded about 50 years ago, was intended, when it was established, to meet the wants of six or seven parishes. Some of these parishes have now provided themselves with independent schools of their own; but three or four parishes, besides the one (Birdham) in which it lies, and among these the large and important parish of Sidlesham with its 1,000 people, still depend for the supply of their educational wants upon the "Manhood School." Some of the children who attend would have to travel for the purpose a distance of three miles. Union of Westhampnet

29. The three Gloucestershire unions of Cirencester, Thornbury, and Newent, represent respectively the stock, sheep, and corn farms of the Cotswolds, the dairy farms of the cheese-making district in the Vale of Berkeley, and the mixed agriculture of a district where the land varies considerably in quality, and its cultivation is adapted to those varieties. County of Gloucester.

30. The Union of Cirencester contains 39 parishes, 85,000 acres, 21,000 people. The geological character of the soil is mostly an oolite brash, which in the lower levels and valleys is fertile, but on the tops of the Cotswolds, at an elevation of 1,100 feet above the sea, is much exposed, and suffers from a prolonged winter. It has a tendency to get full of couch-grass, and requires much attention to keep it clean; hence the labour of women—in most parishes married women, but in some young girls—is largely employed. Boys, as in other districts, are set to scare birds or mind sheep at a very early age; but they are not required for constant work till they are strong enough to do a day's ploughing. The principal farms range in size from 500 to 1,000 acres; but there are intermixed with these smaller occupations of from 50 to 100 acres. The average rent of the hill land would be 20*s.* an acre. On a sheep farm, the proportion of sheep kept would be about two to every three acres; on a stock farm, Union of Cirencester.

* The proportion of land in a farm ordinarily cultivated for hops is not large, about four per cent., I was informed, of the acreage. It is a proportion, however, that is rather increasing. As stated in the text, foreigners are not imported to pick the hops in these parishes; but I was told at Warbleton and Heathfield that many whole families migrate into other districts to pick the hops there, locking their houses up during their absence. The moral, and not unfrequently the physical, results are bad; and in many cases the seeds of fatal disease have been sown by the exposure to wet without proper change of clothes, and the miserable lodgings the people have to put up with during the period of the job.—See "Notes of Meeting," No. 65.

Tying the vine to the pole is another important process in the cultivation of the hop. In Sussex it is done entirely by females, and occupies them, at intervals, for from six to eight weeks in the year. It is done by piece work, and the women earn at it about 1*s.* a day.

A.

the number of beasts would be 10 to 100 acres. The yield of wheat would be from five to six sacks to the acre. The rate of wages paid to ordinary labourers at the time of my visit was 10*s.* a week, with a daily allowance of drink, which the men themselves valued at 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* a week more. It was estimated that an efficient labourer in constant employ would earn, including his harvest and piece work, from 32*l.* to 35*l.* a year. The rent of cottages, the condition of which varies very widely, is on the whole moderate, seldom exceeding 3*l.*, and sometimes not more than half that amount. The parish of South Cerney, like that of Docking, in Norfolk, is an example of the mischief which the system till lately so generally adopted by landowners who had the power of "closing" their parishes, inflicted upon the unfortunate "open" parish that happened to be their neighbour. This parish helps to supply no less than ten adjoining parishes with their labour; and some of the men have to travel to their work a distance of from three to four miles. Another parish—Down Amney—is an admirable specimen of the effects of a sense of responsibility too seldom felt by non-resident proprietors: the school is liberally supported; the cottages leave nothing to be desired. The education of the district generally appeared to me to be below, rather than above, the average, though there are several of the parishes in which there are efficient schools. Evening schools are a rare institution; on the bleak, rugged Cotswolds there would be a physical difficulty in maintaining them.

Union of Thornbury.

31. The Union of Thornbury (with 19 parishes, 66,000 acres, 16,500 population) lies between the spurs of the Cotswolds and the river Severn, and is a district almost entirely of dairy farms. These vary very much in size, from 30 or 40 to 300 or 400 acres; a large proportion of the holdings would range from 100 to 150 acres. A peculiar feature in the agriculture of some of the parishes—*ex. gr.*, Almondsbury, Olveston, and Alveston—is the presence of large allotments, of from 4 to 10 acres in size, which find a ready sale for their produce in Bristol market. The occupiers of these are labouring men who cultivate them with the help of their families; and in this respect, whatever may be their material advantages, they operate very disadvantageously on the school. The land, in consequence of so much of it being in pasture, is worked with less manual labour than in a corn-growing district; two and a half men and one boy would be an adequate supply for 100 acres. Women are not largely employed on the land, except at haymaking, or for an occasional job of stone picking or spreading cow-droppings. Young girls, if employed on the farms, generally accompany their parents in the haymaking and fruit-picking seasons. Boys are not wanted for constant work till they are 11 or 12 years of age. The wages paid in the district in January last were 11*s.* and 12*s.* a week, generally with an allowance of cider in addition. It is the custom of the country to employ men, lads, and women intermixed, to milk the cows on a dairy farm, and results unfavourable to morality, or at least to modesty, are said to arise from the practice. It might have been supposed that in a dairy district the evils of irregular attendance at, and early withdrawal of the children from, the schools would have been less conspicuous than elsewhere. But it does not appear to be the case. Education still labours on under these chronic universal difficulties; and there are considerable tracts of country—*ex. gr.*, the parish of Tytherington, and the vast area of Berkeley with its 15,000 acres, nearly a fourth of the whole union—which are, besides, most inadequately supplied with schools. Cottage rents are rather high, ranging from 3*l.* to 5*l.*, and even 6*l.*

Union of Newent.

32. The Union of Newent (18 parishes, 45,000 acres, 12,500 population) lies on the western side of the county, between Gloucester and Ledbury, and includes two parishes in Worcestershire and two in Hereford. The soil varies from a stiff clay to a workable sandy loam and a light drifting sand, the latter being known in the district by the name of "rye-land." About 75 per cent. of the land is under plough. The holdings generally are not large; from 200 to 300 acres. Boys are wanted for the usual intermittent jobs, and women are largely employed, but not young girls.* The rate of wages is low, 11*s.*, 10*s.*, and in some cases 9*s.* a week, 10s. being the sum most frequently paid. In all cases there is an allowance of cider, which the men value at 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, and prefer to its equivalent in money. The physical, social, and educational condition of the labouring class appeared to me to be low. Many cottages which I saw in the parishes of Newent, Linton, and Taynton are simply unfit for human habitation. There are large areas nearly destitute of schools, or only provided with inefficient ones; and in the wild tract of country round Mayhill there resides a population, probably upwards of 1,000 in number, wild and almost savage in their habits, who seem to lie entirely out of the pale of civilization. I do not know when I have felt more depressed, or more conscious of the difficulties that surround this great question, how to elevate the condition of the rural poor, than after my return from a drive of inspection which I had been taken by a medical gentleman whose practice lies in this district, and in which I had seen type after type of social life almost degraded to the level of barbarism. The houses of the people are widely scattered; the lanes and field footpaths in winter sometimes are ankle deep in mire; the schools are often inconveniently situated. All these, of course, are hindrances, and serious hindrances; but still, in spite of them, efficient schools prosper, and a determined educationist like Mr. Osman Ricardo, who will tolerate no frivolous excuses for irregularities, finds no difficulty, I believe, in filling his rooms to their utmost capacity with a crowd of eager and punctual scholars.† But the soil of this district, socially speaking, requires more thorough and effective cultivation than it has yet received to clear it of weeds, and to produce the fruits of which it is capable. With more combined energy on the part of all, a different tale might soon be told.

Generalized results.

33. After this summary description of my territory, I pass on to state the general upshot of the facts with which it has supplied me, and the impressions which these facts have left upon my mind. I refer the reader to the large body of evidence, which I have printed, for details.

* A considerable number of women and girls in the district earn money by glove-making.

† Mr. Ricardo is an entire believer in the sufficiency of the attractive power of an efficient school. Parents have quite intelligence enough to appreciate its value; the children themselves are drawn to the teacher under whom they feel the pleasurable sensation that they are making progress. The incumbent of Upleadon, though he has a fairly efficient school under government inspection taught by a mistress only, finds that he cannot retain his bigger boys there; they are drawn off by the superior attractions of Mr. Ricardo's school at Pauntley, though the one school is close to their doors, the other lies at a distance of two miles.—*See* "Notes of "Meeting at Corse," No. 92.

A. PRIVATE GANGS.

34. I have but few observations to offer on the subject of the employment of private gangs. The Commissioners define a "private gang" to be "a group of children, young persons, and women in a farmer's own employ and superintended by one of his own labourers." They state in their sixth Report (p. xxiii. 398) that they have reason to believe from information received and facts observed by their assistant Commissioners in the course of their inquiries into the system of public gangs, that "the aggregate number of children, young persons and women occasionally employed in the private gangs is greatly in excess of those employed in the public gangs, and that, "to use a common mode of designating them, where the numbers of the latter are counted by hundreds, those in the former are counted by thousands." I have not been able to discover the foundation of this impression in any part of the district that was assigned to me.

Rare in my district, and not ill-conducted.

35. Out of 156 parochial returns that I have received, only seven acknowledge the existence of private gangs at all; and these only to a very limited extent, and without the accompaniment of any of those circumstances of physical or moral degradation which startled and shocked the public mind when it first read the revelations of the system of public gangs. At Dickleburgh, "their conduct is in general orderly;" at Rushall "the sexes usually work apart;" in Docking, they are all girls; at Ridgwell, they consist only of boys. Only in Hempnall, where the sexes are mixed, which is not always the case, are any mischievous moral results thought to ensue. Besides these few cases mentioned in my returns, I met myself with only four instances of private gangs; a gang of about a dozen boys employed by Lord Leicester to weed in Holkham Park;* a mixed gang of eight or ten young boys and girls, similarly employed in the park of Francis Boileau, Esq., of Tacolnestone; a gang of eight or ten women and girls employed on the farms of Mr. Jacob Finch, of Swaffham; and a gang of boys, varying in size from ten to thirty, which has recently been disbanded, but which used to be employed on the half day system by Lord Rayleigh at Terling.

Not much scope for private gangs.

36. In fact, it would only be on farms of the largest size, ranging from one to two or three thousand acres, that anything like continuous employment could be found for a private gang; and unless it were likely to be continuously employed, few farmers would take the trouble to organize one. In such cases, where gang labour would be useful to them, they would naturally prefer the available services of the public gang. Indeed, it was pointed out to me by the Rev. Whitwell Elwyn, of Booton, whose practical good sense is as conspicuous as his cultivated literary taste, that the gang system, originating in the special circumstances of the eastern counties, was likely to make its way into all districts, where large holdings are the rule, from its inherent value and merit as *an organization of labour*. It is a form of "technical instruction;" a sort of agricultural apprenticeship. The evils to which it has undoubtedly given rise, have sprung not from the use of the system, but from its abuse. Fenced round with proper restrictions, worked by the farmer himself, and not by a middleman, organized under a competent overlooker, it would be the best of all possible introductions for young hands to the labour they will be called upon to do on a farm. To private gangs, employed as they were by the Earl of Leicester and Lord Rayleigh, no conceivable objection could be raised. It is merely the same system that would be applied in the industrial department of every well-organized workhouse or district school.

The gang system, under proper regulations, merely the organization of labour.

The Gangs Regulation Act generally approved.

37. It will be gratifying to the Commissioners to know that the Act passed in the last session of Parliament for the regulation of public gangs has been received universally in Norfolk, not only with entire acquiescence, but with hearty approval; and I am informed that already its good effects are being recognized. It is true that, at one of my meetings, where sentiments of approval of the Act were frankly expressed,† a gentleman gave vent to the opinion, that the regulations would prove the death of the system, as it could not be worked under them; but neither he who entertained this opinion, nor others who endorsed it, appeared inclined to shed any tears over the grave; while the Norfolk Chamber of Agriculture preface the observations they have to offer upon the present inquiry with the statement that "they cordially approve of the Agricultural Gangs Act of last Session, and believe that it will be found sufficient to cure what is certainly an exceptional, but still a great, and perhaps the chief, evil in the employment of women and children in agriculture."‡

Lord Leicester's gang.

* This gang, Lord Leicester told me, his bailiff employed rather in compliance with the importunity of the boys' parents than because he actually required their services. He himself would be glad if the law compelled him to refuse employment to any boy under 10 years of age. To do so now would be thought hard by the parents. In a letter received from his lordship, dated Holkham, April 10th, 1868, he says, "I am happy to say I have just heard that my gang of boys have struck work, wanting higher "wages. I shall give no more than I have hitherto done, and now I hope they will go to school; but I much doubt that, till the "parents are compelled by law to send them, they will not do so."

† The Necton meeting, No. 48. The grounds of Mr. Giles' opinion were: (1) that the present race of gangmasters would not have character enough to obtain a certificate, and that no really respectable men would be found willing to take their place; (2) that a woman would not be competent to superintend a female gang; and (3) that in the large 100-acre fields of West Norfolk the separation of the sexes would be found impracticable.

‡ *See* Resolutions of Norfolk Chamber of Agriculture, Append., p. 5.

Effects of Gangs Regulation Act at Saham Toney.

With regard to the effects already produced by the regulations which have been in operation only four months, I quote from a letter of the Rev. W. H. Parker, Rector of Saham Toney, whose long continued and munificent efforts to improve the education and elevate the condition of the labouring class around him have been quite neutralized by the counteracting influence of the unregulated gang. "Some good," says Mr. Parker, "has certainly been already effected in this neighbourhood by the change in the "gang system, the separation of the sexes, and the superintendence of a gang mistress; but it will require a long, very long, time to "eradicate the mischief which has been done." The date of this letter is April 28, 1868.

Magistrates' difficulties in the interpretation of the Act.

I am told that the magistrates are by no means agreed in the interpretation to be put upon their functions as defined by the Act. Some are disposed to regard the question of "character" in the gangmaster as merely a question of his fitness to superintend agricultural work; others think that the further element ought to be considered of his moral fitness to have the charge of young people. I conceive that the Act, remembering the facts upon which it was based, certainly meant that the latter element should be kept in view; and, in fact, if it were lost sight of, one of the main purposes of this legislation would be evacuated.

Another difficulty, as I understand, which the magistrates encounter is to determine what they ought to consider sufficient testimonials of character. It is a question of the interpretation of the clause, "on due proof to the satisfaction of such justices that the "applicant for a licence is of good character and a fit person to be intrusted with the management of an agricultural gang." Testimonials, I am told, are often signed by neighbours, out of mere good nature, in favour of persons of very indifferent character, which the magistrates do not like to scrutinize with too great strictness.

A.

Suggestions about private gangs.

38. In the few instances in which opinions have been expressed to me on the subject of private gangs, they have been limited for the most part to the hope that the second, sixth, eighth and tenth of the Commissioners' recommendations in relation to public gangs should be applied also to the regulation of these. These recommendations are, that the age of the children employed should be restricted; that the sexes should be separated; that restraint should be placed on the practice of employing females in weeding high wet corn; that a certain amount of school attendance should be compulsory on all children from the time of their beginning to earn wages by employment in a gang.

The present Act should be pushed further and should embrace private as well as public gangs.

39. Only the two first of these recommendations are embodied in the Act as it stands. But the Act itself, I presume, can only be regarded as dealing tentatively with its subject. It is of the nature of an experiment; and the experiment, I think, will bear being pushed considerably farther in the direction in which it has already advanced, without running the risk of doing any harm. The age of 8 is certainly too early, on physical as well as on educational grounds, for any child, either boy or girl, to commence his apprenticeship to farm work in a gang. It might, indeed it ought to be raised at least to 10, if not to 12.* From the almost universal expression of opinion unfavourable to the employment of young unmarried girls upon the land, an opinion expressed not more strongly by the clergy than by the farmers themselves, I believe it would be considered on all hands to be a beneficent interference of the legislature, if females under 16 were prohibited from working in an agricultural gang at all. It certainly would be proper that the hours of work exacted from children and young persons employed in a gang should be subject to limitations determined by their age. The sexes should be separated. In the case of a public gang, the superintendent, as required by the late Act, should be licensed.

40. All these restrictions, except the last, would be as much required in private, as in public gangs Not merely embodied in a law, but effectively applied in practice, they would leave to the gang-system all its elements of usefulness; they would go far to strip it of all its power of harm.†

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN NOT IN GANGS.

Table showing extent of this employment.

41. I proceed to the more general question of the employment of children, by which term I understand boys and girls under the age of 13, in the operations of husbandry. The extent to which this employment is carried in the 93 parishes in my four counties, from which alone returns have been received, is shown in the table printed in the appendix. Here I need only summarize the results, there given in detail.

TABLE II.‡

County.	No. of Parishes.	Aggregate Population.	Males				Females			
			Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Total.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Total.
Norfolk	44	21,606	21	116	339	476	3	14	55	72
Essex	8	4,820	6	33	95	134	—	—	4	4
Sussex	15	5,470	—	17	128	145	—	—	—	—
Gloucester	26	12,743	—	30	229	259	—	—	17	17
Totals	93	44,639	27	196	791	1,014	3	14	76	93

Figures not absolutely to be depended on.

Difficulty in procuring exact returns.

42. It is a matter of regret that out of 257 parishes in which the above statistical information was asked for, it has only been received from 93. Nor can I profess implicit faith in the accuracy or completeness of the returns which have come in. In truth, there is nothing about which people, other than professed statisticians, think it less necessary, or find it more irksome, to be accurate, than about figures. A mere guess, and that, upon examination, discovered to be very wide of the truth, is often supposed sufficient to answer the purpose of any inquiry. And exactness, in this particular item of information, however important, it was next to impossible to obtain. For the employment of children, particularly of young children, in the work of farms is so precarious and occasional, so fluctuating, that figures which would be true of one season would not be true of another; and as my inquiry did not commence till

Need of special restrictions in the case of gangs.

* It must be remembered that the very object of the gang system is to economise the cost of labour by getting as much work as possible out of the children during the hours in which they are employed. The business of the gangmaster is to "drive." Hence "the term 'backbreakers' applied to the older children of either sex who by their endurance can keep others longer and sharper at "their work." (Rev. B. Houchen's letter, in Commissioners' Sixth Report, p. 87, note.) Hence, therefore, the need to raise the limit of age, and to restrict the hours of work; and, if possible, to prohibit the employment altogether to females till they have reached an age when work of this kind would be likely to tell with less ill effect upon their constitutions.

The Public Gangs Act is leading to the creation of private gangs.

† Since writing the above paragraphs I have been informed by a Suffolk magistrate of a state of things growing up out of the Public Gangs Act, which powerfully confirms two positions taken up in this Report, (1) that private gangs need to be regulated on the same principles as public gangs, and (2) that in dealing with this question of the employment of children, whether in manufactures, mines, handicrafts, or husbandry, there will be no possibility of preventing evasions, unless all the cases are included in one simple, comprehensive, uniform law.

It appears that in the part of Suffolk in which my informant resides, the trouble caused by the clause in the new Act requiring the separation of the sexes, which of course in thinly peopled districts lessens the size of the gang and diminishes its usefulness as a rapid working power, coupled with the still indifferent character of many of the gangmasters, has induced the farmer to substitute for the public, the system of the private, gang. The magistrate, to whom I owe my knowledge of the fact, was recently passing a field in which he observed between 20 and 30 boys, lads, girls, and women engaged in picking stones under the supervision of a man. He stopped and inquired whose gang it was. The man in charge replied, it was no gang at all; the workers were all hired by the farmer and paid by the farmer. This system, I am informed, is spreading and is likely to spread; and the farmers further justify it by saying that many of the gangmasters are such rogues that they often decamp without paying to the children any of the money they have received, and that therefore they (the farmers), in addition to the greater liberty they enjoy, prefer employing and paying the children of their own people under the superintendence of one of their own men.

‡ It should be understood that this table does not include any children employed either in public or private gangs. These, however, do not exist in Sussex, or Gloucester; and only to a very limited extent in Essex. Neither does the table include children employed in the seasons of hay-making and corn harvest; nor the Essex pea-pickers.

A.

July, and terminated in January, it fell just outside that season of the year in which the farmer stands most in need of young hands. I believe, therefore, that the figures in my table are considerably below the real mark. The difference would be likely to be greatest in the numbers given of children employed below the age of 10. By 10 and onwards, a child, and particularly a boy, has become of constant use upon a farm, and is probably employed without intermission throughout the year; they are boys and girls under 10 or 11, whose school attendance is so continually interrupted by little jobs of occasional work, which demand first one, and then another, pair of quick eyes, light feet, or nimble hands.*

The agricultural boy's school life ends at ten.

43. Speaking generally, a boy's chance of education, as things are at present, is pretty nearly over when he is once taken away from school and put to one of these occasional jobs of work. The parent has tasted the sweets of his earnings; the boy himself, unless more enamoured of his books than such boys usually are, prefers the independence, and in some cases the idleness.† The jobs themselves follow one upon another so rapidly, that there is always a chance of a fresh one ahead, when the present employment has come, or is coming, to an end. The poor have seldom any idea of the importance, in regard of education, of utilizing small scraps of time. It is not at all uncommon, schoolmasters have assured me, for boys to leave school in the early spring and not return again till the late autumn, though for half that time perhaps they have only been expecting work, and not been actually employed. In most parishes, particularly where the school is not remarkably efficient, or labours under any disadvantages of situation, the proportion of sons of agricultural labourers above the age of 10 to the whole number of registered scholars is lamentably small. In many instances the schoolmaster sees the last of them at an even considerably earlier age,‡ or if he does not see quite the last of them, an interruption occurs in the continuity of their school life, which is fatal to further progress.§

Difference of opinion as to the age at which a boy should begin work upon a farm.

44. There is a considerable difference of opinion between many of the employers of labour and the labourers themselves as to the age at which a boy ought to begin his career on a farm, if he is ever to make a thoroughly efficient agricultural "hand." The almost unanimous opinion of the labouring men whom I have questioned on the subject, is that there is no need for a boy to turn his hand to farm work till he is 12 or 13 years of age, if only his parents can afford to keep him at school and dispense with his earnings. On the other hand, at one or two of my meetings, such extravagant assertions were gravely made as that unless a boy begins to work at 6 or 7, or at the latest at 8,‖ he will never grow into the man he ought to be; and again and again, in proof of the necessity of beginning early, the case of boys brought up in workhouses, where there are no industrial departments, was pointed to, as an instance of the mischievous consequences to the man's subsequent career of keeping him at school, as a boy, too long.¶

It need not be so early as it has been put by some.

45. I think, however, that common sense can decide this question quite as well as this so-called experience. Experience is sometimes only another name for prejudice; and farmers are of all people in the world those who are least given to, and most dislike the idea of, change. There can be no doubt

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Cycle of children's work on the land.

* The following would be something like the cycle of the year:
January.—Hop pole shaving and other coppice work in woodland countries.
February.—Twitching, stone picking, bean and pea setting.
March.—Potato setting, bird scaring, cleaning land for spring corn.
April.—Bird scaring, weeding corn, setting potatoes.
May.—Bird scaring, weeding corn, cleaning land for turnips, bark harvest, tending cows in the lanes, &c.
June.—Hay making, turnip singling.
July.—Turnip singling, pea picking, cutting thistles, scaring birds from ripening corn.
August.—Corn harvest, gleaning.
September.—Hop harvest, tending sheep or pigs on the stubbles.
October.—Potato and fruit gathering, twitching, dibbling and dropping wheat.
November.—Bird scaring from new sown wheat and beans, acorning.
December.—Stone picking; spreading cow droppings; in Norfolk, scaring birds from corn stacks; in Essex, helping their fathers to make surface drains; in woodland districts, coppice work; topping and tailing turnips, and cleaning roots for cattle.

It is impossible to construct such a table with perfect accuracy. Disturbance would constantly arise from differences of soil, climate, season, system. The various operations cannot be precisely limited to months; corn harvest runs on into September, acorning begins in October. One farmer gets his wheat in early; his neighbour perhaps not till six weeks afterwards. Still the table is as approximately correct as it could be made, and it shows, as the farmers themselves constantly asserted, that though one part of the year may be busier than another it is very difficult to find an actually "slack time." It is also of the utmost importance in farming to seize the opportunity. A necessary operation omitted or delayed, it may be only three or four days, may involve the loss, or the serious injury, of the crop for that season. It was a farmer's maxim that grew into a proverb of general currency among the Greeks, "*καιρὸς δ' ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἄριστος.*"—Hesiod, Op. et Dies, 640.

Indolence engendered by some of these employments.

† Nothing can be an idler employment for a boy than scaring birds or tending sheep and cows, the first jobs usually to which he is put. The Norfolk farmers have a saying, "If you put two or three boys near one another on a farm, you want a man to look after them and prevent their getting to play." Elsewhere, the proverb runs, "One boy is a boy, two boys are half a boy, three boys are no boy at all."

Cases of early removal from school.

‡ *See* "Notes on Schools," Nos. 8, 10, 25, 26, 27, 28. In the return for the parish of Great Cressingham (Norfolk), the rector specifies the following four cases as having occurred within the year. The date of the return is September 26, 1867.
1. The son of a person named Ship Newton, 7 years old, has been employed in cow-keeping and crow-scaring since last spring.
2. Arthur Quadling, 8 years old, left school last spring to keep crows off the crops and has not yet returned.
3. Arthur Alderton, son of Sarah Alderton, aged 8, left school last spring to travel about with a dealer and go on errands.
4. Francis, son of Margaret Alderton, 7 years old, left school last spring for sheep keeping, and lost one finger in a cake-crushing machine.

§ The schoolmaster at Fairford (Gloucestershire) said that he had a few boys in his school from some neighbouring villages who went to work all the spring and summer, and came back to school for the three or four winter months, but they made no advance. The fault is not in the school, which is thoroughly efficient.—*See* "Minutes of Fairford Meeting," No. 79. *See* also the experience of the schoolmaster at Olveston to the same effect, "Notes of Meeting at Olveston," No. 84.

‖ At the Great Yeldham meeting (No. 55), one large farmer considered "that a boy taken to work at 5 would be worth twice as much when he is 12, as a boy not taken to work before 10." The force of paradox could hardly go further.

¶ Old Hesiod, as might be expected from his shrewd sense, recognizes that there is a limit both ways. To work a boy too early or too late, with him, is the way to spoil him when he becomes a man. At 12 years of age, he says, he ought to begin to bestir himself:

"*μηδ' ἐπ' ἀκινήτοισι καθίζειν—(οὐ γὰρ ἄμεινον)—*
παῖδα δυωδεκαταῖον, ὅ τ' ἀνέρ' ἀνήνορα ποιεῖ."
Op. et Dies. 699, *sqq.*

The same questions, it seems, vexed men's minds then as now.

A. that the labourers' opinion in this matter is right, and the farmers' opinion is wrong.* The case of the workhouse boy shut up within four dreary walls, not able to distinguish vetches from wheat, nor knowing how to use a fork or hoe, kept poring over books till he is 14 or 15, which is the picture that my friends the farmers drew (where it is to be found in actual life I can't exactly say), is an extreme and exceptional one. It has no parallel in the case of the boy living at home, helping his father every now and then in his garden, witnessing the succession of agricultural operations all through the year, knowing the name and something of the habits and use of every bird, and beast, and implement upon the farm; in fact, breathing the very atmosphere of husbandry. Nor is it true that the earliest employments to which children of tender years are put upon a farm are of any quickening or developing tendency.† No one shall persuade me that the boy, taken from school at eight, who has spent the two first years of his agricultural life in tending sheep or scaring crows, thereby has his witsin brisker movement when he reaches the age of 10 than the boy who has spent the same two years with his slate and writing-book at school. A boy has scarcely need to know that he has any wits at all, as far as his farm-work is concerned, till he comes to be of age enough to drive the plough, the horsehoe, or the drill; and few farmers would put him to do that till he was 11 or 12 years of age. I dare say that, till he has had a little practice, his first essays in these operations would be clumsy and unscientific enough; but I venture to think they will not be a whit clumsier or less scientific because he has spent the two previous years of his life at school than if he had passed them among the sheep and crows.‡

The first employments of children require no skill.

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* It is not, however, by any means the opinion of all farmers, nor, I think, of the most intelligent farmers. Mr. Clement Hardy, in the discussion that took place in the Norfolk Chamber of Agriculture, expressed his belief that it would not cause the slightest inconvenience to the farmer if boys under 12 were prohibited from being employed upon the land. Several farmers present at my meeting at Redmarley (*see* "Notes of Meeting," No. 90) gave it as their opinion that boys are better labourers for being better educated, and that the age of 12 is quite early enough for a boy to begin his apprenticeship to farm work.

† *See* the opinion of the Rev. Mr. Burnett of Boxgrove, Sussex, "Evidence of School Managers," No. 22.

The wits of the ordinary farm-boy admitted to require sharpening.

‡ I quote an amusing and instructive extract ftom an address delivered by Mr. Herman Biddell of Playford, near Ipswich, to the Framlingham Farmers' Club on the 9th of last March. Mr. Biddell has favoured me with his views upon other points involved in this inquiry, and very kindly and liberal views they are. They are printed among my "Miscellaneous Evidence" No. 16. In the address referred to, this gentleman, himself a large occupier of land, says :—

"That future generations of the agricultural labourer are to be exactly like what the majority of the present are, I am not quite persuaded. I do not think farmers, as a body, always do the best by the boys—the little boys they have about them. I don't know that the Factory Act, if extended to our vocation, will make us a bit better in this respect. I don't think it will, but a little thought and a good deal of attention might improve matters vastly. I own we are differently situated to trades and professions. If a boy comes to a farmer and he puts him to plough, for a year or two he makes sad havoc with the drilling and horse hoeing, through his inexperience in laying a level stretch. But the moment he can do the thing as it should be done (in the meantime having spoilt the mouths and tempers of half-a-dozen good horses) he becomes a perfectly independent man, and after having cost no end of trouble and vexation to his master, he immediately starts on his own account and becomes the hired servant of the first man who will give him eighteenpence more than his old master. Now if a lad go for a journeyman carpenter, or harness-maker, or anything of that sort, his principal takes care to secure by agreement some years of service, after he has learned the rudiments of his business, and so in some measure is reimbursed for his trouble in teaching his pupil. Now, I know it is not very encouraging for a man to take a boy, learn him to plough at his own expense, and then when he is of some use, to see him start off for some other sphere, only to leave the plough-handle vacant for the next to try his hand on. But this is no reason why we should let our labourers' boys speak, move, and think at a pace 100 years behind the speed of any other mortal this side the Tweed. Look at the common run of boys in a warehouse in London. Their heads show no more development of brain than their low-bred country cousins, but ten to one if you speak to a London lad, or put a question to him, but you get an answer,—not a blundering, thoughtless one, but something to the point, in the course of a second. I allow he might be quite as ignorant as your country youngster, and the very fellow who would trip you up if you hesitated for a word, would be just the boy if brought into a farmyard and requested 'to see after the things,' to give the fat hog a bundle of wheat straw for supper, and feed the cows with tea leaves; but that would be because he had never had to do it before. But what does our little red-faced, brown-slopped, wooden-soled son of the soil say when you ask him to run and fetch a hay rake? In all probability, if he is a true bred one, he will open his mouth, turn his eyes on you, and wheel on his heels with the precipitate motion of a Polar bear. This is only the commencement of the process of fetching the hay rake. He now repeats the word 'a hay rake,' and opens his mouth again. The process of thought has now commenced, and by the time his indulgent master has thundered out his request a second time, he has just realised the idea of the article required, but it has not yet occurred to him where the hay rake is to be found. This he demands to know by ejaculating the monosyllable, 'Where?' The result is, after having devoted more time to the stirring up the stagnant brain of the hopeful messenger than would have been lost in fetching the article yourself, he goes off at a rate which would exasperate any but those who are accustomed to the pace of the 'farmer's boy.' Now I persist this is neither more nor less than the result of habit; his walk and his thought are only conducted on the same principle. Hurry never enters into the constitution of either. He has no idea of thinking except at the pace I have described. The practice of thinking fast or slow is only matter of habit, just the same as quick walking or quick speaking. The brains of one class of boys are much the same as the brains of another, until association, culture, and opportunity shape them into different organs. I maintain there is no reason why the boy who is bred and born in an agricultural district should not be as intellectual as boys who are bred and brought up in the busy din of a commercial city; the only difference is, in the one case he is brought up in a sphere where body and brain are alike taught to appreciate the value of time, and in the other his employer contents himself with the amount of labour the natural inclination of the boy spontaneously yields. Take the instance of a stable boy placed under the supervision of a crafty groom, a groom who has learned to meet the curse of Adam by wringing the sweat out of the brow of his help, instead of out of his own. You say that's a 'smart boy,' and if the master would take the same pains with each individual boy, whether he is a tender of cows, a feeder of pigs, or a jack-of-all-trades in the farm-yard, he, also, would be what is termed a 'smart boy.' But what do we do? A sturdy lad of the age of eight summers comes into employ, and is installed into the responsible position of keeping cows. You cross the field and ask him 'Where's the shepherd?' Down goes the lower jaw, and up go the eyelids, and if you wait long enough, and repeat the question, the words 'Don't know' are let fall as if by necessity not by choice. 'Have you seen him, boy?' says the master. 'Yees, I 'see'd him go into the five-acres a little while back.' Now, instead of telling him to take care next time and not say 'Don't know,' or a box on the ears will assuredly follow, master most likely turns away, and all he says is, 'Stupid boy,' and the next interview will be much the same as the one I have described. If after the boy repeated the word hay-rake, or 'don't know,' he had been taken by the shoulders, well shaken, and sent off for the required article at a brisk trot, I'll answer for it his wits would have worked with his legs, and the next time the hay-rake or the shepherd had been asked for, there would have been no rehearsal of the vacant stare and the stupid repetition of the words, as if that gave his brain more time. Impress upon your boys that no such thoughtless answer as 'Don't know,' 'Can't,' and the like, will be allowed. Make them speak sharp. If you have a long walk for a boy, and call one out of a set of four cleaning beet in the bullock-shed, give the irksome job to the last that comes, next time they will all rush out like a pack of hounds the moment they are spoken to; make them answer the moment they are called, and run the moment they are wanted. Take care they know you will have this done, and point at certain penalties in case of disobedience. I don't mean the ash stick, or the box on the ears, probably both have been tried at home. Give him to understand that unless he imbibes the smartness I am speaking of, he will be sent the first long errand on foot that turns up; or when the other boys are gone home he'll have to stay at work a half hour alone. Tell him to stand upright and look you in the face, and, moreover, recollect that a well-judged word of praise for a quickly done errand, or a well executed job goes a long way with a being to whom words of praise are rare things. Two bright penny pieces to a lad, whose only assets are a pocket knife, a whip stick, and a copy of Watts' hymns, are a wonderful inducement to do a job quickly and carefully. A new cap, a pair of buskins, or a pair of gloves go a long way towards making him think quickly and act upon his thoughts. I know no class of beings so bedazzled and delighted by a little present for themselves as the little boys in a farm-yard. They are not all alike, and do what you will some will have better heads and quicker wits than others; some will be idle and ill requite the efforts I have suggested to improve their capabilities; but some will be grateful for your

A. Restriction proposed on the hours of labour of boys under a certain age.

46. If farm-boys did not go to work till they were 12 or 13 years of age, I do not think that there would be any need to suggest that there should be any restriction placed on the number of hours of labour exacted from them in a day. In ordinary cases, the work is not exhaustingly hard, nor are the hours excessively long. For most jobs, a child's day and a woman's day are the same; nine, or at the outside 10 hours, with an hour and a half or two hours allowed for meals. Mr. Herman Biddell, of Playford, assures me that in his part of Suffolk even a ploughboy's day does not exceed 10 or 11 hours. I was severely taken to task for asserting to the Central Chamber of Agriculture in London that a bird-scaring or a plough-driving boy's day was not unfrequently 14, 15, and even 16 hours long. I have abundant evidence, however, in proof of the assertion. The fact is that if the little birdscarer is to be of any use he must be on his ground at sunrise, and remain there till sundown;* and this at midsummer, when he is keeping birds off the ripening corn, makes a long day of it. And though of course the day is shorter in the spring, when he is watching the new-sown crops, yet, according to Mr. Vipan in his medical evidence, "to expose a boy of 10 or 12 years of age, even for 12 hours a "day, to the cutting easterly winds that prevail in the eastern counties in the months of March, April, "and May, must not only be detrimental to his physical growth, but is nearly sure to develop the "seeds of any disease that may be latent in his constitution."† Dr. Borham, of Halstead, another medical gentleman who allowed me to examine him, considers that "eight hours a day is as long a "time as any boy of 10 ought to be employed. If kept longer on his legs, the cartilages of the joints "become disorganized, and produce stunted growth, curvature of the spine, and often that scrofulous diathesis, which prevails to such an extent among the English poor."‡ And, whatever may be the practice in Suffolk, I am quite sure that in a very great amount of cases the number of hours during which many a boy is employed about horses in the day is far in excess of 10 or 11. Mr. Spearing, in the interesting paper which he read to the Hungerford Farmers' Club, and which I have printed in my Appendix, states that "the management of the stable is generally left pretty much to the carter, and "masters are not always alive to the way in which boys are managed;" and he expresses his "regret "that at stable-work boys are frequently made to do what under-carters or older servants ought to "do."§ The farm labourers, with whom I had a conference at Newent, told me that "a carter-boy "would be expected to get to his work between 5 and 6 a.m., and perhaps does not leave off till "between 7 and 8 p.m.," and they added that "these hours are too much for little boys, but they "can't be shortened; and the change that is wanted is to employ bigger boys, who can better stand "the time. A lad of 14 to 16," in their opinion, "would make a better carter-boy than one of 12 or "13."‖ Indeed, it was pointed out to me by the Rev. Reginald Hill, of Bromsberrow, in Gloucestershire, that under the present system they are the youngest boys who work the longest hours. When the lad gets beyond the age at which he would be put to "starve" birds or to drive plough he would, in most cases, find his day materially shortened. At two important meetings which I held in Gloucestershire, one at Cromhall, the other at Berkeley, at the former of which the Earl of Ducie, and at the latter Lord Fitzhardinge, were in the chair, there was a general agreement of opinion that 10 hours' labour in the day is as much as ought to be required from any boy under 12 years of age.¶ I am quite prepared, from what I have heard and seen, to recommend that such a restriction should be imposed by law. It is necessary on physical grounds; it is necessary also, if night schools are ever to be of any use to the farm-boy, on educational grounds. It would not interfere vexatiously with the practice of those farmers who have assured me that they never think of employing a boy for more hours; while it would provide a remedy for cases, which are often cases of very great hardship, even if they are "exceptional."**

47. At several of my meetings it was an opinion frankly expressed on the part of the farmers that young boys, "boys of 10 or 11" was the age fixed in two instances,†† cannot, and ought not to be required to, stand the cold to which they must be exposed if employed during the winter months upon the land. The medical account of the case is that the circulation of the blood in a boy, insufficiently clothed and fed, and exposed for a number of continuous hours to any severe amount of cold, becomes

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exertions and repay you for the trouble. Perhaps I have a weakness for the boys, and am apt to take the bright view of a troublesome task; you will think so when I say I have nine on one farm of about 270 acres. On these I have practised the system I have here recommended, and if I have some full of mischief, some stupid, and others careless; if some are idle, and others better disposed to work; if they are no better than boys differently treated, I know they are brighter, more useful, quicker, and far more obliging than they were before I paid any attention to them. I do not believe we require to put wits into the heads of our rustics so much as we want to make those wits work of which they are already possessed."

Surely the farm-boy's wits might have a keener edge to them if they had had a little more sharpening on the schoolmaster's hone. Mr. Biddell's typical boy "comes into employ at the age of eight summers." Poor lad! In most schools at that age he has hardly found out that he has a mind, much less learned how to use it.

* "Seven hours a day is enough for any child up to 13; but in keeping birds off the corn, in which very young children are often employed, they must be early and late to be of any use."—Rev. James Shirley, Rector of Frettenham, Norfolk, Append., p. 139.

† *See* "Medical Evidence," No. 1.

‡ *See* "Ibid.," No. 2.

§ *See* "Appendix," p. 24.

I request anybody who wishes to know what a ploughboy's day often is, to read the story told me by the two boys Albert Merritt and William Stephens. (*See* "Evidence of the Labouring Class," Nos. 40 and 42). I am certain that these are quite common cases. *See* also the list given me by the Rev. Mr. Douglas, of Hardwicke ("Miscellaneous Evidence," No. 33), of the length of a day's work to many boys in his parish. Mr. Albert Pell stated in the Central Chamber of Agriculture, when my instances were said to be "exceptional," that his stable boys (in Leicestershire, I believe) came to their work at 5, and did not leave off till 7.

‖ *See* "Notes of Meeting," No. 96.

¶ "Notes of Meetings," Nos. 87 and 89.

** *See*, in addition to the instances already referred to, the evidence of Mr. Cattle, surgeon, of Newent, "Medical Evidence," No. 4. It was thought at the Berkeley meeting that, in event of any such restriction being imposed, it should rather be a limit of so many hours in a week than of so many hours in a day, as the exigencies of farm-labour are so various and cannot always be foreseen; and the case was instanced of a boy being sent with the waggon to fetch coal or take corn to market. The proper reply, it seems to me, would be, that on such errands older boys should be employed. Twenty miles of road-work (as the distance may frequently amount to), when considered in connexion with the rate of travelling, the time occupied, and the work that has to be done before starting and after return, would be thought by any medical man excessive for a boy of the tender years supposed.

†† *See* "Notes of meetings at Drayton and Horsford, in Norfolk," Nos. 10 and 11.

A.

impeded; and upon the proper maintenance of the circulation depend his growth and physical development.* I saw it suggested in a very sensible letter in the "Times" newspaper,† that, on these physical grounds, no children—girls or boys—under the age of 12, should be employed in out-door agricultural work between November 1 and March 1. It would, no doubt, to the poor children themselves be a very beneficent restriction. I believe that it might be enforced without any intolerable hardship to the parents, or serious inconvenience to the farmer. It would admirably fit in with the suggestion that I shall have to make, when I come to speak of the best mode of dealing with the agricultural child's education. I feel sure that if the Commissioners make such a recommendation, they will find themselves supported by a strong force of public opinion. This limit as regards the season, together with the previous limit as regards the hours, would suffice to establish the proportion that ought to exist between the age and strength of a boy, and the nature and amount of the work exacted from him.

Restriction required in the case of employment on Sunday.

48. I think, further, that a suggestion made by the Rev. J. D. Ballance, vicar of Horsford, Norfolk, in his Return, is one to which the attention of the Commissioners should be called, viz., that where boys are employed, as they frequently are, when bird scaring or sheep tending, all the seven days of the week, the same boy should not be employed on two successive Sundays, but only on alternate Sundays. Whatever difficulty there may be in applying the half-time principle of the Factory Acts to the general employment of agricultural boys, there would be no difficulty in applying it to work required on Sundays. The effect of employing the same boy every day in the week, perhaps for months together, upon his general character and tone of mind is one that only those who have had experience of it can adequately appreciate. It is emphatically brutalizing. The boy never cleans himself, never puts on his best clothes, loses all reverence for the Sabbath, severs a link that attached him to his teachers and schoolfellows, misses the chance that the Sunday school would have given him of having a little intellectual movement imparted at least once a week to the stagnant faculties of his mind. A restriction that the same boy should not be employed in farm work on two consecutive Sundays, so as to deprive him of the opportunity of attending church and Sunday school, coupled with a restriction of the number of hours for which a boy under a certain age may be employed in any one day, would be in entire harmony with the principles which in the Workshops' Regulation Act have been applied to other trades, and would, I believe, be generally accepted as a very proper piece of legislation.‡

EMPLOYMENT OF FEMALES.

49. I now approach the subject, which of all others with which I have had to deal in the course of this inquiry, has caused me most perplexity, and through which I am even now least able to see my way clear. I refer to the employment of females of whatever age or condition upon the labours of the farm. The perplexity of which I speak has not arisen from the difficulty of having to reconcile diverse or contradictory opinions. On the contrary, as will be seen by any one who will take the trouble to peruse the evidence which I have collected on the subject, the unanimity of thought and feeling among all those who have expressed their opinions is most remarkable and almost absolute. It is universally admitted that such employment, not so much from causes inherent in it as from circumstances by which it is surrounded, is to a great extent demoralizing. Not only does it almost unsex a woman, in dress, gait, manners, character, making her rough, coarse, clumsy, masculine; but it generates a further very pregnant social mischief, by unfitting or indisposing her for a woman's proper duties at home. Some of the work on which women are frequently employed, such as serving the threshing machine, weeding high wet corn, drawing turnips or mangolds, is work to which, on physical grounds, they never ought to be put at all. Exposure to wet or cold, from which no farm labour can claim exemption, is likely, owing to the greater susceptibility of the female constitution, to be specially injurious to them. The farmers, almost to a man, complain of the difficulty of getting dairymaids and other domestic servants; and almost to a man again, express the opinion that the proper place for a young single girl is in a household, and not upon the land. It is admitted that the intermixture of the sexes is one great cause of demoralization; yet such is the nature of farm work that it would be very difficult even by the best contrived arrangement—it would almost be impossible by legislation—to secure effective separation. It is said that a party of women almost necessitate the presence of a male superintendent to keep them steadily and methodically to their work; while even more corrupting than the intermixture of any number of men with women in their work is said to be the influence of two or three debased members of their own sex. There are farm operations, as farming is practised in Norfolk, which practical agriculturists like Lord Leicester, fully alive to the evils accompanying the present mode of employing women, declare could not be effectively performed without them; § and, on the other hand, there is an

Admitted to be demoralizing.

Causes of the evil hard to reach, and difficult to remove.

* W. H. Vipan, Esq., "Medical Evidence," No. 1.

† *See* "Times," October 12, 1867.

The case of stable boys employed on Sunday.

‡ Another very great evil of a similar kind, but which could be more effectively corrected by right feelings leading to proper arrangements on the part of employers than by legislative restriction, is the way in which the stable work on many farms is laid out on Sundays. It is so arranged as practically to deprive the stable-boys of any opportunity of attending church at all. They do not get home, or at least they say they do not get home—and if their home lies at any distance they probably say the truth—in time to get themselves ready for morning church; and in the afternoons they have again to be at the stable at 4 o'clock, either to feed their horses there, or to take them out to grass in the summer time. There are two remedies, either of which would be practicable: either to readjust the hours, feeding a little earlier in the morning or a little later in the evening; or to adopt the alternate principle here too. One carter and his boy could without any difficulty do on Sunday all the work that needs to be done, which on other days, when the horses are at work, would require two carters and two boys. But the fact is that since the habit has died out of farmers taking their stable boys into their own house very few masters seem to consider themselves charged with any moral responsibilities in respect of the lads whom they employ. I have often heard well-meaning parents, of the feeble character that cannot exert its own legitimate authority, regret the change. The moral consequences that result from this desecration of the Sunday are, perhaps, in the interests of society, more serious than the spiritual; at any rate they are these consequences that have been uppermost in my mind while writing these remarks.

Large farms cultivated without female labour.

§ At the same time large farmers in Lord Leicester's neighbourhood cultivate their land without women. Mr. Lewis, of Heacham, and Mr. Wharton, of Ringstead, the former occupying 1,000, the latter 700 acres, cultivate their land entirely without women. Mr. Freeman of Dersingham, on 1,200 acres employs as few as he possibly can, and would do without them altogether if he could procure a sufficiency of male labour. Mr. Buckworth of Cockley Cley, farming 1,500 acres, does not employ a single woman or girl even in harvest, doing his weeding and turnip-singling by the help of a Swaffham gang. In the two Essex Unions which I visited, women, except at hay-making, pea-picking (and then not by the farmer), and harvest, are scarcely employed upon the land at all. In one parochial return received—that from Feering, in the Union of Witham—there appears to be an exceptionally large

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almost universal opinion that only by a tyrannical use of its power could the legislature step in and prevent, at any rate adult and married women, from gaining their livelihood and adding to the scanty resources of their family by any means that are honest and in themselves innocent. The evil is to some extent being mitigated by natural and spontaneous influences. Everywhere I heard the same story, that women are found to be less and less disposed to go out to work upon the land. They will refuse unsuitable work; they will stay at home on wet days. Whether from the easier circumstances in which they live, or from their having become intelligent enough to take a more accurate measure of loss and gain,* there seems to be much less attraction for them in the farmer's 8*d.* or 9*d.* a day than there used to be.

The case of young girls.

50. In the case of young girls it is admitted further, that farm labour indisposes them for domestic service, both by unfitting them for it and also by generating in them a spirit of independence and a dislike of control. But, as has been pointed out to me by the Rev. Edgar Montagu, whatever truth there may be in the cry about the difficulty of getting servants, it is probable that all persons who would keep servants have them, such as they are, and it is doubtful if our social system has the capacity of absorbing more; while the feeling of resentment of control and the love of a spurious independence, which are said to be produced by employment on the land, is not really produced by anything special in the form of that employment, but simply by the fact that those who earn their own livelihood will be their own masters and mistresses; and the same or even worse results are stated to be produced by other employments undertaken by girls, such as the straw-plait and glove-making, into which the whole body of the sex, other than those engaged in households, would be driven if shut out from work upon the land.†

Restrictions suggested by others.

51. The evil effects—moral, however, rather than physical—which are observed to ensue from the employment of young girls in agricultural labour are admitted universally, and almost without modification, and that not more distinctly by the clergy than by the farmers themselves. The remedies for them which have been suggested to me are, however, very various. Some would prohibit female labour altogether; some would limit the restriction to unmarried women under 20; others would prohibit up to the age of 18, or 16, or 13; some would allow work up to 13 and prohibit it afterwards. Some would limit female labour to special kinds of work, or to special seasons: would allow it in haymaking, harvest, and hop-picking, and in the more temperate months of the year, but would prohibit it in other farm operations and during the winter. Some think the evil is confined to cases where females work together in gangs, and that there is very little harm in their employment in small groups, still less when they work in their mother's company or under their mother's eye. Not a few consider that the evil is lessening, and in some parishes has even disappeared, and see no necessity for legislative restrictions at all.

Restriction proposed in respect of age.

52. Of so numerous recommendations it is not easy to select the best and most appropriate. They are all based substantially upon the same grounds, and the only question is which seems likely to reach the end in view most simply and effectively. Speaking from what I recollect as being the general current of opinion in my parochial meetings, as well as reading what I do read in the answers to my returns, I should say that in Norfolk, where, as may be seen from the table,‡ the employment of girls attains considerably larger dimensions than in any other of the three counties which I visited, the opinion in favour of restriction was strongest, and the age to which most persons were prepared to recommend that the restriction should extend was 16. Up to that age parents are compellable by law to maintain their children; and by that age it was hoped that most girls, if debarred from work upon the land, would either have settled themselves in domestic service or be engaged in some other more suitable mode of earning their bread. If such a restriction were accompanied with a dispensation for girls between 12 and 16 working in company with or in assistance to their mothers, in the six summer months (April—September), the hardships which Mr. Read and others apprehend as likely to ensue from an absolute restriction would be very much mitigated, while the evil of promiscuous employment would be altogether removed.

Restriction of hours and kinds of work unnecessary and unadvisable.

53. From all that I have been able to learn, I do not believe that there is any necessity to limit the hours of work in the case of women and girls, as I have thought there is a necessity for limiting them in the case of boys; nor, as it is extremely unadvisable to impose restrictions which cannot be enforced, however unsuitable some kinds of farm work may be to women, would it be wise to attempt to define those kinds by law, or to lay down limitations in respect of them.§ One may venture to trust

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number of females employed. It is probably to be accounted for by the fact, which I see also mentioned in the return, that seeds are largely grown in the parish for the London and other dealers. Land cultivated for seeds requires about four times the ordinary amount of manual labour to keep it clean.

* I find that in my own parish in Berkshire the women have a sort of proverb among themselves that, where there is a family "there's only fourpence a year difference between what she gets who goes out to work, and what she gets who stays at home; and *she who stays at home wins it.*" It will be seen by reference to the "Evidence of the Labouring Class" (Nos. 2, 5, 6, 28, 33, 35), that this sentiment is widely diffused.

Difficulties girls find in getting suitable "first places."

† It must be remembered, too, in this connexion, that neither is domestic service, at least in farm houses, which used to be the young girl's first place, what it was. The farmer's wife has not escaped the influences which have so powerfully affected every other class in society. She will not now take the raw girl from the father's home, whom she once undertook to instruct, by example as well as by precept, in all good housewifely ways. She, like the clergyman's wife and the squire's wife, must have her servants "know how to do things" before they come to her. And the consequence is that in many parts of the country a girl's only chance of a "first place" is at a public house or in the family of a small tradesman; the first the worst possible school, the second a place where she is made servant of all work, and taught to do nothing well. No truer kindness or more real social benefit can be conferred than is conferred by a person who, having what is called an "establishment," will take from time to time a young girl or two, place them under the charge of an upper servant, and so have them properly trained to their duties. The clergy are largely in the habit of doing this.

‡ See page 11.

§ Many women tell me that they find out-door work favourable to their health. "Farm labour isn't so hard as the wash-tub," said a Sussex woman to Mr. Gaisford, of Tangmere. "They'd soon let you know their minds," said Lord Leicester's bailiff to me, "if you put them to work they're not inclined to." "The women are quite able to protect themselves" was a view taken at one of my public meetings. Sometimes, no doubt, coercion is exercised by the farmer upon the wife through her husband (who is threatened with the loss of his place if his master cannot have his wife's services too); and sometimes by the husband directly: but I believe these are rare cases, and if they were frequent, I do not know that they could be prevented by legislation. I found nothing akin to the 'bondage' system of the North in my counties.

A. somewhat to the curative influences of education and social progress. Agriculture, I presume, has not declined in the last quarter of a century in the counties of Gloucester, Essex, and Sussex, yet not a fifth part of the number of women is employed upon the farms in these counties now that was employed upon them 25 years ago. Many forms of labour—driving carts, for instance—which they undertook without reluctance then, nothing probably would persuade them to undertake now. The more extensive introduction of machinery is likely to supersede much female, and indeed much juvenile, labour; and though to our impatient eyes the march of social improvements always seems slower than we think it ought to be, and in fact we can only estimate its rate when we carry our memory back over a considerable flight of time, yet it may be retarded rather than quickened by legislation, if public sentiment rebels against that legislation as needlessly vexatious, interfering, uncalled for, or inopportune.

THE EDUCATION OF AGRICULTURAL CHILDREN.

Its three necessary conditions.

54. In attempting to deal with the all-important subject of education in its relation to agricultural populations, it must be borne in mind that it is only by the combined fulfilment of three conditions that any great improvement of present results can be obtained. We must provide accessible and efficient schools; we must enforce, or at least secure, regular attendance; we must prevent early withdrawals. The fulfilment of the two first conditions without the last, or of the two last without the first, would place us a very little, if any, way in advance of the position which we are occupying now. I do not deny or wish to depreciate the inherent attractiveness of an efficient school; I bore testimony to it in my Report to the Duke of Newcastle's Commission in 1859;* I am ready to repeat that testimony now. But still, owing either to the irregular attendance or to the early removal of a large proportion of the children, even the efficient schools are not producing more than half of their legitimate fruit; and efficient schools—though considerable in number and yearly, I hope, increasing—are still the exception and not the rule. If I were to attempt a rough classification of the schools which I have seen in the course of this inquiry, or of those which have been described to me by their managers, I should not be very wide of the mark if I were to classify one-third of them as efficient; one-third as useful, but capable of much improvement; the remaining third, as places of education, utterly valueless. There is a paramount, pressing, immediate necessity for improving the condition of two-thirds of our existing schools.†

The efficient schools are not producing their full fruit.

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* *See* "Report of Commissioners," vol. ii. p. 116.

Extract from a paper read at Sion College.

† I should like to be permitted to extract here a passage from a paper on education which I read at a meeting at Sion College, on the 27th of last February, After quoting from a speech on the same subject recently made by Mr. Bright, at Birmingham, a speech full of wise and moderate counsels, I proceeded to say:—"I go in thoroughly for this suggestion, originally made, I believe, "by Mr. Lowe, and here adopted by Mr. Bright, that we should 'survey our existing institutions.' One of the leading principles "of a scheme of my own, which I ventured to develop in four letters to the 'Times' last spring," (*see* the 'Times' of April 16, 17, 18, and 20, 1867), "was that the Inspector, who was to be the officer of the Government concerning himself only with the secular "teaching, should penetrate into every parish and report upon every school. When I find that of 8219 parishes in England with a "population below 500, containing in the aggregate 1,865,401 souls, only 924, or not more than 1 in 9, are aided by annual "grants, or, in other words, subjected to effective inspection and encouraged by substantial rewards; or when again I am told that "of 2,651 parishes with a population of between 500 and 1,000, only 1,038, or less than one half, give to the nation the same "guarantee of efficiency, in their schools" (*see* Report of C.C.E., 1866-7, p. 109.) "I confess that I do not contemplate with any "feelings of satisfaction the condition, as regards their being placed within reach of adequate means of instruction, of the children in "these 8,898 uninspected parishes. I regard inspection, effective inspection, inspection which can secure that attention shall be paid to its "recommendations or remonstrances, as the very salt of elementary education. The inadequate way in which it is supplied to schools "in rural townships is, as I have pointed out elsewhere" (in my Report to the Schools' Inquiry Commissioners on the system of Common schools in the United States and Canada), "the capital defect in the New England system of Public Schools. Where those "schools languish, and that is in more places than some unqualified admirers of American institutions are apt to allow, it is mainly "by reason of there being no competent, independent officer, representing higher than local interests, to give direction to the energies "of the teacher, and the spur that is needed to the activity or liberality of the trustees. And in Old England, the managers who "from whatever motive shut the door of their school against an inspector, the sole object of whose visit is to guarantee and "reward the efficiency of the school, are about as wise as the man who should close the doors and windows of his house against the "daylight and the sun.

More complete inspection required.

Poverty of proportion of inspected to uninspected schools.

Inspection the only guarantee of efficiency.

"I am even inclined to go further,—further, probably, than I shall carry some of my hearers with me,—and raise the question "whether, with a view to public interest, even under a voluntary system, any man or body of men, availing themselves of the ad-"vantages of their position even with the highest motives, and constituting themselves managers of a school which undertakes to "provide education for the class who are admitted, partly by reason of their poverty and partly by reason of their ignorance, to be "unable to provide it for themselves, can, even if they find all the money, legitimately claim the astounding right to carry on this "great national work simply at their own 'sweet will,' to repudiate the prerogative of the State to see that the work thus under-"taken is properly and effectively done, and it may be even to sacrifice the highest interests of a generation to some visionary "crotchets, unworthy jealousies, or illiberal theories of their own. I claim for the English poor the right to have provided for their "children by the wealth and property of the country, which their—in too many cases ill-paid—toil has done so much to create, in "part at least, and not to the exclusion of their own parental responsibilities, the opportunity of a sound, elementary education. I "think the State is shrinking from a paramount duty if it does not see to it, and that without loss of time, that this opportunity "shall exist in every parish in the land. Let the country be surveyed, either on Mr. Lowe's plan or on my plan, with the least "possible delay. Let us know—not from averages, not from estimates, not from sample districts, but from accurate, thorough "inquiry, what the state of our case actually is. Where schools are absent, let them be supplied; where they are scanty, let them "be multiplied; where they are inefficient, let the cause of their inefficiency be noted and removed. I know that it is the fashion "to say that things are going on very well, and only want to be let alone. I say most emphatically that things are not going on "well. Even if there is progress, it is progress at a terribly slow rate. Remembering that the school life of these children is "limited to about five years, I do not think that the slight increase in the centesimal proportion of children in Church schools to "the population of the country, exhibited in the lately published decennial returns of the National Society, can avail much to "remove the impression left upon every observer of the phenomena, that there is year by year passing out of our hands and beyond "the opportunities of education, a vast number of uninstructed or most imperfectly instructed children. Besides, if there is "progress in one direction, there is the reverse of progress in another. The maximum school age has been steadily and almost "continuously lessening for the last 10 years. In agricultural districts it has become a rare thing to find a labourer's son in the schools "above the age of ten. Many of the schools are filled with babies. When we compare the standard we have reached with that which "seems to be attained without effort in Prussia, and assert in a triumphant tone that our 1 in 7·7 of the population at school is not "so very far behind their 1 in 6·21, we ignore, or find it convenient to keep out of sight, the difference, *qua* results, implied in the "fact that our school life is between 3 and 10, or, at the best, 3 and 12, while the Prussian school life is between 5 and 14. And "the *number* of those being educated tells us very little about the *quantity* or *quality* of the education they are receiving. The "current report of the Committee of Council on Education is not very encouraging here. It appears, as the result of last year's "individual examinations, that out of a percentage of 65 scholars upon the average number attending the schools presented for "examination under all the standards, only 15 per cent. were presented for examination above Standard III. (Report for 1866-7, "p. 25), and that whereas 264,231 scholars *ought to have been* so presented if the first standard had been mastered in the seventh "year, and there had been regular subsequent progress, only 161,773 *were* presented, and only 97,364 passed without failure above "Standard III., leaving 63 per cent., or nearly two-thirds, as the 'number of children who pass out of school to work with less of

Question if managers of schools have a right to refuse it.

Duty of the State.

Present progress very slow.

School age diminishing.

Small number of children passing in the higher standards.

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Poverty of schools.

55. The influence that most powerfully depresses the condition of the inferior schools is their poverty—poverty arising not so much from want of means as from illiberality in the use of means, and an indisposition to apply them to this particular object. In my report to the Education Commissioners of 1861 I thought it my duty to call public attention both to the general fact of such indisposition and also to some flagrant individual instances, and I published a table, which attracted some notice and which the Commissioners used as a basis for some emphatic remarks on the inadequate support that schools too often receive from the landowning class,* showing the sources of the income arising from voluntary contributions of the schools in 168 rural parishes. I could easily accumulate, were not the task invidious and unwelcome, fresh instances of the same kind; and no language can be too strong to describe the straits to which schools that ought to be flourishing in affluence are frequently reduced, and the efforts that have to be made by zealous managers, struggling against their circumstances, to keep them afloat at all. Indeed, naturally shrinking as I do from the semblance of the wish to magnify my order; much as I regret the attitude taken up by many of the clergy in relation not only to the Conscience Clause, but to the whole principle and method of administration of the Committee of Council; little as I can sympathize with those extravagant claims of right, supposed to be inherent in the Church as distinguished from the State, to control and direct in such a country as England the education of the young; plainly as I can see and deeply as I lament the evils—the feebleness of life, the want of sustained general interest, the frequency of collapse—that have arisen from the clergy's seeming "to take too much upon them" in this matter, still, it may be asserted now, as I ventured to assert it 10 years ago,† without fear of contradiction, that but for the zeal and activity of the clergy, and their large sacrifices not only of money but of labour and of time, in three-fourths of the rural parishes of England there would either be no school at all or at best only the semblance of a school. Speaking broadly, there is no other *class* of men in the kingdom who really take an intelligent and earnest interest in the subject. The farmers, possibly, may not oppose; the landowners, probably, may feel it their duty to subscribe; but the sustaining motive-power, springing from the desire to do the best they can for the spiritual and temporal interests of the children committed to their charge, without the presence of which any amount of money spent will do but little for a school, comes from the clergy.‡

The clergy, the only class at present really working in the cause of education.

56. I do not think these efforts have always been appreciated at their true worth. In the petulant talk that is sometimes heard about emancipating schools from "clerical influence," as from some obstacle to the extension of national education, it seems to be forgotten that to that influence, and that alone, the vast majority of those schools owe not only their birth, but their life; and in these days of the disestablishment and disendowment of churches, I cannot but look forward with sad foreboding, in the interests of national prosperity quite as truly as in the interests of religion, to the time when, the position of the clergy being changed, their influence, and in many rural parishes, possibly, their very existence, will be swept away. I fail to see anywhere even the yet unassociated elements of the class that will replace them. We do not live in Prussia or in America, where public spirit is high and the whole community, in the matter of education, is animated by but one mind. In England public spirit, except under the influence of temporary excitement, is low; and zeal for education is the exception, indifference the rule.

Inadequacy of the voluntary system the main argument in favour of the support of schools by a rate.

57. It cannot be denied, however, that the apparent feebleness of the voluntary system, and the inequalities in the way of educational provision which, if it does not generate, it seems powerless to prevent, furnish the most cogent argument to the advocates of a system of schools supported by local rates. The argument in favour of this system would, indeed, not only be cogent, but irresistible, were it not remembered that American experience proves that schools maintained by rates have their own special difficulties, and still are found to vary infinitely in merit; that ratepayers, retaining the control of expenditure, are fond of cutting it down to the very lowest point; and that even liberal supplies of money, unaccompanied by intelligent supervision, are a very inadequate guarantee for the efficiency of a school.§

"'elementary knowledge than Standard IV. denotes.' No wonder, with this state of things existing even in our best, that is, in the "inspected schools, that, in the language of the Report, 'the inquiry is everywhere rising, whether time should simply be trusted "'to, or progress accelerated by new measures.' (p. 20.). That our rate of progress needs to be accelerated somehow if we "would not fall into the rear of every civilized nation on the globe, cannot I think be doubted by any one who will remove the "film of prejudice and look at things clearly as they are."

Opinion of teachers.

I may add, as the almost universal opinion of the most competent teachers, repeated to me again and again in the course of this inquiry, that a child who leaves school with a smaller stock of elementary knowledge than is denoted by the ability to pass an examination in Standard IV., is not likely, unless he has used some effective contrivance for retaining it, to be found in possession of much of that stock after two years' working life in the fields. In the Central Chamber of Agriculture on March 3, there was a discussion, which, however, came to nothing, whether it might not be possible to satisfy the interests of education by requiring a certificate of a certain minimum of attainment as a condition of a child's being allowed to go to work. It was gravely suggested in the discussion, that passing the examination in Standard I. might be a sufficient fulfilment of the condition; that is, that the child should be able to read monosyllables, to form on a slate manuscript letters, capital and small, name at sight and write down if required figures up to 20, and add and substract figures up to 10. The meeting, I presume, foresaw the ridicule that awaited such a proposition, and it was wisely abandoned.

Abortive attempt in Central Chamber of Agriculture to fix on a standard of attainment.

* *See* their Report, vol. i. 77; vol. ii. pp. 69–77. Appendix, pp. 132–7.

† In my report to the Duke of Newcastle's Commission, "Report of the Commissioners," vol. ii. pp. 72, 99.

‡ Of course I am speaking generally. I do not wish to be understood as implying that all clergymen are full of, or all landowners and farmers lacking in, educational zeal. But I am certain that I have not overstated the case in the text, though I do not in the least mean to state it as a case which has no exceptions.

The principle of a rate, properly guarded, sound and salutary.

§ Not that I am myself hostile to the principle of a rate, provided it is incorporated into our present system, and does not throw the control of the school into the hands of the ratepayers. In the shape of a rate in-aid, levied on a certain defined area and distributed on equal terms to all certified schools within that area, not displacing the present management, but simply stimulating local interest and compelling reluctant owners of property to do their duty, I regard it as a principle not only perfectly sound, but decidedly beneficial. The commissioners have allowed me to print in the Appendix a letter which I addressed to the editor of the "Times" about a year ago (April 20, 1867), in which I sketched the outlines of such a scheme, which in principle, though varying considerably in detail, is the scheme of the commissioners of 1861. Mr. Bruce, in introducing his Education Bill into the House of Commons last year, did me the honour to notice and to criticize my scheme. He seemed to think that it would apply sufficiently well to the case of country parishes, though he considered it to be inapplicable to towns. I certainly meant the scheme to apply to

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The principle of a rate has, as yet, few supporters in my district.

Grounds of objection.

58. I cannot say that I found, in the course of this inquiry, many warm supporters of the principle of an education-rate. I found a few, and those sometimes where I little expected to find them; but the great body of opinion, whether on the part of the landowners, or the clergy, or the farmers, is decidedly arrayed against it. The clergy oppose it generally on the ground that, in their judgment the necessary correlative of a rate is secular education; the owners and occupiers of land are for the most part hostile to it, not so much because it would involve secular education (though they are not friendly to that), as because they apprehend that it would fall entirely upon one class of property which they affirm to be already unfairly burdened. I do not know that this need necessarily be the case. In America, both in the United States and Canada, they manage to tax both real and personal property for local purposes; it is true, not without difficulty, nor without opening the door to many evasions. Without going to the length to which sometimes gentlemen went at my different meetings, maintaining that the whole public support of schools should come from the resources at the disposal of Parliament, which represent, it was argued, the equal incidence of taxation upon all kinds of property, I certainly think that the observance of a certain proportion between the contribution of the State and the contribution of the locality, the former being the produce of taxation, while the latter is raised by rate, would remove the ground of the apprehension entertained, and distribute the burden, in its fair proportions, upon an equitable principle. Though the wealthy fundholder or proprietor of railway shares, residing in a district, has his duties towards, and ought to feel an interest in, the material and social condition of the population by which he is surrounded, and who to a greater or less extent minister to his convenience, his relation to them is different from that of those who, whether as owners or occupiers, have, so to speak, called that population into existence and settled them on the land. *He* has merely to discharge the general duties of a wealthy citizen; *they* have to fulfil the special responsibilities of wealth towards those by whom it has been created.*

The principle, however, believed to be gaining ground.

59. But as all principles that are really sound will not only bear discussion, but are the better for being discussed, so, I believe, the principle of an education-rate, apart from any particular form in which it may be embodied—some of the forms proposed being objectionable enough—is slowly making its way into the minds of thinking men as the only mode of remedying the anomalies of voluntaryism, and securing, I won't say, necessarily for every parish—but for every district, an efficient school.

Compulsory education.

60. The principle of compulsory education, by which I mean some adequate legal provision to secure the regular attendance of children at school, has (as will be perceived from a perusal of my notes of meetings) many more friends and supporters in the districts which I visited than the principle of an education-rate. The mere prohibition of children from labour up to a certain age would, it was thought by many gentlemen, do nothing for education, unless it were accompanied with a requirement that such children should attend school. † Sir George Jenkinson, in speeches which he made both in the Gloucester and the London Chambers of Agriculture, in which he seemed to carry the feelings of the majority of those present with him, even thought that such a prohibition would be positively injurious; would make things worse than they are now, would fill our lanes and village-streets with a troop of noisy and mischievous idlers. The apprehension rests upon a strong and deep-seated conviction of the apathy and carelessness of parents. In the parish of Pulham Magdalene, in Norfolk, where there is an efficient, accessible school, the rector told me that there must be at this moment from 40 to 50 children of the proper age, who are neither at school nor at work. Similar cases could be multiplied to any extent. At the same time,—so many are the anomalies of the present system,—there is fully an equal number of parishes in which the parents are found most anxious to get the best education for their children that is within reach, and where the existing freedom produces quite as happy and quite as abundant results as any mode of compulsion could hope to do. Sometimes, the efforts of the clergyman alone have succeeded in dissipating the apathy, which, for want of some energetic movement, has hung over a parish like a cloud; but results, higher both in kind and in degree, have been produced where the awakened public spirit has been general, and it has been felt that the degradation of any one class is a reproach and a peril to all.

A compulsory law, unless effective, would be demoralizing.

61. If a system of compulsion, which is to bring all children below a certain age to school, is to be devised, it should be one that will be at once general and effective. The spectacle that is to be seen in Massachusetts of a law, couched in stringent terms, existing in the statute-book, which no one ever dreams of attempting to put in practice, is not edifying. Not only is it not edifying, but it is demoralizing. "In Prussia," says Mr. Pattison, "it is a general feature of the administration that nothing is law "which is not actually in force," and consequently the law requiring attendance at school "is well and "uniformly carried into effect."‡ But there seems to be no third or middle course between the iron coercion of a Prussian system and a free reliance on the softer influences of moral suasion and a more enlightened appreciation of the benefits of education, which, if an adequate public interest could once be generated, would carry us, I fully believe, fairly over the difficulties that at present obstruct our progress. And the great obstacle in the way of introducing the Prussian system here would arise from

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schools in either situation; but I should be quite content with the admission that it might work with good results in the case of rural schools. Perhaps a fatal error in our past educational policy has been that it has been too Procrustean, and has endeavoured to make all schools mould themselves after one type, and earn help on the same terms.

* When I used this argument in the London meeting of the Council of the Central Chamber of Agriculture it was vigorously rebutted, and I was told that capital, not labour, had created the wealth that arises from the land. I did not mean to ignore the claims of capital as a wealth-creator, because I pressed the claims of labour. The gentlemen who so loudly demurred to my view would probably have found something to say against the manufacturer who might have gathered into one spot 500 or 1,000 pairs of hands for the purposes of some productive industry without making any provision for the education of the children; yet that would simply be a parallel case.

† See the paper handed in to me after my meeting at Newent, and printed at the end of Notes, No. 95. The Earl of Leicester also doubts if the boys who have left his gang will attend school unless compelled. The feeling is very widely spread indeed.

‡ *Report of Education Commission* (1861), vol. iv., p. 197. He adds: "Some of the more stringent provisions of the factory law "are said to have been evaded at one time; but this was soon corrected, and it is now enforced to the letter."

our inveterate, and not unreasonable, aversion from any rigorous or inquisitorial system of police.* Nor, as Archdeacon Hankinson† pointed out with much force to the meeting at North Creake, could a system of compulsion with any equity be applied till we have established throughout the country a complete system of efficient schools. To compel a child to spend five or six years of his life at a school where he could learn nothing really profitable would be an unredeemed hardship.

A. Compulsory attendance pre-supposes efficient schools.

62. I am not sure that it falls within my province to discuss this matter further. It was, however, a subject that was continually being brought under my notice during my inquiry, and the Commissioners, I think, ought to know that there is a considerable number of persons throughout the country, the proportion being larger among the laity than among the clergy, who entertain the opinion that the proper corollary of a prohibition from labour, should such be enforced by law, is a compulsory requirement of attendance at school. Not a few gentlemen, it is true, argued backwards from the latter to the former; and objecting to compulsion in the matter of school attendance, objected to prohibition in the matter of labour. They admitted the unsatisfactory state of things at present, but they believed that they saw evidences of improvement, brought about by the natural operation of moral and economical causes. They mistrusted the effects of restrictive legislation, as likely to create more evils than it would remove. They wished "patience to have her perfect work;" and in the fact of the progress accomplished in the last five-and-twenty years they saw grounds for hoping that, by building steadily on foundations already settled, the next five-and-twenty years would witness progress greater still. They dreaded the introduction of elements of disturbance.‡

Opinions upon the subject very much divided.

63. There can be no doubt that the defective state of education in agricultural districts is attributable, in various proportions and in different localities, to all the causes specified in the instructions issued by the Commissioners to their Assistant-Commissioners. The want of schools readily accessible to the children; the inefficiency of the instruction in many of the schools which exist; the poverty of the parents, and their consequent indisposition to forego the weekly sum that may be added to the family earnings by the child's labour; the low moral tone which leads parents to be indifferent to the education of their children; and the pressure put upon the parents by the employers to induce them to allow their children to go to work at too early an age, are all of them influences unfavourable to the attainment of any high standard of mental cultivation by the agricultural poor.§

Circumstances affecting school attendance.

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* It may save the reader trouble if I extract from Mr. Pattison's report a description of what the Prussian system actually is:—

The Prussian system of compulsion.

"It is not enough to bring the children to school or to enter their names in the school register unless their regular attendance is also secured. This point is accordingly guarded in the German system with as much vigilance as the former. To take a single province of Prussia, Silesia, *ex. gr.*, it is the duty of the pastor and the schoolmaster to use their moral influence with the parents to make the children come punctually and regularly; but this moral persuasion can be enforced, if need be, by an appeal to the police. The police office of the place makes out the list of the children as they arrive at the school age. This list is put into the hands of the school board, which from that moment becomes responsible for the attendance of all whose names are inscribed in the register. The master keeps the book of absences, marking them as 'excused' or 'inexcused;' and it is one of the duties of the school board in its periodical meetings to watch this book. If the offence be repeated they send in the offender's name to the police office, and he is mulcted in a small fine for each day of the child's absence. In case of non-payment he is sent to gaol for a period corresponding to the amount of the fine. In some towns a messenger is attached to the school, and at the end of the first hour the master marks off the absent names, and despatches the messenger round to the houses to inquire the cause of absence, which is duly entered in the book. In Berlin the control of attendance is undertaken by the school delegacy, which employs as its organ for this purpose bodies called by the name of *schulcommission*. Former arrangements for securing attendance having been found insufficient this new system was organized in 1845. Berlin was divided for this purpose into 35 districts, or rather the division already existing for the purpose of the poor's commission was adopted. In each of these districts a *schulcommission* was appointed. This body consists of a chairman, vice-chairman, and a number of members, varying with the population of their district from 6 to 10. The members are elected for three years by the Common Council, and confirmed by the *magistrat*. It is usual to ask the lay members of the school boards to serve as members of the school commission of the district in which their school is situated. As the office is an unpaid one, and the duty thankless, the city has great difficulty in getting anyone to serve. The commission meets once a month on a fixed day, three members forming a quorum. Its proceedings are minuted, and the minutes may be called for by the school delegacy. It has but one business, that of controlling the school lists and school attendance. For this purpose it employs as its organ the royal police, in the same way as the school board in a country town employs the town police. The police commissary of the district sends in to the commission the list of the *schulpflichtig* children" (those, *i.e.*, within the ages that limit the period of compulsory school attendance, which in Prussia begins at the completion of the child's fifth year, and extends over the eight, in some parts of the country the nine, following years). "The members of the commission are expected individually to visit the parents, to urge upon them the moral obligation of seeing that their children attend regularly. Only when this private admonition is ineffectual an official admonition is given to the parent or guardian. If within a month from this monition a second 'inexcused' absence occurs, a written notice issues from the commission, reminding the defaulting party that he makes himself liable to a penalty. This notice is registered. If a third 'inexcused' absence occurs within a month, the commission sends notice to the school delegacy, adding from the record a copy of the previous notice. This notice is handed to another committee of the school delegacy, which is charged with the enforcement of the fine. This committee inquires into the case, assesses the fine, and orders payment within eight days. It is open to the condemned party to appeal during these eight days to the *magistrat*. The sentence of the *magistrat* is final. The fine may be levied by execution. If there are no effects the offender is punished by imprisonment."—Report, vol. iv., pp. 193–4.

Conditions required for its successful working.

It is plain that this system, for its successful working, requires an amount both of public spirit and of submissiveness to the power represented by the policeman which, in England, is absolutely unknown. I do not believe that the gentlemen who not unfrequently at my meetings seemed disposed to favour a system of compulsory education had ever pictured to themselves any organization such as this for carrying it out. Yet without such an effective organization a mere law of compulsory attendance would be practically inoperative. I have my doubts of the efficacy of the Workshops' Regulation Act on this account. It is the "duty of the local authority" to carry out its provisions; but among those provisions there is none to compel the local authority to discharge the duty. Even in Prussia, with this vigorous law, difficulties, says Mr. Pattison, are found in making the attendance "uniform and punctual;" and he traces these difficulties to two chief sources: (1), the poverty of the parents; (2), the unsatisfactory condition of the school.—Report iv., p. 198.

† This excellent clergyman, who assisted me most cordially in my inquiry in West Norfolk, has since entered into his rest, carrying with him the respect of all who knew him.

‡ The Rev. R. C. Burton, rector of Taverham, Norfolk, a zealous and active educationist, may be taken as a representative of these opinions, which are very widely entertained. *See* his letter quoted in "Notes on Schools," No. 7.

Influence of bad roads and of want of shoes.

§ Under the head of inaccessibility of the school must be included the state of the roads and field paths in the winter months, as well as distance from the children's homes. Under the head of parents' poverty must be comprised inability to provide their children with decent shoes and clothing, a very common thing; not inability to pay the school fee, a very rare thing. The poverty too, though very real, is in most cases the result of improvidence, mismanagement, or drunkenness. No doubt, in some cases, employers put pressure upon parents. I could mention if it were necessary some strong cases, but much more frequently they are the parents who put the pressure upon the employers. Indeed several employers, Lord Leicester among them, told me that they would be thankful for a legal prohibition from employing children under a certain age, which would enable them to give a decisive answer to such importunity. As things are a refusal would be considered a piece of harshness.

A.

Amount of school accommodation probably sufficient, if better distributed.

64. I do not believe, if it were properly distributed, that there is any deficiency of school area in relation to the wants of the population. At the date of the Duke of Newcastle's Commission there was a considerable surplus;* and though certainly the population has considerably increased in the last ten years, the work of school building also has not stood still, though no doubt it has been partially discouraged both by the reduced scale on which the Committee of Council have made their building grants since the introduction of the Revised Code, and also by the apprehensions produced by the Conscience Clause in many cases attached to the reception of such grants. But a much more important question than the extent of schoolroom area is the mode of its distribution; and this is a question surrounded by numerous and serious difficulties. Sometimes the population itself is so dispersed or so aggregated that it is impossible to place the school in a situation conveniently accessible to all. Sometimes, from the reluctance of the owner, or from certain circumstances belonging to the property, the best site cannot be obtained. Sometimes the school has been placed near the church or the parsonage (proximity to the latter being a very important element in its well-doing), but not near the village in which the people live. Sometimes, it is an old building, once conveniently situated, but from which, owing to some change in the industrial circumstances of the locality, the population have gradually drifted away. Sometimes a physical barrier, a river, or arm of the sea, interposes between the school and a hamlet that might otherwise be benefited by it.† At the same time, I believe that the distance of the school from the homes of the children is the smallest of all the obstacles that stand in the way of the adequate education of the people. Children who would catch at any excuse for absenting themselves from a school where they are either not kindly treated or feel that they do not get on, think nothing of a walk of two or even three miles to reach a teacher who has the art of attracting them; and not only will they make nothing of the distance, but they will probably be found to be among the most regular and punctual pupils, on the same principle on which, as the farmers often told me, the labourers who live farthest from their work generally keep the best time. I do not know how we shall ascertain with any accuracy the actual distribution of our schools till we have, as suggested by Mr. Lowe, an educational survey. An Ordnance map, on a sufficiently large scale, with the situation of all existing schools distinctly shown, and some easily arranged conventional symbol to indicate the character of each, would throw much valuable light on a subject where, I think, everybody must feel himself to be a good deal in the dark.

Other obstacles more serious than the distance of the school.

Apathy of parents.

65. The apathy and low moral tone of the parents, exhibiting itself in indifference as to whether their children attend school or not and in their retention at home on every trifling pretext, are much more serious difficulties. Yet even these are found to exist chiefly where the school is, or for a long time has been, notoriously inefficient, or where no very vigorous efforts have been made by the clergyman and school managers to awaken a higher sense of duty. There is the greatest possible difference in this respect frequently observable between two immediately contiguous parishes; in the one everything betokens activity, interest, co-operation, progress; in the other you see as plainly the symptoms of torpor, disunion, disorganization, and decay. I believe myself that where this apathy exists it is because the people want stirring. An active, zealous clergyman coming into one of these stagnant parishes has been known in a few months to work wonders. It is part of my creed that personal influence is the great instrument of social regeneration; and the barrenest soil may be made to yield a crop, if it is properly manured and farmed. In nine cases out of ten, apathy is the result of neglect. The advantages of education have never been fairly presented to the parents, either from some defect in the school or from some supineness elsewhere, and therefore they do not appreciate it. My own experience, ranging over upwards of 20 years, as a school manager, is that apathy in the matter of education may be got rid of, if you will take the pains. At present, however, it must be admitted to be, in many parishes, a very deep-seated cause of difficulty and discouragement. It is from such parishes that the cry for compulsory education comes the loudest. On the other hand, I could name parishes by the score in which, under our present system, the Prussian standard, at least in respect of attendance, if not of age,‡ is without any difficulty attained.

Their poverty.

66. But the most formidable difficulty of all, seeming to defy any attempt to deal with it either by moral or legislative action, is, not the apathy of parents, but their poverty,—"duris urgens in rebus "egestas." As I stated to the Duke of Newcastle's Commission, "the agricultural labourer's wages are "never up to the mark that can allow of his sacrificing the earnings of his child to higher considera-"tions;" and in this nineteenth century we cannot, I suppose, attempt to regulate the rate of wages by Act of Parliament.

Rate of wages of the agricultural labourer very variable.

67. It is a problem that has a good deal vexed my mind, how it is that the economical law of supply and demand, which is what generally determines the price of labour, penetrates with such feeble power the condition of the agricultural labourer. Mr. Holland, M.P., at the Gloucester Chamber of Agriculture, thought he could account for it by the extent to which the English peasant is still as it were *adscriptus glebæ*, by the influences of habit, association and want of enterprise. And no doubt the law of supply and demand, for its perfect action, pre-supposes free movement in the particles that compose the mass. The men must carry their labour to the best market, if they are to get the best price for it. Anyhow, the difference in the rate of wages for the same class of labour in different parts of England is very remarkable, ranging (as I am informed) from as high a rate as 18*s.* a week in the northern counties, to as low a rate as 9*s.* or 10*s.* in the western and southern.

What I found it to be.

68. I made it my especial care to ascertain as exactly as I could the earnings, both weekly and yearly, both at day and piece work, of the agricultural labourers in those parts of the country which

Amount of accommodation in 1858–9.

* In the ten sample districts selected by the Commissioners there was an excess of 46·7 per cent of accommodation at eight square feet per scholar, so that for each 100 scholars in attendance there was accommodation for 146·7.—Report, i. 650.

† A case was mentioned to me in which some children were prevented attending school because they were not allowed to take the shortest route across a gentleman's park, the distance by the road being upwards of two miles.

‡ I mean that the number of children attending school is fully one in 6¼ of the population, though they may not reach the Prussian maximum age of 14.

formed my territory in this inquiry. I am perfectly aware, that owing to the different habits and modes of payment that prevail in different localities,* it is a somewhat complicated problem, and that many other elements have to be taken into account, besides the current rate per week and the number of weeks in the year. Any one who will take the trouble to read my minutes of meetings will see the answers that I obtained to the questions I put upon this subject in each of my four counties. A.

69. In Norfolk, where the weekly wage at the time of my visit was 12*s.*, it was estimated that the total annual earnings of an able-bodied labourer, including his piece-work, would range from 37*l.* to 40*l.*† In Norfolk,

70. In Essex, the weekly wage being 11*s.*, a man's total earnings for the same period were calculated at 35*l.* or 36*l.*‡ Essex,

71. In Sussex, the weekly wage being 13*s.* and 13*s.* 6*d.*, a man was believed to earn from 40*l.* to 45*l.* in the year, including what he gets from "flawing" timber in the spring.§ Sussex,

72. In Gloucestershire, on the Cotswolds, the weekly wage being 10*s.*, a man in constant employ was supposed to earn, with his piece-work, from 30*l.* to 32*l.* a year;‖ in the union of Newent, the labouring men themselves estimated their earnings, if in constant employ, at an average of 11*s.* a week, exclusive of drink;¶ in the Vale of Berkeley, the weekly wage being 1*s.* or 2*s.* a week higher, the year's earnings would be increased proportionately. and Gloucester.

73. It must be remembered, however, that these estimates contemplate only the case of the first class labourer, who can "turn his hand to any kind of farm work," and suppose constant employment throughout the year. At the Cromhall meeting, in Gloucestershire, at which Lord Ducie presided, it was stated that, *allowing for lost time*, the maximum earnings of an able-bodied labourer in the year would barely exceed the average of the current weekly rate.**

74. These estimates may be tested in another way. They may be compared with the earnings of the carter or the shepherd, the two most important servants upon a farm, who certainly would not be satisfied if their yearly earnings fell below the level of the ordinary day labourer. The carter is a servant hired for the year, who gets no piece-work nor harvest. His ordinary wage is 1*s.* or 2*s.* a week beyond the current rate of the district; his cottage rent free, to be estimated at 1*s.* 6*d.* a week more; probably a patch of potato ground ploughed and planted for him; and a gratuity of one or two pounds at harvest. At one of my meetings it was stated that the earnings of the carter might be regarded as "equal to the maximum wages of an agricultural labourer" in constant employ.†† These estimates tested.

75. I come, therefore, to the conclusion that the annual earnings of a farm labourer, who loses no time and gets his fair allowance of piece-work, would give an average throughout the year of about 2*s.* per week in excess of the current weekly wage. Thus where the weekly wage is 13*s.*, the annual earnings would amount to 39*l.*; where the wage is 12*s.*, to 36*l.* 8*s.*; with a wage of 11*s.*, to 33*l.* 16*s.*; and at 10*s.*, to 31*l.* 4*s.*; and these estimates do not differ widely from those arrived at by other modes. General conclusion.

76. I have said that these estimates only profess to regard the case of the best labourers, and even then suppose them to lose no time. The classification of farm labourers is admitted, at present, to be very imperfect,‡‡ and farmers regret that the only mode of discriminating and rewarding superior skill or industry in a labourer is by the expedient of piece-work or by private gratuities.§§ Still, no doubt, the best labourers earn the most money; and though the more liberal farmers pay their regular men "wet Many men do not earn so much as this.

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* It is a common assertion among farmers that, owing to variations in modes of payment, the system of allowances in kind, lower rent of cottages, &c., the difference in the rate of wages in different localities, which measured by the money payment looks very considerable, is apparent rather than real. There is a slight foundation for the statement, but only a slight. The wages paid in the Cotswold district are given with all the fulness possible in the "Notes of my Meeting at Elkstone," No. 76, but beyond the allowance of cider, valued at 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, I can see no perquisite that the men enjoy. The harvest work is set at from 2*s.* to 3*s.* an acre lower than in Essex and Sussex. (Compare "Notes of Meeting at Halstead," No. 53; "West Grinstead," No. 63.) Cottage rents it is true are low in the parishes represented at Elkstone—one shilling a week, but elsewhere in the Cirencester Union and also in that of Newent, where the same, and in some cases even a lower, rate of wages prevails, rents seem to rule quite as high as in counties enjoying a higher wage rate. At the same time I am bound to admit, and this is the strangest phenomenon of all, that the material condition of the people, at least in the two articles of dress and the furniture of their homes, does not strike the eye as sensibly worse in the lower than in the higher wage districts. Some parts of the union of Newent, certainly, are in a bad plight; but other parts, with no higher wage rate, seem fairly well-to-do. Mr. Constable, the Principal of the Agricultural College at Cirencester, told me a remarkable story. Some years ago, Mr. Gray, the then manager of the northern estates of Greenwich Hospital, touched with the accounts he had read of the wretched condition of Dorsetshire labourers, from motives of pure benevolence advertised for a hundred, to whom he offered constant employment at the northern rate of wages, undertaking also to defray the cost of their journey. Many came, but few stayed any length of time. Whether a sort of nostalgia or home sickness, very prevalent in this class, affected them; or whether, being of a race slow to change, they found an irksomeness in their new situation which, in some particular frames of mind, time, instead of mitigating, at last renders intolerable, I cannot say. The fact was merely stated, not explained. Anyhow, they returned to their old Dorsetshire wages and ways. I heard, not unfrequently, instances of the same temper, though on a smaller scale.

† *See* "Notes of Meetings at Morton, No. 2; Felthorpe, No. 8; Dickelburgh, No. 22; Hunstanton, No. 37." In the two last cases where the figure was set as high as 40*l.* it was with special reference to a "first-class labourer," of the best quality.

‡ Mr. Foster, of Great Totham, paid last year in wages 50*l.* to "a man of remarkable ability."—"Wickham Meeting," No. 58.

§ *See* "Meetings at Slinfold, No. 61; West Grinstead, No. 63" (where "flawing," and Sussex work generally, are described); "Singleton," No. 70. At Warbleton, No. 65, and Sidlesham, No. 71, the estimate was that a man's total earnings in the year would give an average of 16*s.* a week.

‖ *See* "Meeting at Elkstone, No. 76; at Siddington, No. 82."

¶ *See* "Newent Meeting," No. 96. The cider they valued at 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, at the rate of three quarts a day. Almost without exception, the men are found to prefer the allowance of drink to its equivalent in money. "When a man has nothing to eat but "bread and cheese, and sometimes only bread without the cheese," a man said to me, "a drop of drink is very comforting." But in spite of this preference it is manifestly a vicious mode of paying wages, and many of the best farmers are making efforts to abandon it.—*See* "Notes of Tibberton Meeting, No. 91; Falfield Meeting, No. 88."

** *See* "Notes of Cromhall Meeting," No. 87.

†† *See* "Alveston Meeting," No. 85; also "North Cerney Meeting," No. 77. The perquisites of the shepherd, which are given in "Notes of North Cerney Meeting," No. 77, for the Cotswold district, bring his yearly earnings to some slight excess, depending partly on the size of his flock, over those of the carter. Sometimes, the shepherd is allowed to do as much of the shearing as he can find time for in addition to his ordinary work. This is paid at the rate of about 4*s.* 6*d.* per score of fleeces.

‡‡ *See* "Paper read at Newbury Farmers' Club," by Mr. H. Frampton, Appendix p. 20.

§§ *See* Evidence of Edmund Oldfield, Esq., "Miscellaneous Evidence," No. 7. There are difficulties about piecework which are stated by Mr. Frampton in his paper.

A.

"or dry," yet this is by no means a universal practice, and the "shifty" men who only work for the farmer when they can't get a job elsewhere, and leave him the moment they hear of anything more attractive, are naturally treated with much less ceremony.* So that there must be a very large number of men in an agricultural district—men, not disabled but past their prime; men with less natural aptitude, and who can't put their hands to any sort of farm work; men who from sickness or weather lose a considerable amount of time in the year; men, whose roving, unsettled habits indispose them to regular employ, whose sum of yearly earnings must often be pounds below what farmers would state to be the standard of their neighbourhood.

The weekly wage the true measure of the farm labourers' ordinary resources.

77. Besides, though it is true that the annual earnings of the farm labourer, owing to the various jobs of piece-work that he gets in the course of the year, are perhaps five or six pounds in excess of the mere aggregate of the ordinary weekly wage, yet this weekly wage is probably for 40 weeks out of the 52 the true measure of the man's available resources. Improvidence, unhappily, is the rule of his class. Increased earnings are generally spent, too often in dissipation, as fast as they are earned. The harvest money is always considered as bound to clear off two scores, the rent of the cottage and the shoemaker's bill; and if by any mischance the man or any part of his family lose their harvest, the landlord will probably lose his rent, and the shoemaker will almost to a certainty go unpaid. In measuring, therefore, the ability of the agricultural labourer to dispense with the earnings, in consideration of the education of his children, it will not be safe to rate him as having more money coming in than is implied by the current weekly wage of the district in which he resides.†

Poverty of parents the chief obstacle to the education of the children.

78. It is, then, to the poverty of the parents, far more frequently than to their apathy or low moral tone, though there is an indefinable connection between the two, and people's moral tone is very much raised or lowered by the elevation or depression of their outward circumstances,‡ still, it is to their poverty mainly that we are to trace that irregular attendance during children's nominal school-life, and the premature termination of that life, which constitute the two great obstacles to the education of the farm labourer. With the value of every sixpence so appreciably brought home to their intelligence, and with odd jobs of all kinds which children can do and by which sixpences can be earned, so continually presenting themselves, it is a matter of regret rather than of surprise that parents of this humble rank should not be superior to a temptation, the power of which no other class of parents can so fully feel. Here and there, one meets a parent who resists and conquers the temptation, and though the effort is made in a lowly sphere, the stedfastness of purpose it implies rises almost to the height of heroism; but the majority, it must be confessed, yield to it.§ And the natural result is the comparative failure of our schools.

Irregular attendance more serious evil than early withdrawal.

79. Of the two evils, the evil of irregular attendance is much the more serious. We can rarely keep our agricultural boys in our schools beyond the age of 10 or 11, and I am afraid from all the evidence that I have been able to collect, that the *maximum* age is lessening; but, given efficiency in the school and regular attendance in the scholar, a boy who entered school at 5 would be prepared to leave it with a fair amount of mental equipment at 11, and even, if his industry had been properly stimulated, at 10.‖ Few persons, unless they have carefully looked into the matter, have any conception of the difference that in a vast number of cases exists between a child's nominal school-life and his real. Mr. Beckett, of Ingoldisthorpe, a school-inspector in the diocese of Norwich, has furnished me with some tables, exhibiting the facts in relation to his own parish and district, to which I beg very earnestly to call the

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* At the Cromhall meeting it was stated, "About half the men on a farm—those, namely, employed about horses and stock—"would be employed wet or dry. The others would be paid if they chose to brave the weather, which few of them are inclined to "do."—"Notes of Meeting," No. 87. *See* also "Miscellaneous Evidence," No. 24.

Indebtedness of the agricultural labourer.

† Partly from their own improvidence, and partly from the wretched system of "touting" for customers which prevails among village shopkeepers, a very large proportion of our peasantry are hopelessly in debt; so hopelessly, that many of them do not even try to shake off the burden. It is painful to observe how dull their moral perceptions are upon this point, and how seldom the more thriftless regard it as an act of dishonesty to incur debts which they have no prospect of being able to repay. I have not, however, much pity for the shopkeepers, who counting it a triumph to draw away a customer from a rival, by their lax system of credit bring upon themselves the losses of which they complain. The effect of the system is that though our agricultural labourers, as a body, are I believe surprisingly honest, considering their opportunities of peculation, towards their employers, the principle of integrity among them, in the matter of paying just debts, is very seriously undermined. The books of most country shopkeepers, if examined, would tell a sad tale.

Results of providence.

That the provident labourer may not only pay his way honestly, but even put by considerable sums of money, is proved by the following four cases, all of them cases of labourers living in one Norfolk parish, which I was allowed to extract from the ledger of the Harleston Savings Bank. I think it right to suppress the names.

1. A. B. Labouring man in the employ of the rector. Earns 12*s.* a week; aged 45; no family; wife earns 2*s.* a week and two days' board as laundress at the rectory. Made his first payment of 10 guineas in Dec. 1857; has now 124*l.* 5*s.*

2. C. D. Yardman to a farmer; aged about 50; married, and has one son and three daughters. In December 1856 had 21*l.*; has now 62*l.* 11*s.* 3*d.*

3. E. F. Yardman on another farm; aged 40; married, but no family; earns 13*s.* a week, and has his house rent free. In December 1856 had 45*l.* 10*s.*; has now 120*l.* 6*s.* 3*d.*

4. G. H. Gardener to the rector; earns 13*s.* a week; pays 4*l.* 10*s.* rent for cottage; aged 32; married and has two children; wife sickly, and has been a considerable expense to him; a remarkably sober, well-conducted man. In 1856 had 35*l.*; has now 70*l.*

At Burnham Thorpe, the case was mentioned to me of a shepherd who had been able, by his thrift, to purchase four or five excellent, in fact "model," cottages which had been built by the late Lord Orford, and were sold at his death. I cannot however say whether the property is unmortgaged.

‡ The Roman satirist thought that what gives the keenest edge to poverty is the scorn of the world:

"Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se
Quam quod ridiculos homines facit."
(Juv. Sat. iii. 152.)

And it may be so, from the world's point of view. But in the eye of the moralist, its most malign aspect is in its power to generate the loss of self-respect, and the loss of natural affection. It is, emphatically, hardening—at any rate in its influence upon "the "natural man."

§ See Cases No. 28, 33, 35, in the "Evidence of the Labouring Class." Those mothers must have had in their years of trial an amount of determination that comes up very nearly to the English idea of heroism. I must say that I felt touched by it, as they told me their simple tales.

‖ I have seen nothing in the course of my present inquiry to lead me to change, or even to modify, the opinion which I expressed on this subject in my report to the Duke of Newcastle's Commission.—See Report, vol. ii. p. 46–7.

A.

Commissioners' attention.* The five years of nominal school life, when tested by the entries in the register, are constantly found to dwindle down to less than three; and those three, not years of uninterrupted attendance, but distributed at intervals, growing more and more intermittent as the boy grows older and every year becomes of higher value, over the five. From Mr. Beckett's table a further fact, of no slight importance in its bearing upon this question, emerges: that the irregularity of attendance is greatest in the case of those boys whose school life is shortest, a result probably attributable either to the greater poverty, or the greater improvidence of the parents, which thus by a double action deprive the children of the educational advantages they might otherwise have enjoyed.

How are these evils to be prevented?

80. And so we are brought face to face with the question into which the Commissioners are charged by Her Majesty specially to inquire. Can this interception of the benefits of education from the child of the agricultural labourer be prevented? Can the principles of legislation, which have been applied with such beneficial results to the regulation of the employment of children in almost every branch of manufactures, be introduced with any reasonable prospects of success here?

Difference between manufacturing and agricultural operations.

81. Of course, every one must at once appreciate the wide difference in the conditions under which manufacturing and agricultural operations are carried on. The former are carried on under cover, independently of weather, in the midst generally of a dense population from which the labour supply is easily drawn; are unvarying in their character; can, if necessary, be easily brought under the eye of an inspector and controlled by law. Every one of these conditions is directly reversed in the case of agriculture. Further; work in a crowded room, even with the best provisions for ventilation, cannot but be unwholesome; work in the open field, "when proper precautions are used" (to borrow a phrase that I heard used in the Gloucester Chamber of Agriculture) is healthy rather than otherwise.

Opinion of the Education Commissioners of 1861 as to the effect of the Factory Acts.

82. I am not prepared to speak, from personal observation, of the actual results of the Factory Acts, as regards the employment of children, whether physical or educational, as I have never lived in, nor had an opportunity of examining (more than very partially), any district in which they have been in force. My knowledge of those results is derived chiefly from the Report of the Education Commissioners in 1861, who of course made them a special subject of inquiry.† But I suspect that they have secured the physical object for which they were passed more effectively than the educational; ‡ and that in some respects they have exercised an influence even prejudicial to education. Otherwise, I cannot account, after their operation for upwards of a quarter of a century, for the lamentable tale of educational destitution which we have been hearing of late from Birmingham and Manchester.§ The Commissioners of 1861 hit the one great educational blot of all the legislation which has produced these various Acts, and also indicate the mode in which their operation appears to have had an unfavourable influence upon education itself. The blot is, that the Acts, while making provision for the children's attendance, make no provision for the efficiency of the school; and the consequence is that the inspectors' reports "are full of the excellent results of the half-time factory education in the few "factory schools that are good, and of its failure in the vast majority."‖ The unfavourable influence is, that parents, knowing that they will be obliged to send their children to school as soon as they begin to earn wages till they attain the age of thirteen, often let them run wild in the streets till the wage-earning period arrives.¶ The general conclusion at which the Commissioners arrived on the subject of these Acts is thus expressed:

"The beneficial operation of the education clauses of the Factory Acts depends upon the "quality of the schools; and the quality of the schools depends to some extent on the countenance "given by the manufacturers. Where the schools are good the clauses act well, subject to a certain "drawback arising from the tendency which the prospect of compulsory attendance has to induce the "parents to neglect the child's education during its earlier years. The education clauses of the Acts

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* *See* "Miscellaneous Evidence," No. 12, Appendix, p. . I could not attempt to collect many documents of the same kind; but I am quite sure, from what I saw and heard elsewhere, that these figures of Mr. Beckett's indicate neither an exaggerated nor an exceptional case.—See further, "Notes on Schools," Nos. 25, 26, 27, 28, 38, 45.

† *See* Commissioners' Report, Part i. ch. 3 (vol. i. pp. 201–217).

Mr. Horner's opinion.

‡ Mr. Horner even accuses the framers of the Act of 1833 (3 & 4 Will. IV. c. 103) of indifference to education. "Its imperfect "provisions," he says, "prove the correctness of the statement which I have often heard made, that in the clauses making attend-"ance at school imperative, the passers of the Act had education much less on their mind than the providing a security against the "children being employed in the factories for a longer time than that to which the Act restricts their daily labour. The so-called "education clauses enact no more than that the children shall attend a school; nothing is said as to the kind or quality of the educa-"tion which they are to receive."—Quoted, *ibid.* p. 207.

Physical objects imperfectly realized.

§ Even the physical objects seem from Mr. Horner's last report (1859), to be very imperfectly secured. "I have in many former "reports," he says, "brought the subject of over-working prominently forward. I have pointed out the existence of the evil, and "how punishment can be evaded . . I have also suggested remedies . . . But as there is evidently no disposition in any quarter "to have the glaring defects of the law corrected, it is unnecessary for me to enlarge upon this subject any more. I have also "pointed out at some length in former reports, how the education of the children, professedly provided for, is in numerous cases an "utter mockery; how the protection of the workpeople against bodily injuries and death from unfenced machinery, also professedly "provided for, has become practically a dead letter; and how the reporting of accidents is to a great extent a mere waste of the "public money. These defects in the working of the Factory Acts will, I presume, continue; for those who formerly took an "active interest in this question, and those whom it most directly concerns, seem to be satisfied with the good which the factory "legislation has done and is doing, notwithstanding these imperfections"—Quoted, *ibid.* pp. 207–8.

Condition of schools granting certificates of attendance.

‖ Report, i., p. 204. In p. 206 some samples of the schools that were allowed to grant certificates of attendance are exhibited, taken from one of Mr. Horner's reports, in which the inspector states that of the 427 schools in his district "only 76, or less than "one-fifth, are good efficient schools; 26 more are only tolerably good; 146 are considerably inferior to these last; 112 are so "low in quality that the term 'indifferent' is better than they deserve; and 66 are not only of no value but positively mischievous, "as deceptions and a fraud upon the poor ignorant parents who pay the school fees."

Effect of Factory Acts on early education.

¶ Mr. Assistant Commissioner Winder says:—"I satisfied myself by repeated questions to individual children and by an inspec-"tion of school registers, both at Rochdale and Bradford, that, on the average, half-time children at the commencement of their "work have been a shorter time previously at school than day scholars of the same age. I am afraid that it is the prospect of "compulsory education which is at the bottom of this exceptional neglect, and this I found to be the opinion of those best qualified "to judge. The knowledge that a child must go to school at a later period of life makes its parents more careless during its earlier "years."

Canon Girdlestone also, speaking from an experience of 25 years in Lancashire, states that great numbers of children do not attend school till the age arrives at which they are compelled by the Factory Act to do so.—"Report," vol. i., p. 199.

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"affecting print works are nearly useless.* The expediency of extending these clauses to other "manufactures and to mines"—and we may now add, to agriculture—"depends upon the power of "the Legislature to secure good schools and regular attendance."—"Report," vol. i. p. 226.

The question must be discussed, not with reference to past success or failure, but on its own merits.

83. If the educational legislation embodied in the Factory Acts had been successful, and the circumstances of the two departments of labour were alike, a good case would have been made out for extending at once and without hesitation to agriculture principles that had been so prolific of good results in trade. But seeing that, in the opinion of the most competent judges, owing to the oversight which did not recognize the necessity of making provision for efficient schools and (in the case of children employed in printworks) for continuous, regular attendance, the educational results have been disappointing, and the circumstances of the two cases are widely dissimilar, the question of the propriety of applying the *principles* of this legislation to children employed in agriculture must be discussed on *à priori* grounds, irrespectively of past success or failure in other spheres, and upon the understanding that if applied at all, they shall be applied effectively, the goodness of the school being guaranteed and the regular attendance of the children secured. Because the principles have failed hitherto, it does not follow that they should continue to fail if proper steps are taken to enable them to work with due effect. The Legislature, if it has the will, certainly has the power to repair its own omissions.

Question proposed.

84. The question, then, to be discussed on its own merits, unfettered by any other influence than that of simple recognition of the circumstances of the case with which we are dealing, is—can we reasonably hope to improve the education of children employed in agriculture by requiring them to attend school for a certain number of years after they have gone to work, in one or other of the recognized modes of the half-time system, or in one or other of the recognized modes of what (for want of a better name) I will call the periodic system.†

Answer universally received.

85. I may say at once, that upon putting this question, as I did put it everywhere, not only to farmers, but to school managers and school teachers, I got but one nearly unanimous answer: the half-time system in either of its forms is declared to be utterly impracticable in agriculture; and though the mode of requiring school attendance adopted in the Print Works Act might be practicable in the case of younger children for the slack months of the winter season, yet even that would labour under many serious difficulties and objections, while to enforce it upon boys of as high an age as 13, who are employed about stock and horses, and whose services are as much needed in the winter as in the summer, would cause great inconvenience to the farmer.

Objections to the half-time system forcibly put by Mr. Wilkinson.

86. The objections to either form of the half-time system cannot be more tersely or forcibly put than they are by the Rev. John Wilkinson, a zealous educationist, in his Prize Essay published in the Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society on the Farming of Hampshire.‡ He is speaking of night-schools, in favour of which he found, as I also found, a strong feeling prevailing among the farmers, on the ground of their hours not interfering with agricultural labour:

"Night schools," he says, "seem to have arisen naturally out of the necessities of the case, as "the best means of supplementing the inevitable deficiency consequent either on the early age at which "the day school is left for labour, or on an irregular attendance, or on no attendance there. They "may be taken to be one mode of proved efficacy for solving that difficult problem in the elementary "education of the labouring poor, viz., how to combine instruction with the demand for juvenile "labour. No other plan, such as half-day or alternate day schools, has yet been devised which is not "open to grave objections. A half-day system will not answer, because the boy has a whole day's

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Failure of the education provisions of the Print-works Act.

* The commissioners are very strong in their language upon the failure of these clauses. "The provisions," they say, "appear "to be of little use. . . . Mr. Horner says, 'Of all the mockeries of the education which the Legislature intended that children "'employed in factories and print works should receive by the enactments for that end, none is so great as in the case of a large "'proportion of the children employed in print works. The children sometimes attend one hour in the day; are then away for a "'week, and attend another hour; and so on in the most irregular way, until a pressure comes to make up their qualification, and "'then they attend the five hours daily. I have reason to believe that the attendance certified is set down carelessly and sometimes "'fraudulently.' The whole body of inspectors, by their joint report of October 1855, thus denounce the system:—'There is a "'part of the Act to which we feel it our duty to call your earnest attention, namely, the provisions for the school attendance of "'children employed in print works. . . . There are some instances of the owners of print works having provided good schools, "'and in such cases, and when the attendance of the children is carefully looked after, and they are not stinted to the legal "'minimum of attendance, such schooling may do good; but as regards the great majority of these children this nominal school "'attendance has been found in practice not only a farce but a mischievous delusion, for it is a semblance of education without "'any reality. The children get no good; their attendance at school is at uncertain intervals, no more than sufficient to make up "'the statute number of 150 hours; and the records of such very irregular attendance, required by the law to be made out by the "'teachers, can be very little relied upon. . . . We feel ourselves bound to bring this subject forward, because we should be sorry "'if from ignorance of the actual working of the so-called education clauses of the Print Works Act they should be quoted as a "'good precedent to follow.'"—"Report," vol. i. pp. 210–212.

In the new Workshops' Regulation Act there is a similar deficiency. The inspector can disqualify a teacher who is unfit, either on moral or intellectual grounds, for granting certificates; but there are no powers in the Act for replacing such disqualified teacher by a better; and if there is no school within one mile of the workshop or the child's residence the educational provisions become at once inoperative. *See* ss. 14, 17.

Our statute book is too full already of inoperative enactments. In a recent debate in the House of Lords on the "Regulation of "Railways Bill" Earl Grey stated that "an existing law required railway companies to use engines consuming their smoke, but it "had become a dead letter, because there was no one to enforce it. As long as only a general law stood on the statute book "without any provisions for enforcing it railways would transgress the Act with impunity, because no private person would take "the trouble to prosecute." *See* "The Times," May 12, 1868.

Two modes of half-time.

† By the two modes of the half-time system I mean the half-day plan, by which the child is half the day at work and the other half at school, and the alternate whole day plan, by which he gets five days' schooling and seven days' working every fortnight, Saturday being a *dies non* as regards the school. The two recognized modes of the periodic system are—(1), that of the Print Works' Act, by which the child must attend school for 150 hours in every half year, as a condition precedent to his employment in the following half-year; and (2), that of the recent Workshops' Regulation Act, by which "every child employed in a workshop "must attend school for at least 10 hours in every week during the whole of which he is so employed."

Two modes of the periodic system.

I am not competent to interpret the language of an Act of Parliament, but I do not quite understand how a child can be said to be "employed during the whole" of a week in a workshop, of which week he is required to spend 10 hours at least, that is, at least two full days, in a school.

‡ *See* "Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society of England," vol. xxii., part ii. I quote from a reprint (1862), p. 83. The remarks have the advantage of being written six years prior to, and therefore independently of, this inquiry.

"work set him, and that very possibly at a distance from home; alternate days will not answer, "because every workman's usefulness depends on his acquainance with his work, and if he be away "half his time he is just twice as long learning his business; neither will master, bailiff, or headman "be bothered with teaching two sets of boys; they say one is trouble enough. Besides, where are the "relays to come from? At pressing times every boy and girl is wanted; and even for constant places, "in parishes of ordinary density of population, the supply of boys is not beyond the demand. There "is no juvenile reserve. The application of these schemes to an agricultural district is an impracticable "theory. They proceed on a mistaken analogy between manufacturing and agricultural operations. "In the one there is concentration of uniform work, under cover, in one spot, independent of season "and weather; in the other the work is spread over some square miles, is exposed to wet above and "mud below, varies with every season, and is dependent on every atmospheric change. From "circumstances so different the same practical conclusion cannot be deduced."

The half-time system has been tried successfully.

87. It will be seen by reference to the opinions expressed both at my meetings and in the replies I have received to the Commissioners' Circular, that this is, in substance, the stereotyped answer of almost everyone in my district to whom I have put the question. Mr. Wilkinson may perhaps be thought to use extravagant language when he says, "The application of these schemes to an "agricultural district is an impracticable theory." The experiment made by Mr. Paget in Nottinghamshire of the alternate whole day system is well known; and, though not perhaps so widely known, an equally successful experiment on a larger scale was carried on by Lord Rayleigh in Essex with a gang of boys, who were half the day at work and half at school.* No doubt both these experiments are alleged to be, or rather to have been, successful; for, owing to an asserted deficiency in the crop of boys at Terling, Lord Rayleigh has discontinued his half-time gang for the last three or four years. But if successful as experiments, it must be remembered that in each case the experiment has been tried under exceptionally favourable circumstances. A great landowner is almost autocratic on his estate, and can ride any hobby and carry out any fancy that he pleases; and with so limited an induction of particular cases, and those cases so far removed from the ordinary conditions under which the tenant farmer occupies and cultivates his land, it would be unsafe to proceed, against an almost universal opinion to the contrary, as though the practicability of the plan were assured.†

But under exceptionally favourable circumstances

The half-day system, if practicable, certainly the best for the individual child, but would introduce an element of disturbance upon the farm,

88. I have not the least doubt that the half-day system, if it could be adapted to the exigencies of the farm, would be found infinitely the most advantageous in the interests of education. The boy's body would not be over-tasked at his work, nor his mind at school. Four hours' schooling and four hours' working in the day would produce very good results, physically and intellectually. But I am afraid that the plan would disorganize the farm, and would also disorganize the school. I was permitted to see a carefully written paper, communicated by Mr. Tebbutts, a large occupier in Huntingdonshire, to my colleague, Mr. Boyle. Mr. Tebbutts has a decided preference for the half-day to the alternate whole day system; and, provided all labour-restrictions were removed during two months in the year (I presume that he has in his eye the seasons of haymaking and corn harvest), he thinks that, in his neighbourhood at least, the farm work could be so arranged as to dispense with the services of all boys under 13 years of age after one o'clock, at which hour, therefore, the farmer should be bound to dismiss them, and they should go to school.‡ But what, if the boy leaves off work at a distance of two miles from the school? What, if his clothes are wet, or his boots clogged with mire? What, if he has to go home and get his dinner, and that home, as may well be the case, lies in one direction, while the school lies in another?

"Intervalla vides humanè commoda."

and into the school.

89. And I hardly know what the village schoolmistress would do with this somewhat disorderly element introduced into the disciplined ranks of her afternoon school. She would not have quite so hard a task, it is true, as would be hers, were she called upon, as she would have been if Lord Shaftesbury's Bill had become law, to reduce to order and fuse into her classes a knot of rough farmer lads, who in eight or nine months spent in working on the land had forgotten their good manners, and lost their

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* See Lord Rayleigh's statement in my "Miscellaneous Evidence," No. 23. In Mr. Paget's pamphlet, describing his experiment, if I remember rightly, he states that eight was the number of boys whom he so employed. Lord Rayleigh's number sometimes rose to as high a figure as 40. When I call Lord Rayleigh's a "successful experiment" I am giving his Lordship's own estimate of it. As it has been discontinued, or at least reduced to very insignificant proportions, I had no opportunity of forming a judgment of my own. I have stated in a note on Lord Rayleigh's evidence that some farmers in the neighbourhood who had seen the experiment at work did not think that it worked well.

Experiment tried in Cheshire by Sir Philip de Grey Egerton.

† I doubt if I have the right to produce evidence which does not properly belong to the territory assigned to me, because I may be thought to be trespassing on the preserves of one or other of my colleagues. But, while staying at Lord Ducie's, in Gloucestershire, I had the good fortune to meet Sir Philip de Grey, Lady and Miss Egerton. In conversation with Miss Egerton, I found that the half day system is worked on her father's estate in Cheshire, and she was kind enough to give me the following account of it.

"Sir Philip Egerton employs on the garden and the home farm at Oulton Park six boys on the half day system, paying them each 3*d.* for half a day's work. The system has been modified once or twice; and its success depends on the willingness of the bailiff to co-operate in the experiment. It requires the boys to be thoroughly well looked after. The gardener finds the boys good at their work, and they get on well at school. They have only half a mile to travel from their work to the school. Miss Egerton doubts if the half time system could be worked on a farm, particularly on a small farm (as most of the Cheshire farms are); though she hopes to induce one of her fathers' tenants to try the plan. By a system of encouragement, boys in this parish (Little Budworth) are kept at school till 14, and girls till 15. Regular attendance is promoted by a system of prizes. Wages in the neighbourhood are 10*s.* and 12*s.* a week. The people are poor but neat and well-mannered. Many families of five and six children are maintained solely by the parents' earnings. All the women work on the land; their doing so is not thought to produce good results. Many of the men only work on fine days. A man seldom, if ever, eats fresh meat, except on Sunday. His dinner generally is boiled potatoes and butter-milk. The children bring only bread and butter; sometimes fruit pies. Their drink is water or butter milk. Cottage rents, including a garden, are about 3*l.* 10*s.* Damson trees are in every garden, and the people often pay their rent with the produce. The people keep their cottages in tidy order, and are very contented. There is a very strong feudal feeling; and the feudal relation is carefully maintained on both sides."

This is only another instance of an experiment tried under the most favourable conditions. I shall be curious to know what the tenant-farmer, if induced to venture on the plan, makes of it.

‡ Mr. Tebbutts states that in his "neighbourhood the work for which boys are required is morning and not afternoon work." As he does not specify, I am at a loss to conceive what that work can be. The bird-keeping boy, the sheep-tending boy, the plough-driving boy certainly could not leave the field at 1 o'clock unless his place were supplied by another.

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habits of unquestioning obedience; but she would have a hard task still; too hard, I fear, for any but a first-rate disciplinarian and a first-rate instructor to accomplish.* It must not be forgotten, in discussing this question, that by far the largest proportion of our rural schools, which *ex hypothesi* are the schools concerned, are schools under a single teacher, and that teacher a woman, in most cases without any great flexibility of method or fertility of resource; and that to make room and find work for these half-timers, the principle of her existing classification would have to be modified, or a new principle be introduced, either of them an operation to her nearly as perilous as that of the general who has to change his front in face of an enemy. I do not say that the difficulty is insurmountable; but at any rate it is formidable; and in estimating the probable gain, the certain loss must be taken account of too.

The alternate whole day system only practicable when relays of children can be procured.

90. It is possible to conceive such a re-arrangement of the hours and modes of work upon a farm as to allow of a half-day attendance at school;† though to be really practicable, the school attendance must be in the morning, as in Lord Rayleigh's plan, and not, according to Mr. Tebbutts' proposal, in the afternoon. Such an arrangement, I say, may be conceived, though I am afraid it would have to overcome much prejudice and many difficulties, before it could be carried out; but it is impossible even to conceive the alternate whole day system applied to agriculture, as Mr. Fawcett proposed to apply it in his Bill, except in localities where there is a sufficient number of boys of the proper age to carry on the work of the farm by the system of relays. In fact, two boys would be required instead of one. And here again, supposing the practical difficulties, noted by Mr. Wilkinson, overcome, would be a loss to be set over against the gain. If in any parish, at present, 50 boys are wholly employed on the land, under the alternate whole day system 100 boys of as nearly as possible the same strength and age would be required to do the work of these. This "juvenile reserve," as Mr. Wilkinson calls it, can only be found in the school; so that the practical result would be that instead of 50 boys wholly at work, and 50 boys (with more or less regularity) wholly at school, you would have in the parish 100 boys, earning the same sum in the aggregate, but with very different effects on the condition of families when it came to be distributed, only half their time at work, and half their time, or at least, for five days in a fortnight, at school. What Mr. Paget can do with eight boys at Ruddington, in a population of 2,300, it might be found impossible to do even there, if every farmer in the parish attempted the same thing; it would certainly be found impossible in the thinly peopled parishes of the South of England, where boy-labour is in great demand, and there is asserted to be no redundancy of the article.

The principle of the Print-works' Act most applicable to agriculture, but proved, in its own sphere, to be ineffective.

91. If the Commissioners of 1861 are right in their view of the ground for the legislative distinction between factories and print-works, it should seem that the rule governing the employment and education of children in these latter establishments is also the rule that should govern their employment and education in agriculture;‡ and so, though probably ignorant, as I was myself, of the ground of the distinction, it has, as a fact, seemed to almost all the persons, conversant with the nature of farm operations, who have expressed to me their opinion. It is generally, though by no means universally, admitted that there are three or four slack months in the winter, from the middle or end of November to the beginning or middle of March, during which the farmers do not require the labour of children, and when, therefore, they might be sent to school. In some districts, it is true, where boys are chiefly employed about horses and stock, their services are said to be as necessary to the farmer in the winter as in the summer; indeed, even more so, as the cattle are then in the yards, and not at pasture, and require much more attention and waiting on. And all are agreed that the slack time is only to be found in the winter months, a season of the year when the state of the weather, and on clay soils the impassableness of the roads, are apt to thin, and reduce the regularity of, the attendance at school.§ Still there is the time, the farmer says, which it is the business of the educationist to take and utilize.

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* This difficulty, a very serious one, pressed itself strongly on the minds of the clergy of the Redenhall deanery in Norfolk, when they considered this question. See the Report of their discussion, Appendix, p. 19.

Opinion expressed by myself to the Education Commissioners of 1861.

In my Report to the Education Commissioners of 1861 I briefly touched upon the half-time system to the same effect. I said, " I have met with no instance of an attempt to introduce the half-time principle into agricultural pursuits. Most persons conversant " with the character of farm labour, and also with the temper of farmers, appeared to consider it an impracticable theory. No one " had ever dreamt of trying it. Even in the case of children employed in factories, and who come under the operation of the " Act of Parliament, as at Axminster, Lyme and Sherborne, the arrangements made for the instruction of the half-time scholars " did not seem very satisfactory: the compliance with the terms of the Act (as far as I could ascertain, which was a matter of " considerable difficulty to do) appeared to be nominal rather than substantial; and as the number of the scholars, as compared with " the bulk of the school, was in all cases insignificant, and the instruction of the classes went on continuously while they were absent " on the alternate days, so that they missed in fact just half of what was taught on each subject, I doubt whether the system can " work very advantageously either for them or for the rest of the school. The case is removed into entirely different conditions if, " as probably happens in purely manufacturing localities, the children come in relays to school, as they go in relays to work. You " then have to do with two sets of children entirely distinguished, and the continuity of the instruction of each set is not interrupted. " But this is not at all parallel to the case of a small manufacturing (or half-time) element intermingled with the ordinary constitu- " ents of a rural school. I can only say that the system was not giving satisfaction either to the managers or the teachers in the few " places where it professedly was being tried. The small extra amount of attendance which it secured did not compensate for the " element of disturbance which it introduced into the school." "Report," vol. ii., p. 63–4.

It is from no foolish reluctance to change my opinion, if I saw good grounds for doing so, that I must declare that my mind upon this matter is still the same.

Work would have to be re-arranged.

† Bird keeping must be done by an old man with a gun; boys above 13 must be got to drive plough and tend sheep and stock; women must be more largely employed. There would not be much left for the half-timers to do but weed, which they would be required to do, under superintendence, in a gang.

‡ "The ground for the legislative distinction between factories and printworks appears to have been that the demand for the " article produced by the printworks has hitherto been liable to such sudden and irregular changes *as to require a large amount of* " *labour at particular times*, and thus to make it more difficult in this case than in the case of factories to divide the children into " sets for alternate labour." "Report," i., 210. What, I suppose, the inexorableness of fashion does for the printworker, the inexorableness of weather and seasons does for the agriculturist. He "requires a large amount of labour at particular times."

§ There are, however, great and remarkable discrepancies between different neighbourhoods on this point. In Essex, the school attendance, particularly of boys, is very much smaller in winter than in summer; in Sussex, the two attendances are about equal; in many parts of Gloucestershire the winter attendance of boys is 25 per cent. larger than the summer. The discrepancies could all, no doubt, be easily accounted for by those acquainted with each district. In the woodlands of Sussex, employment in the coppices comes in to take the place of employment on the land. In Gloucestershire, when the fruit is picked, the children have nothing else to do till the next spring. In Essex, young boys assist their fathers during the winter, in surface-draining.

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92. But we have already heard, on the highest authority, that of those who have watched, and in fact, directed, the operations of the Print Works' Act in its own sphere, that "such of these provisions "as refer to education are found to be of little use."* There is not, therefore, much encouragement to try, in its application to agriculture, a principle which, where it had infinitely more chances of being successful, has proved a failure. Certainly the principle might be modified; and by being modified, might be made much more effective; and a modification of it is what I shall venture to suggest when I come presently to recommend the course that I think ought to be pursued.

Advantages of one general simple law.

93. Some years ago "six of Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools memorialised the Secretary of "State for the Home Department in favour of 'one general and simple law for securing a certain amount "'of schooling to all children employed in mines and manufactures,' urging, among other arguments, "that a general law would be less likely to disturb the children's labour market than any partial mea-"sures."† If these inspectors were to memorialize Her Majesty's Government now, I suppose they would add the case of children employed in agriculture and every other form of manual labour, to the case of those employed in manufactures and in mines. In fact they would probably suggest the desirableness of one simple, universal law dealing with elementary education. The Prussians have one such simple law, and therefore their system of education is effective; our legislation on the subject is broken up into a thousand rules, and therefore our system is ineffective. In all legislation, the object should be to embody comprehensive principles, and to avoid complicating the measure by any attempt to deal with details. The moment you descend from generals to an enumeration of singulars, you open the door to evasion. The art of man, it is said, can always drive a coach and six through an English Act of Parliament.

The Factory Acts themselves need revision.

94. Instead, therefore, of applying, with very doubtful prospects of success, the regulations of the Factory Acts to agriculture, I should like to see, as the Commissioners of 1861‡ wished to see, the Factory Acts themselves revised. I am satisfied that the age of 8 is too early, on physical grounds, for children to go to constant work; I am satisfied that the age of 8 is too early, on educational grounds, for them to commence half-time or periodic attendance at school. But whether the Factory Acts are thought to require revision or not, it will be seen by any one who cares to peruse the evidence that I have collected, that it is the almost unanimous opinion of every person and body of persons who have expressed opinions upon the subject, that the best mode of promoting the education of children in agricultural districts would be (1) to prohibit their employment on the land under the age of 10; (2), to make provisions for securing their regular attendance at school for the five years preceding that age; and in several cases the suggestion was added that (3) to prevent the possible loss, by disuse, of what they had attained, the children, when emancipated from entire restriction, should still be required to fulfil a certain amount of winter attendance—say 150 hours—either at day or night school, for two years more. I should add that not only do farmers think that this mode of dealing with the subject would be the mode least embarrassing to them in the cultivation of their land; but that managers and teachers of schools declare that they could do more for the children's education in this way than they could hope to do if regular attendance ceased at 8, and intermittent attendance took its place till 13. My own opinion, formed upon an experience of twenty years as manager and (to a considerable extent) teacher of a rural school, entirely coincides with theirs.§ It is the opinion of the teachers particularly, that irregularity of attendance is the most formidable difficulty with which they have at present to contend,—children kept at home for all sorts of frivolous purposes by the parents, or withdrawn for all sorts of varying lengths of time by the farmer; and that a child kept constantly at school till 10 ought to be able to pass in the Government's Fourth Standard, indicating an amount of attainment which, though something of its completeness may be detracted by the friction of life, is likely, in its main elements, to stick to him to the end.‖

General opinion of the best mode of dealing with children employed in agriculture

Opinion of teachers in particular.

95. I found a perfect agreement amongst the farmers that, whether his education makes him a better labourer or not,¶ every English labouring man ought to have placed within his reach the opportunity

Opinion as to the amount of education that ought to be attained.

* "Report of Education Commissioners," i. p. 210. *See* above, p. 26, note *.

† "Report of Education Commission" (1861), vol. i. p. 201.

‡ One of their recommendations was, "That the defects in the Acts of Parliament respecting the employment of children in "factories, printworks, mines, and collieries, should be remedied by legislative enactment."—"Report," vol. i. p. 226, § 11.

§ I have stated that prohibition of labour under the age of 10, with a view to taking advantage of the preceding years for the purposes of education, has been the almost unanimous opinion both of individuals and of the bodies of persons with whom I have come in contact during this inquiry. I must, however, except two important bodies; the Norfolk Chamber of Agriculture, and the Council of the Central Chamber following the suit of the Norfolk and Leicester Chambers, who, after full discussion of the subject, at which I was myself present, have passed resolutions in favour of the limit of prohibition being fixed at nine. It is needless to say that to consent that a child should be prohibited from labour up to the age of 9, and to make no further provision for his education, is to make no concession to the demands of public opinion in this matter. One year gained by the school after 9, is, in educational value, probably worth three years passed within its walls before it. Indeed, the Norfolk Chamber seem to anticipate that their concession would not be deemed sufficient, for they add a clause that, "Should attendance at school be insisted upon after the boy has "commenced labour, school on alternate days or weeks would render the boy almost useless to the farmer. He had much better "attend the school for a certain number of consecutive days during the leisure part of the year." The Cirencester and Gloucester Chambers, though neither of them relishing the prospect of legislative interference, and the latter in express terms deprecating it, both considered that a boy ought not to be employed in farm labour under the age of 10, "or" (the Gloucester Chamber added) "unless he can read and write efficiently;" and the latter body "pledged itself," in its Resolution, "to use its influence in all "legitimate ways to secure this rule being adopted and acted upon." *See* "Appendix," p. 15.

Opinions of the different Chambers of Agriculture.

‖ I beg to refer to the case of the boy William Stephens of Bromsberrow ("Evidence of Labouring Class," No. 42), as one in point. This boy's school learning had stuck to him admirably. He could read well, and write well, and read writing well. He had left school 3½ years and had never attended a night school, though his mother, who can read, had made him keep up his learning at nights at home. But he was for five years uninterruptedly at school, and reached the first class. He was intelligent certainly, but his intelligence was probably simply the fruit of cultivation.

An individual instance.

¶ Opinions vary a good deal as to the relative value of an educated and uneducated labourer. Lord Leicester speaks very strongly of the value of school training as developing intelligence, and of the value of intelligence, when developed, to an employer. On the other hand, at one of my meetings, a gentleman delivered himself of the γνώμη (as Aristotle would call it) that "It takes three educated men to do two ignorant men's work." When I tried to fathom the grounds of such opinions, I generally found them resting on such convictions as these: that the educated men are the most discontented, the most shifty, the least inclined for drudgery, the sauciest in their answers, fonder of reading the newspaper (a charge frequently made) than of work, always on the

Opinions as to the relative value of educated and uneducated labourers.

A.

Ability to read the most important power.

of education, and that his education ought, at least, to extend as far as the power to read, to write, and to cipher; and the admission was very frankly made that the present general standard of attainment is far below this. I entirely go along, also, with the opinion very frequently expressed, that the ability to write and to cipher are of secondary importance compared with the ability to read. They can be easily and quickly secured, if the desire exists, at almost any period of life, and there will always be abundant motives for securing them;* but the power to read, if not acquired in youth, is rarely acquired with any facility at all, while it is, emphatically, the key of all subsequent knowledge and self-improvement.

A certain measure of this power once attained not likely to be lost.

And there is a certain analogy between the capacity to read and the capacity to swim. A man whose mastery of this useful accomplishment, when a boy, was limited to the power of sustaining himself in in the water for half a dozen strokes, and whose practice stopped there, if he should unhappily fall into deep water twenty years afterwards, even within easy distance of the bank, will infallibly be drowned; but he who has once accomplished the feat of swimming across the Thames will find that he has endowed himself with a power that he will never lose. So too with reading. No wonder if the poor lad, removed from school just as with infinite labour he can spell out "easy narratives" written in words none of them more than two syllables long, with no subsequent practice, and no one to urge him to keep up his learning at home, soon loses the modicum he has acquired, and in two years or so can only distinguish his master's sacks from a neighbour's by the *colour* of the initials stamped upon them;† but let a boy only once get to read a page in a fourth or fifth reading book, such as is ordinarily found in our schools, with intelligence and fluency, and I undertake to say he shall never forfeit that power. I will not say it may not be impaired; but it shall never be wholly lost; and if impaired, a little pains, a season's attendance at a night school, shall rapidly make it good again.

The Education Commissioners' view of what could and should be realized.

96. The Commissioners of 1861 considered that "under the present circumstances of society, a satisfactory point will have been reached when children go to the infant school at the age of 3, and from "the infant school to the day school at the age of 6 or 7, and remain in the day school till 10, 11, or 12, "according to the circumstances of their parents, and the calling to which they are destined; provided "that they attend, while on the school books, not less than four hours a day for five days in the week, "and not less than 30 weeks, ranging, under the most favourable circumstances, up to 44 weeks, in the "year;" and they believe that "there is nothing in the feelings of the parents on the subject of "education to prevent well directed efforts to insure this amount of attendance from meeting with "general success." Those efforts, they added, "should be directed principally to increasing the "regularity of the attendance, rather than to prolonging its duration," inasmuch as "neither the "Government nor private persons can effectually resist, or would be morally justified in resisting, the "natural demands of labour when the child has arrived, physically speaking, at the proper age for "labour, and when its wages are such as to form a strong motive to its parents for withdrawing it from "school."‡

Necessity for governing our efforts by our circumstances.

97. These opinions are characterized by the moderation and good sense which are such marked features in the Report of that Commission, and are well worthy of being pondered before we take another step which ought to be a step in advance, but which, if running too strongly counter to popular sentiment, Mr. Bright told his hearers at Birmingham, might be forced into a retrograde movement.§ Our social circumstances are such as to awaken us rudely from the dream that it is possible to develop in England a high ideal of elementary education, and even to hope to reach the Prussian standard. With the increased activity that is developing all the material resources of the country, it seems to be a sort of economic law that material progress can only be purchased at the cost of moral and

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look out for an opportunity to better themselves. Mr. Iles, vice-chairman of the Cirencester board of guardians, an intelligent and liberal-minded farmer, justly attributes these results, which must be admitted to exist to some extent, to partial education; when it becomes general, the evils complained of will disappear, and the natural gradations of society, temporarily displaced, will be restored.

I observe a similar remark, *in alia materia*, made by Earl Granville, in his capacity of Chancellor of the University of London, in his recent address at the admission of successful candidates to degrees. "He was ready to admit that the most detestable women "he had met with were those who might properly be called 'blue stockings;' but he agreed with Dr. Johnson, who met a similar "argument by saying, that if you gave a silk-laced waistcoat to a country lad he would be proud and haughty over his fellows of the "village, but that if you gave all the boys in the parish a silk-laced waistcoat, there would be no one over whom they could be "proud. This he thought applicable to women. If they were all educated alike, they would have no cause to pique themselves "on their superiority."—Reported in the "Times," May 14, 1868.

Instance of rapid attainment of power to write and to cipher.

* A case was mentioned at my meeting at Morningthorpe (Norfolk) of a man who had an offer of a bailiff's place upon a farm. He could read, but could neither write nor cipher. Having three months' notice he attended the clergyman's night-school, and in the course of the winter acquired sufficient knowledge of these two arts to enable him to accept the place. *See* "Notes of meetings," No. 29.

† *See* the case mentioned by Mr. Howlett in "Notes on Schools," No. 18.

‡ "Report of the Education Commission," vol. i. p. 225, ss. 6, 7, 5, 4.

Infant schools impossible in small parishes.

Mr. Bellairs' estimate of the period of the school life.

It is well known to all persons acquainted with the circumstances of small, that is, of the large majority of, rural parishes, that in them the establishment of an infant school is an impossibility, and that where children have a mile or more to travel, the educationist must be content if he can get them under instruction at as early an age as five. I regard from 5 to 10 or 11 as the practicable school life in an agricultural district; and if that were realised in the case of all, or even most of our children, the condition of things, in respect of intelligence, in those districts would be as different from what it now is as light is different from darkness. Mr. Bellairs, the oldest, I believe, of Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools, seems to confirm this view by his wide and long experience. Speaking of irregular attendance, he declares his "conviction, that until some means are devised to secure regular attendance for the children "of the poor from 4 to 10 or 11 years of age, a very large amount of our exertion and money will be wasted, and our jails, peniten-"tiaries, and reformatories will show our shortcomings by the presence of a mass of inmates untrained and untaught." "Report of the Committee of Council on Education, for 1866–7," p. 25.

Sentiments of Mr. Bright.

§ "I should recommend," said Mr. Bright, "what I call a steady progress rather than a great rush, because in making a great rush upon this question and introducing measures based upon what I look at with great doubt—a compulsory and forced attendance at schools, I am not sure that you will not produce among the people a reactionary feeling which would defeat the very object you have at heart. Suppose you establish a great and broad system, and proceed to lay considerable and heavy rates upon a people who at present do not much appreciate education, and you establish in your towns a sort of 'truant police' to look after the children who do not go to school, if you bring too much weight to bear on the people before they are sufficiently enlightened to approve your efforts, you may find that there is a great reaction, and your difficulties become almost, if not altogether, insuperable. The great mass of your children now are uneducated. If you propose at once to create a great revolution of that kind, I am certain you will find that those for whose benefit you are acting will not give you that co-operation without which it is impossible that you should succeed."

A.

intellectual; it is a question whether the Prussian standard itself, in spite of the high value set by the people themselves on education, can be maintained. "Since 1850," says Mr. Pattison, "a turn has "taken place. Factory labour and pauperism are both gaining ground, and irregularity in the "attendance at the common schools is on the increase."* Certainly, in the New England States, by the united testimony of superintendents of schools, in all the great centres of manufacturing industry, the tendency of things is downwards rather than upwards, and as, Mr. Horace Mann confesses, educationists of the present generation are forced to accept and acquiesce in a lower ideal of general culture than was set up, and possibly for a time realized, in the simpler days of the pilgrim fathers.† If we cannot wholly bend circumstances to our views, we must to some extent adapt our views to circumstances.

The law should be uniform and moderate.

98. I have already said that what we want seems to me to be a simple, uniform law, which everybody shall understand, and which there shall be some effective power to compel everybody to obey.‡ What I wish to say now is that such a law must be moderate in its demands, practicable in its details, not seeking to inflict unnecessary inconvenience upon the employers of labour nor what the Education Commissioners consider would be unjustifiable hardship upon those who have to maintain themselves by their labour. I must do the farmers of England the justice to say that, in discussing this question, though naturally sensible of embarrassments to themselves that might be created by restrictive legislation, they appeared to be still more apprehensive of such legislation pressing intolerably on the condition of the poor. It was, therefore, again and again urged upon me that any such legislation ought, in equity, to be accompanied with some dispensing power. If a high amount of school attendance in the year were required, the magistrates, it was said, might be empowered to relax the requirement in the case of any man who could show that his family was above a given size or his earnings below a certain sum. If the age of 10 were chosen as the age under which children should be prohibited from labour, a trustworthy certificate that a child had reached a given standard of attainment at an earlier period might be a ground for relaxing the prohibition in favour of that particular child; and it was further thought that the possibility of attaining such a certificate at the early age would act as an indirect form of compulsion, and induce parents to seize every opportunity of sending their children to school.§

Accompanied, too, with a dispensing power.

Some would raise the age of prohibition as high as 12.

99. It will be seen by reference to my Evidence that several gentlemen who have favoured me with their views upon this subject, recommend that the age of prohibition should be raised as high as *twelve*, and assert that no inconvenience which could not be surmounted by a little management would be thereby inflicted upon the farmer; and I should myself be much better satisfied if we could secure the attendance of the children at our schools from five to *eleven*—for six years instead of five. But, seeing what I have seen and hearing what I have heard of the poverty of the parents, I am afraid to press for an amount of restriction which, however desirable in the interests of education, would bear with undue severity upon the physical condition of the labouring poor. I content myself with asking for a law which shall require regular, uninterrupted attendance at school up to the age of 10; and for the two years between 10 and 12, while the child is at work, a certain amount of attendance, as suggested by the Norfolk Chamber of Agriculture, either at day or night school, during the leisure part of the year.

Value and position of the night school.

100. The mention of night schools suggests that this is not an improper place in which to deliver myself of what I have to say about this educational agency. Mr. Wilkinson, in the essay already referred to, says that he found among the Hampshire farmers a strong feeling for Sunday-schools and winter night schools, chiefly on the ground that the hours for these do not interfere with agricultural labour; and he himself thoroughly endorses this opinion, "that they are the right thing for an "agricultural district," as well as bears witness to their being "most popular among the poor."‖ I would be the last person in the world to depreciate the value of a rural night school, as for 10 years of my life I have been in the uninterrupted habit (till last winter, when I was engaged on this Commission) of conducting and teaching in a very successful one.¶ But if any one will be at the pains of reading

Its difficulties.

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* "Report of Education Commission (1861)," vol. iv, p. 194.

† "Horace Mann's 10th Report (1849)," p. 10.

‡ Mr. Albert Pell pointed out, in the London Chamber of Agriculture, the possible difficulty that might arise from two laws, one prohibiting employment (as in the case of factory children) only up to the age of 8, and another (supposing such were the enactment) prohibiting the employment of agricultural children under 10 in any district, of which there must be many, where an agricultural and manufacturing population was intermixed. Again, a law which dealt only with the case of agricultural children on the shores of the Wash would drive scores of children, excluded from the land, into the occupation of mussel-picking; in Essex, into the straw-plait; in Gloucestershire, into "gloving;" and so on. A uniform law would extricate the question from all these difficulties.

Difficulties likely to arise from want of a uniform law.

§ See Richard Hooker's argument for the existence of dispensations, "Not to turn the edge of justice or to make void at certain "times and in certain men, through mere voluntary grace and benevolence, that which continually and universally should be of "force (as some understand it), but in very truth to practise general laws according to their right meaning. . . . Which things "being considered we require that it may not seem hard if in cases of necessity, or for common utility's sake, certain profitable "ordinances sometime be released, rather than all men be always strictly bound to the general rigour thereof."—"Eccles. Polity," v., ch. ix.

Richard Hooker's argument for dispensations.

‖ Prize essay on Farming in Hampshire, by Rev. John Wilkinson, p. 82.

¶ The numbers on the register of my night school for the winters of 1863–64, 1864–65, 1865–66, and 1866–67 respectively, my population being 368, were 31, 32, 36, and 24. In the three earlier years there was a considerable infusion of scholars from a neighbouring parish. My population is very scattered, and some of the most regular scholars came a distance of nearly two miles. In 1864–65, when the school was open 48 nights (16 weeks of three nights each), 19 out of the 32 scholars attended upwards of 40 times, and obtained a prize therefor. In the same years there have been the names of 60 scholars on the register of the day school, with an average attendance of from 45 to 50; so that I do not know that even a compulsory law could do much more for us than, by a little effort, we manage to do for ourselves. I must confess, however, that I am obliged myself, to a greater extent than is agreeable, to play the part of a truant-officer. But country parsons who want the comfort of an efficient school must not be above doing, not necessarily any dirty, but some unpleasant work, both in begging for subscriptions and stimulating attendance. When once, however, the public interest is generated, it is surprising to find how light the work soon becomes. I am certain, thanks to the attractive powers of a very efficient schoolmistress, that the children in my parish would infinitely rather come to school than stay away.

My own experience of night schools.

A.

the answers, printed in my Appendix, which I have received to the questions in the Commissioners' Circular on the subject of this class of schools, they will find that the night school is a most precarious institution. The evidence of Archdeacon Hopper, of Starston; of the Rev. E. B. Everard, of Burnham Thorpe; and of the Rev. W. T. Beckett, of Ingoldisthorpe,* illustrates the special difficulties under which it labours. The fact of the fitful and intermittent life of a vast majority of night schools, disclosed in the same body of evidence, proves that, in the face of these difficulties, the night school too often cannot be carried on. Still more necessary to it even than to the day school is the personal superintendence of the clergyman, or of some one in the social position of the clergyman; still greater are the difficulties of raising funds and providing teachers; still more discouraging are the irregularities of attendance, and the decay of interest, the listlessness and drowsiness, in the scholars who come. The farmers cry up the advantages of the night school, and in not a few places co-operate willingly and zealously with the clergyman in superintending one; but elsewhere they praise its advantages without helping to bear its burden; and I have even met with instances of their actively opposing it, and refusing to make any arrangements of their work so as to facilitate the attendance at it of lads in their employ.†

The night school not a substitute for, but a supplement to, the day school.

101. The night school must not be regarded as a substitute for but as a supplement to an efficient day school. It carries on the education process a little farther, or prevents its retrograding; it cannot conduct it successfully *ab initio*.‡ It rests at present on too precarious a basis to be trusted to as a permanent and universal institution. As things are, it is very far from permanent, and very far from universal. Out of 139 parishes making returns to me, 44 have no evening school; many, probably, are never likely to have one. A large number report that the evening school which they once had, and which flourished for a time, while the clergyman was young or strong and when the interest was fresh, has, owing to a change in these conditions, been discontinued. And from the nature of the case, these conditions, which are essential to the vitality of the evening school, are conditions always liable not only to change but to collapse.

The Committee of Council have never done much to encourage evening schools.

102. The Committee of Council on Education, till quite recently, has never seemed to recognize the importance or appreciate the difficulties of evening schools. They were relegated, so to speak, into a corner of the system, almost out of sight, and only offered aid on terms with which in nine cases out of ten it was impossible for them to comply. Even the Revised Code, from which at the outset great things had been expected in relation to this class of schools, placed them in some respects under almost increased disadvantages. It removed the restriction, which in most cases practically amounted to a prohibition, on the employment of the master of the day school to teach or assist in teaching the evening classes; but it introduced some fresh restrictions equally embarrassing. No grant could be earned in respect of any night scholar under 12 years of age.§ The principal teacher must be duly certificated. The conditions of examination were so framed as almost to preclude the possibility of holding one in cases (very frequent) where the clergyman happened to be the sole manager and had also himself taught in the school.‖ The organic connexion between the day and night school was still required to be maintained. All these regulations are, to my mind, the very reverse of encouragements, and seem to be drawn up in entire ignorance or disregard of the fact that the two most serious difficulties under which night schools labour are, firstly, want of teachers, and secondly, want of funds.

The Duke of Marlborough's Bill.

103. The Bill introduced during this Session of Parliament into the House of Lords by the Lord President of the Council, whether as defective as it is by some asserted to be in other points or not, is at least a step forwards in the right direction here. It dissolves the organic connexion, often so difficult to maintain, between the day school and the night school by recognizing schools which meet in the evening only, provided that they meet not less than 100 times within the school year. It does not demand, in order to earn a partial grant, the possession of a certificate by the teacher. It allows scholars to be examined at 10 years of age. If only the stringent regulation with regard to the mode of conducting the examination itself were modified, there would then, I think, be no demand made upon the managers of night schools with which they might not fairly be expected to comply. In the recognition of schools meeting in the evening only not less than 100 times within the school year there is a provision made for such a possible amount of school attendance during the winter months as would be more than equivalent to the requirements of the Print Works' Act, and would meet the views of those who assert that this is the only practicable form of carrying on the education of agricultural boys above the age of 10. If, as has been suggested, the day's work of boys under 12 years of age, between the 1st November and the 1st March, were required to terminate at four in the afternoon, these evening schools, where they could be established, might prove a very useful institution.

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* See "Answers on Evening Schools," Nos. 20, 28, 32.

Instances of obstruction night schools.

† In one Gloucestershire parish I was informed of a case of a farmer threatening to discharge a lad of 16 if he attended night school, as he claimed his services from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. In another instance a boy was told that if he liked to go to night school he must come back and finish his work on the farm when it was over. These are extreme cases of obstructiveness to education, but they occur in sufficient numbers to justify the statement made in the text. At some of my meetings farmers expressed the opinion that the moral results of night schools were not entirely satisfactory.

Instance of men making themselves scholars in night school.

‡ It is true that Archdeacon Hopper pointed out to me three men in his parish, now tolerable scholars, who did not know their A, B, C, when they commenced attending his night school. But these are exceptional instances, as Archdeacon Hopper himself is an exceptional man for educational ability and zeal. And whatever *men* might be found to have perseverance enough to do in a night school, I venture to doubt if the most skilful teacher would ever get *boys* to learn their A, B, C, there.

§ The objection to this regulation is that the larger proportion of agricultural boys leave the day school at ten, and that instead of being encouraged to attend the night school immediately, they are, as far as the influence of this regulation extends, almost discouraged from attending for two years, when much of their little stock of learning will have slipped away. I suppose the idea was that the existence of the limit would be a motive to the boys to remain two years longer at the day school. It is needless to add that it has not had this effect.

‖ The Rev. W. L. Hussey, of Ringstead, Norfolk, informed me that a grant, or at least an examination with a view to a grant, had been refused to his school on this ground.

A.

104. In two or three places I found evening schools held in the summer as well as in the winter, in fact, carried on throughout the year. The general opinion, however, seemed to be that you would never draw young men and lads away from their garden or their game of cricket in the summer evenings into a school; and I am myself afraid that such would be the case. Otherwise, if it could be contrived, a summer evening school would have some very manifest advantages.

Possibility of evening schools in the summer.

105. Still, when all has been said and done, every suggestion listened to, and every expedient tried, the night school has to encounter so many, and apparently such inevitable obstacles, from want of funds, want of teachers, want of interest, sparseness of population, physical exhaustion of scholars, influences of weather, distance, roads, that, however useful when it not only exists but thrives, its thriving, and even its existence, is far too uncertain to justify our trusting to it even as a supplementary agency, or to relieve us of the obligation to secure for every district a thoroughly efficient and accessible day school.*

The evening school not to be trusted, even as a supplementary instrument.

106. Similar is the position of the Sunday school, the other educational instrument in favour of which Mr. Wilkinson says he found a "strong feeling" existing among the Hampshire farmers. Its utility, or rather its capacity of usefulness, was occasionally, though not very frequently or very strongly, pressed upon myself in the course of this inquiry. It is more generally admitted to be a school in form rather than in power. Indeed, a very vigorous pamphlet has been written by a Norfolk clergyman,† in which it is plumply asserted that the institution is on its deathbed, and that it can only be revived (I doubt if the remedy would have occurred to many minds) by a larger infusion of dogmatic teaching. Whether this recipe would act as a tonic to the system or not, it is beyond all doubt that the present influence of the Sunday school in rural districts is very feeble, both as regards the formation of character and the development of mind. It may not be so in thoroughly well worked parishes, where the clergyman has time and strength to devote to its superintendence; but it is so in most parishes. And it is so for reasons, many of which are beyond even the most zealous clergyman's control. It is very rare to find boys, or even girls, willing to be kept under religious instruction, as boys and girls are in Germany, till the time of their confirmation. Many boys, when they have once gone to work, think themselves too much of men to attend school even on Sunday; or, if they do come, often introduce into it an element not only of dullness but of disorder, with which it is not always very easy to deal. The farmers, again, if strongly in favour of Sunday schools, do not let the school derive much advantage from their favour, by arranging the Sunday work of their boys so as to enable them to comply with its requirements. The Sunday work of the boys who "keep" birds, or tend sheep, or are employed in the stable is, as I have already noticed, altogether incompatible, as at present laid out, not only with attendance at church, but with attendance at school; and such boys, in consequence, are often found to lapse into the mere ignorance and darkness of heathenism. Almost every clergyman, who prepares candidates for confirmation, tells the same tale. It is a precious opportunity lost through a combination of adverse circumstances; and I cannot but regret that farmers if they really feel, as they profess to feel, a strong personal interest in the moral character of their workpeople, do not make a more vigorous effort than they do, in the years when that character is taking the bias that will perhaps shape its course for life, to bring to bear upon its formation the united influence of the place of worship and the Sunday school. With such co-operation on the part of the employer, and with a little stirring up of the parents to a higher sense of their duty in the matter, there is no doubt that the Sunday school might soon be made an effective instrument of education. I use the word in its widest sense, as implying both the regulation of the affections and the development of the mind. My own experience is that no lessons are more capable of sustaining the interest, and drawing forth the intelligence of children, than lessons either on the great scripture biographies, or on the principal events and general course of Bible history, or on the grand precepts and doctrines of Christianity, in the hands of an earnest and competent teacher. Unhappily, too many of the teachers in our Sunday schools, though earnest, are not competent. They undertake the duty from a laudable desire to do good, but they rarely realize the difficulty of the task, or even themselves possess the amount of knowledge of their subject, or the pedagogic skill to enable them to discharge the task successfully. And this, in addition to the reasons stated above, is a further reason of the ill success of Sunday schools.

Position of the Sunday school

in respect, (1), of the scholars.

(2), of the farmers.

(3), of the teachers.

107. Before I quit the subject of education, I may mention one or two agencies which I found at work in connection with it, with such an amount of success as to justify the hope that, if applied elsewhere, they might contribute to extend the benefits and increase the efficiency of the school.

Notice of some collateral agencies.

108. One of these agencies is the savings' bank connected with the school at Tortworth, established for the purpose of encouraging the habit of thrift in the children, but also found to act sensibly, though indirectly, on the regularity of their attendance and the length of their continuance at school. There are at present 35 depositors, whose deposits vary from a minimum of 1*s.* to a maximum of 4*l.* The deposit itself need not be withdrawn when the children leave school, but the interest ceases then; and it is this growth in the amount of the deposit by the accessions of interest that probably in not a few instances secures for a child another year at school.‡ In this case, Lord Ducie himself pays the interest; but as three per cent. is found to be a sufficient attraction, the system could be adopted in any school, through the agency of the ordinary savings' banks, without involving the managers in any additional responsibility or expense.

(1). School savings' bank at Tortworth.

109. I took another hint, which I think valuable, from the manner in which, under the influence of the vicar, the endowment of the Blue and Yellow Schools at Cirencester has been used. Instead of

(2). Utilization of endowments.

* As an example: in the return for the parish of Thornbury, where the evening school (in a population of 2,500) is only credited with 18 scholars, it is stated that some years back there was a flourishing school of 90, which has dwindled to its present proportions owing to a decay of interest in those to whom it would naturally look for support.

† The Rev. J. B. Sweet, of Colkirk.

‡ *See* account of this bank in "Notes of Meeting at Cromhall," No. 87.

§ *See* "Notes on Schools," No. 35.

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being admitted, as was the case under the old practice, to the benefits of the endowment at eight, no children are now admitted till they are 10, and they are thus retained in the school till they are 13. Here, then, is a way of utilizing many a small endowment, which at present is quite unprofitable, if not mischievous. An endowment of 10*l.* a year, broken up into exhibitions of 2*l.* annual value, would probably keep five boys of the labouring class at school till they were 12, instead of their being, as now, lost to education at 10. As there is a strong feeling growing up in favour of the diversion of many miscalled "charitable" endowments to the purposes of education, no better application of them can be conceived than this, which will at once act as a charity in relief of the poverty of the parents, and advance the interests of education by securing the longer attendance of the children at school.

(3). Addition, where possible, of an industrial department.

110. The phenomenon of the so-called "plaiting schools" in Essex suggests the probable attractiveness of the addition of an industrial department, in which the children could earn some money either for themselves or their parents, to the ordinary routine of a school. By the addition of a savings' bank, as at Tortworth, at the same time, a powerful reciprocal influence would be exerted. I am not prepared, in consequence of any thing that I have seen since, to unsay a single word that I said in my Report to the Commissioners of 1861, about the difficulty, and in most cases the impossibility, of grafting a course of "industrial training," as it is called, upon the system of an ordinary elementary school.* It seems to me now, as it seemed to me then, simply a question of finance. An industrial training department, which should turn out good cooks, housemaids, laundresses, dairymaids, bakers, or, in the case of boys, give them a sort of introductory apprenticeship to the more useful trades or the more skilled branches of farm-labour, would, if effective, be a most expensive adjunct; if ineffective, would be a mere plaything.† But the fact of the Essex plaiting schools,‡ proves two things: (1) that the parents prefer for their children a school in which they are supposed to be taught something that in after life will help them to gain their livelihood, a preference which may be shortsighted, but which certainly is very natural; and (2) that the prospect of gain from their children's earnings now is a powerful incentive in favour both of their longer and more regular attendance at school. It would be quite possible, without going to the length of advocating the introduction of an industrial department, to introduce kinds of work, capable of being taught by a woman, and suitable both for girls and boys, which if properly done might deserve remuneration, and should be remunerated according to its desert. I have introduced, to a limited extent, the principle of payment for needlework done by the girls into my own school. I find that the expedient is very popular, and when more generally applied, I think it will prove a healthy stimulus in many ways.

The Essex plaiting schools, what they prove.

Ill-success of the attempt to introduce plaiting into parish schools accounted for.

111. I admit that the experiment has not succeeded very well, where it has been tried competitively. In some of the parishes in the Union of Halstead, in which the plaiting schools exist, permission was given by the managers to the children to bring their plait with them to the parish school for a certain number of hours or afternoons in the week. But, of course, the money earned under such a limited permission could not compete with what the children can make at the regular plaiting schools, in which they work at their little trade five or six hours every day. It seems to me, however, that straw-plait is a "handicraft";§ and, therefore, if the Workshops' Regulation Act is ever thoroughly and generally enforced, these schools, which are really workshops, will come under its operation, and their influence, which is at present said to be very mischievous, be reduced within due bounds.

SIX MORE POINTS TO BE NOTICED.

112. There are a few more points, not directly related either to the education of agricultural children or the employment of agricultural labour, but intimately connected with and influencing the social condition of an agricultural population, on which I desire to touch before bringing this Report to an end. They are (1) The question of cottage accommodation, and of close and open parishes; (2) the modes of hiring farm servants, and the influence of the so-called "statutes" and "mops" held for that purpose; (3) the multiplication of beerhouses; (4) the system of "largesse" and "harvest frolics" which prevails in the eastern counties; (5) the preservation of game; and (6) the co-operative principle in its application to the circumstances of a rural community.

1. Condition of cottages.

113. It will be observed, upon reference not only to my Notes of Meetings, but to the special body of evidence upon this subject collected out of my returns, that nothing can be more widespread than the feeling entertained, nothing can be stronger than the language used, about the general condition of the

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* "Report of the Commissioners," vol. ii. pp. 61–63.

Captain de Winton's plan of industrial teaching

† In the Gloucester Chamber of Agriculture, Captain de Winton, who took up the question of the education of the labourer with great earnestness, said, *inter alia*, that he "should like to see in connection with day school an industrial room, furnished with "models illustrating the best mode of laying a hedge, thatching a cottage, building a rick, &c., as well as of the more complex "agricultural implements, and he would have the boys taught to answer such questions as 'How would you clean out that ditch?' "'How would you lay that hedge?' 'How would you thatch that rick?' 'How would you plough?' and so forth. He thought "that then, when the lad went into the field, the practical work would come easy to him." But the difficulty would be when you had built your industrial room and fitted it up with models to get a teacher, who in most cases would be a woman, capable of using and explaining them. And none of this knowledge is of the sort that a boy would be required to possess when he first came to work upon a farm; and if he had any wits in him and kept his eyes open, he would acquire the knowledge by degrees against the time when he would want it, by the obvious expedient of imitation and from the natural motive of a desire to excel.

‡ I remember seeing in 1858 similar schools in Devonshire, in which children of a very early age were taught to make the exquisite Honiton lace. There are also the "braiding schools" in Dorsetshire, in which nets are made for the Bridport trade.

Straw-plaiting a "handicraft," and a "plaiting-school" a "workshop."

§ By the definitions of the Act, a "handicraft is any manual labour exercised by way of trade or for purposes of gain in or "incidental to the making any article or part of an article, or in or incidental to the altering, repairing, ornamenting, finishing, or "otherwise adapting for sale any article;" while "a workshop is any room or place whatever, whether in the open air or under "cover, in which any handicraft is carried on."

In his return for the parish of Great Maplestead in Essex, the vicar (Rev. E. S. Corrie) says: "About a dozen of our elder girls "go to a plaiting school at Little Maplestead. We allow no plait in our school here. The attendance could be immediately "increased were plait allowed, but I consider the whole character of the school would be lowered by it. This straw plait is a great "cause of the low state of education in this district, and of many other evils besides."

When Mr. Corrie expresses the opinion that the introduction of plait would lower the whole character of the school, I presume he has in his eye its introduction to an extent that would allow him to compete successfully with the plaiting schools, where the proportion of the literary instruction to the manual labour is about the same as that between Falstaff's bread and his sack: "O monstrous! but one halfpenny-worth of bread to this intolerable quantity of sack!"

At Great Yeldham the experiment had been tried, but with no great measure of success. It was the same with attempts, which came under my notice in Dorsetshire in 1858, to rival the "braiding schools."

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cottages of the peasantry, certainly in every one of the agricultural districts, almost in every one of the parishes, which I have visited. In one return they are described as "miserable;" in a second as "deplorable;" in a third as "detestable;" in a fourth as "a disgrace to a Christian community."* Even where they are spoken of in favourable terms, it will generally be found that if adequate in quality they are inadequate in quantity;† and that some rich landowner, "lord of all he surveys," and having exercised his lordship by evicting so much of his population as were an eyesore or were likely to become a burden to him—still employing their labour but holding himself irresponsible for their domicile—has, by a most imperfect system of compensation, built a limited number of ornamental, roomy cottages, which he fills with his own immediate dependents. Out of the 300 parishes which I visited, I can only remember two—Donnington, in Sussex, and Down Amney, in Gloucestershire—where the cottage provision appeared to be both admirable in quality and sufficient in quantity; and I mention these cases with the greater pleasure, because in each the landowner, though not resident, is as willing to recognize and as careful to discharge his responsibilities as though he were.

Their deficiencies.

114. The majority of the cottages that exist in rural parishes are deficient in almost every requisite that should constitute a home for a Christian family in a civilized community. They are deficient in bedroom accommodation, very few having three chambers, and in some parishes the larger proportion only one;‡ they are deficient in drainage and sanitary arrangements;§ they are imperfectly supplied with water; such conveniences as they have are often so situated as to become nuisances; they are full enough of drafts to generate any amount of rheumatism; ‖ and in many instances are lamentably dilapidated and out of repair.

Natural history of ruinous cottages.

115. The natural history, so to call it, of these miserable, ruinous dwellings is very various. Some of the worst are parish cottages, either erected in the time of the old poor law or bequeathed to the parish as a last home for its aged paupers, which there are no funds to repair. Another almost uniformly bad class are the cottages run up by squatters on the waste, or held upon a lifehold or copyhold tenure, and which have not yet fallen in to the lord of the manor. Others have been put up by speculative builders of the flimsiest materials. Others are converted stables or farmhouses, attesting in the one case the conquest of the railway over the road, in the other the change in the phase of agricultural life which has merged half a dozen petty occupations into one large holding. Some belong to small proprietors too indigent to have any money to spare for their improvement; some to absentee or embarrassed landowners, the former of whom are unwilling to improve an estate which they never see, the latter, in addition to being unable, are equally unwilling to improve a property from which they get no advantage.¶

Deplorable consequences.

116. It is impossible to exaggerate the ill effects of such a state of things in every aspect—physical, social, economical, moral, intellectual. Physically, a ruinous, ill-drained cottage, "cribbed, cabin'd, "confined," and over-crowded, generates any amount of disease—fevers of every type, catarrh, rheumatism—as well as intensifies to the utmost that tendency to scrofula and phthisis which, from their frequent intermarriages and their low diet, abounds so largely among the poor. Socially, nothing can be more wretched than the condition of "open" parishes, like Docking, in Norfolk, and South Cerney, in Gloucestershire, into which have been poured remorselessly the scum and off-scour of their "close" neighbours. Economically, the imperfect distribution of cottages deprives the farmer of a large proportion of his effective labour power. The employer who has no cottages to offer those whom he employs must either attract labourers by the offer of higher wages or must content himself with refuse; and in either case, when he gets his man gets him more or less enfeebled by the distance he has had to travel to his work. The moral consequences are fearful to contemplate. "I only wonder," writes one clergyman to me, "that our agricultural poor are as moral as they are." Modesty must be an unknown virtue, decency an unimaginable thing, where, in one small chamber, with the beds lying as thickly as they can be packed, father, mother, young men, lads, grown and growing up girls—two and sometimes three generations—are herded promiscuously; where every operation of the toilette and of

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* I beg to call particular attention to the evidence of Mr. Samuel Clarke ("Medical and Sanitary Evidence, No. 5), as to the state of things generally in the county of Norfolk.

† Thus at Spixworth there are only three cottages to 1,200 acres; there might well be 25. At Waterden only two cottages to 760 acres; 15 would be no excessive supply. At Markshall only five to 830 acres; at the usual Essex rate there should be 25. At Buckenham Tofts there are only two resident labourers on 650 acres; at Didlington no more on 1,850 acres. At Sedgeford, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have an estate of 2,000 acres without a single cottage, and in this parish we hear of 10 and 11 persons sleeping in a single bedroom. At Titchwell, Magdalene College, Oxford, the chief landowner and lord of the manor has not a single cottage. At White Colne, in Essex, the chief landowner has not one either. Instances of this kind could be accumulated *ad infinitum*.

Deficient chamber accommodation.

‡ Thus at Hellesdon 32 cottages have only one bedroom; at Horsford, 65; at Ingoldisthorpe, 17 out of 50; at Titchwell, 16 out of 30; at Thornham and Sedgeford (in Norfolk), and at Stone in Gloucestershire, "the majority."

Bad drainage.

§ Thus at Hatfield Peverel in Essex I was told that "the parish is frequently visited with fever and when fever settles there it is "apt to stay, the drainage being defective," in this case "owing to natural difficulties." ("Minutes of Meetings," No. 58. In the next parish, Terling, since I visited it last autumn, there has been a terrific outbreak of typhoid fever, resulting in upwards of 200 cases and more than 40 deaths, out of a population of 900, attributable to the same cause. At Burnham Thorpe the long-continued presence of a low type of fever led to an investigation into the possible sources of the disease at the instance of the Board of Guardians, and that investigation produced the Report printed among the "Medical and Sanitary Evidence," No. 6.

Dilapidation.

‖ In the return for the district of Sonthwater in Sussex, a case is mentioned of a cottage, an old converted farmhouse, with so huge a chimney that on a wet day the fire can't be kept alight, and the occupiers have before now been obliged to go to bed on a cold stormy day to keep themselves warm. In Linton, I was informed, very few of the cottages have a staircase; the bedrooms are reached by a ladder or steps. The cases in which the roof—particularly when it is old thatch—is so utterly unsound as to be unable to resist anything like a downpour, and where the people's bedding, in consequence constantly gets deluged, are too numerous to mention. Among many bad cottages which I saw in the course of one morning's drive in the neighbourhood of Newent, I think the worst—indeed the worst I ever saw anywhere—was a cottage occupied by a man named Shale in the hamlet of Kilcote, his own freehold, but which, from some circumstances attached to the title, he cannot sell. Part of one of the outer walls had fallen down, and the space was filled up with a feather bed; the door could not be hung on the jambs; one of the sides was of wattle and dab, and the dab had peeled away, and a neighbour who lived 50 yards away said he could see the lights at night as plainly as through a wattled hurdle. The house ought long ago to have been condemned as unfit and unsafe for human habitation. It is occupied by a family of nine persons, who might be buried in its ruins any stormy night.

¶ There are three parishes in the single Union of Cirencester which suffer, in the state of their cottages, from this cause.

A. nature—dressings, undressings, births, deaths—is performed by each within the sight or hearing of all; where children of both sexes, to as high an age as 12 or 14, or even more, occupy the same bed; where the whole atmosphere is sensual, and human nature is degraded into something below the level of the swine. It is a hideous picture; and the picture is drawn from life. Mr. Clarke, of Norwich, can tell any one who will ask him tales of things that he has himself seen, horrifying enough to make the very hair stand on end. The medical gentlemen whose evidence I publish assure me that cases of incest are anything but uncommon. We complain of the ante-nuptial unchastity of our women, of the loose talk and conduct of the girls who work in the fields, of the light way in which maidens part with their honour, and how seldom either a parent's or a brother's blood boils with shame—*here*, in cottage herding, is the sufficient account and history of it all.

117. And the character of the home affects profoundly the condition of the school. It would be a rare thing indeed to find education valued where domestic comfort and decency are impossible and unknown. A low physical condition induces a low moral condition and a low intellectual condition. Elevate the man in one element of his nature and you elevate him in all; depress him in one and you depress him in all. Not only in the complex organization of society, but in the complex organization of each individual man, is it true, "If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; and if one "member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it."

The farmers keenly alive to this evil;

118. I am happy to say that at all my meetings the farmers were quite as loud and outspoken as the clergy in denouncing the mischievous results of the present condition of too many English cottages. It was unanimously agreed to, again and again, that every cottage inhabited by a labourer with a mixed family ought to have three bedrooms.* It was more than once suggested that something in the shape of a Building Act should be introduced which should require a certain proportion of the cottages of every proprietor to have this amount of accommodation. Inspection of cottages by an independent officer like the exciseman, who should have power to limit the number of their inmates in some proportion to the number and cubical capacity of their rooms, was in many cases urgently advised.†

and also to the evil of close parishes.

While still stronger, perhaps, and under the circumstances even more natural, was the feeling of the farmers about "close" parishes. Indeed, anything more selfish and, I will venture to say, wicked than the motive which led to the creation of such parishes it is difficult to conceive. They arose from a desire to rid one's self of a just share of a burden which is only tolerable when borne by all equally. Mixed with this was a desire to get rid of an eyesore and of a nuisance; of people intruding upon the squire's privacy or disturbing his game. Added to which was an utter abnegation of all moral and social responsibility in respect of those whose labour was producing our wealth, and whose strength and muscle was being worn out in our service. By the change in the law of settlement, it is true, "*nous* "*avons changé tout cela.*" At least we have changed the principle; though it will be long before we have undone all the effects of the practice. Just now a righteous Nemesis has fallen upon the creators of close parishes. They find their rates increased three and four fold;‡ they sometimes experience a difficulty in letting their farms. I am informed that a farmer's question when he comes to look at a farm no longer is, "What are the rates?" because he knows they will be equal throughout the union, but, "How many cottages, and what supply of labour can I command?" Tenants are beginning to fight shy of farms without cottages, and of a labour supply that has to be fetched three or four miles. It would almost be a less loss and a less inconvenience to a farmer to go that distance after his water.

Proportion of cottages to the hundred acres.

119. The proper proportion of cottages to each 100 acres of land depends very much on the nature of the soil, whether heavy or light; the mode of cultivation, whether arable or in grass; and the kind of labour employed, whether chiefly adult male or that of women and children too.§ In the dairy district of the vale of Berkeley, one or at the most two cottages to the 100 acres is considered a sufficient supply; in Essex and Sussex, where female labour is less used, four cottages is the proportion desired; in Norfolk and on the Cotswolds, from two and a half to three. Heavy land requires more labour than light; arable land than pasture; a district that produces corn than a district that produces butter and cheese; while the labour of women and children, of course, to a certain extent displaces the labour of men. I consider, however, that in an average district, where the farming is of a mixed description, and the labour employed is mixed too, three cottages to 100 acres would be an adequate, perhaps almost an excessive, proportion.‖ A superabundance of cottages and of population is nearly, if not quite, as great an evil as a defective supply. It lowers wages and produces pauperism; and the lowest type of

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* Where the family is mixed it is evident that two bedrooms is a very small step in advance, in the way of improvement, upon one. What is required is one bedroom for the parents, a second for the boys, a third for the girls. It has even been suggested to me, with, I think, a good deal of force, that for such a cottage a labouring man could afford to pay a considerably higher rent than for one with less accommodation, inasmuch as, with such possibility for separating the sexes, he could keep his sons at home till they married, and their earnings would largely augment the family exchequer.

† The existing Sanitary Act is quite ineffective, owing to the local influences by which it is hampered, to act with the vigour that is required. Some Boards of Guardians (as at Depwade) leave it to the parishioners who have a grievance to take the first step. Other Boards, composed of men who perhaps themselves live in glass houses, shrink from interfering with a neighbour for fear of being interfered with themselves. Others are reported to be advised by their clerks that the clause in the Act which seems to give power to prevent overcrowding in dwellings, only applies to the case of cottages used as lodging-houses. At Starston, Sedgeford, and Ingoldisthorpe, cases were mentioned to me in which the powers, supposed to reside in the sanitary inspector, were invoked in vain.

‡ *See* some instances quoted in Miscellaneous Evidence, No. 7.

§ The question is further affected by the size of the holdings. In the Berkeley district, where the farms are generally small, the proportion is reduced by so much of the work being done within the farmer's own family. The school attendance of the farmers' children in this neighbourhood is often more irregular than that of the labourers'.

‖ At the Gloucester Chamber of Agriculture, Capt. de Winton said he should like to see a law compelling every landowner to erect two cottages on every hundred acres. The Earl of Leicester reckons at about the same rate. His lordship is credited with being the owner of 50,000 acres of land: and in a speech, quoted in the Commissioners' Sixth Report, p. xxii (s. 94), he "calcu-"lates that 950 labourers are required to cultivate his property." He estimates also that 520 cottages (the number he owns) supply him with about 450 able-bodied labourers. He told me that he is quite sensible of his deficiency of cottages, and of the injury he suffers from it, and he is building every year as many as he can afford to build.

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rural civilization is to be found in those large, over-peopled, "open" parishes, in which, at the slack seasons of the year, there is always a considerable number of men out of employ.

All that can be demanded of landowners is to stock their estate with a sufficient supply.

120. Unreasonable demands are sometimes made upon landowners. They are not only expected to stock their estate with as many cottages as it requires for its proper cultivation, but they are sometimes expected to provide house-accommodation for the servants of railway companies and others in no way connected with their land. In several of my returns parishes are represented as suffering from a defective supply of agricultural labour because cottages built for those who should cultivate the land are occupied by parties who gain their livelihood in some other way. The result generally comes about in this way. An intelligent and skilful farm labourer seeing a chance of obtaining more remunerative employment as a platelayer on a railway, or in some other capacity where manual skill and strength are required, changes his service but retains his cottage. The possibility of this happening, and the fact that it often happens, opens an important question: what is the best tenure of a cottage for all parties concerned—to secure to the occupier his home, to the farmer his labour supply, and to the landlord his rent—and who should have the immediate disposal of the cottages on an estate, he who owns or those who rent the land? An infinite variety of opinions, mostly resting on some intelligible ground, are entertained upon each of these points. To attach the cottages to the farms and transfer the right of nomination to them from the landlord to the farmer would, it is asserted, be placing the men too much under the thumb of their master and allowing him to deal with them pretty much on his own terms.* On the other hand, for the landlord to retain the control of his cottages wholly in his own hands might occasion great inconvenience to the farmer, and even deprive him of the power of procuring his necessary labour supply.† In a Gloucestershire parish of 1,500 acres, where all the cottages belong to one landowner who keeps them entirely in his own hand, the farmers feel very strongly the disadvantage of the arrangement; and in the case of one of them, his carter lives two and a half miles from his stable.‡ Perhaps Lord Leicester cuts the knot in the best way; all his cottages are held direct from him, and are not sublet by the occupier of the farm; he gives, however, to his tenants the privilege of nominating to the cottages adjacent to their farms, subject to his agent's approval.

Question as to the best tenure of cottages.

Cottage tenures in respect of time.

121. Cottages are held on all sorts of tenure in respect of time, weekly, fortnightly, monthly, quarterly, half-yearly, yearly. The most frequent tenures, however, are by the week and by the year. The weekly tenure is, of course, the favourite with landlords and employers; the tenant, naturally, would prefer being secured in his tenement for the year. I think the general feeling at the meetings in which the subject was discussed was that the fairest tenure to all parties was by the year, with a right on either side to give up or to turn out on three months' notice. Leases, I suspect, in the case of cottage tenants, are never known; but as much confidence appears to exist between the parties to the contract as if they were; and violent, harsh, sudden evictions are very rare. If the power to evict on summary notice were ever exerted, it would be most likely to be put forth upon the provocation of poaching, the sin of sins in a tenant in the eyes of a game-preserving landlord.§

Difficulty in sorting families.

122. In fact, the very tenderness with which the domestic sentiments of the people, and their natural attachments to their home are treated by landlords, throws a difficulty in the way of dealing with the cottage accommodation of a parish or an estate with the freedom that the case requires. I was frequently told, in reply to a question upon the subject, that "we should not be so badly off for cottages, if "the families were better sorted." The principle of "sorting," that is, of moving families, once large but now reduced in number, from a cottage which they can no longer fill to a smaller one more suited to their need, is, I believe, freely applied by Sir Edward Kerrison in Suffolk, and by Earl St. Germains at Down Amney; and if applied with due consideration, ought not to be regarded by anybody as a hardship, particularly if it is known beforehand that the cottages are occupied on such terms. But, still, in all cases there must be more or less of a wrench felt, when a man and his wife are removed from the house in which they brought up their family, the garden where perhaps every fruit tree was planted by their own hand, to a new home to which they are required to attach themselves in their old age. The violence of the wrench may be mitigated by a variety of expedients, some of which would be no more than acts of common justice,—by a proportionate reduction in the rent, by compensation for unexhausted improvements, &c. But still, there cannot fail to be a shock to the natural sentiment which, happily for England, attaches all of us, whatever may be our rank, to the dear, familiar place we call our home.‖

True view of cottages as property.

123. The true mode of regarding cottages as one of the elements of property, at any rate the true mode of regarding cottages built by a landowner for the purposes of his estate, cannot be better

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* A case was mentioned by a considerable landowner in Norfolk in which three large tenants of his applied to him to have the control of the cottages on their farms. These cottages were at the time being let at 1s. a week, about half the rate of other cottages in the neighbourhood. The object of the application, my informant believed, was to enable the masters practically to reduce the wages of their men by charging them the full rent for their cottages. For the honour of the English farmer I believe such instances of "sharp practice" would be rare.

† Every farmer expects to have at least enough cottages at his disposal to house his bailiff (if he keeps one), his carter, his shepherd, and his stockman, in a word, all the servants whom he hires by the year.

‡ Elberton. *See* "Notes of Meetings," No. 84.

A Norfolk instance.

§ In one Norfolk parish, where the bulk of the land belongs to a kindhearted nobleman, who likes every cottager to have half an acre of garden ground, the cottage rents are paid yearly, but each tenant signs an agreement by which, if guilty of any offence against the law, and it is pretty generally understood what offence is meant, he can be turned out at a fortnight's notice.

‖ A woman in my own parish, who had been moved last Michaelmas into a new cottage quite as comfortable as the one she quitted, upon my asking her the other day whether she had got reconciled to the change, replied, "Pretty well, Sir; but I have "never been able to pass by the old place since, and I always go round another way." It was suggested to me by some one, though I forget by whom, in the course of this inquiry, that the best form in which to build cottages is that of the double cottage with five bed chambers between the two tenements, so planned that in case of one of the two families increasing and the other growing smaller, one of the bedrooms, by the simple contrivance of stopping up one doorway and opening another could be attached to either tenement, as required. The suggestion seems to me a valuable one.

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expressed than it is by Archdeacon Hopper in his return. "A cottage," he says, "built so as to be "durable, cannot *per se* be self-supporting, that is, yield a rent equal to a good interest for the cost of "the building, *plus* the expense of continuous repair. But this is not the aspect in which, in my "judgment, the building of cottages ought to be viewed. They ought to be considered as a necessary "part of landed property, the adjunct of a farm leased to a tenant for occupation. Viewed in this "light, the building of cottages, if built by the landlord, will return a fair interest for his money. The "tenant will gladly pay 5 per cent. on the outlay for the command of the cottages, and the advantage "of having his labourers near to his homestead; deducting 1 per cent. for repairs, there will remain "4 per cent. for the landlord, a sufficient remuneration."*

This view not generally recognized.

124. I suspect that it has been the practice of the landlords themselves, letting their cottages and receiving the rent from them as a separate item in their rent roll, that has prevented the recognition of their true relation, so clearly stated by the Archdeacon, to the farm. They are as necessary an adjunct to the homestead as the barn or the stable, which no landlord ever dreams of regarding as separate sources of income. It is as important to the farmer to have a comfortable weather-proof building to house his labourers, as to house his horses or his corn. When an estate is sold, the cottages upon it are included in the purchase just as much as the mansion or the farm-houses; and upon the same principle, the rent arising from them ought not to be regarded, except for the mere purposes of account, as a separate source of income, but as simply one of the constituents of the total return which the money laid out upon the purchase was expected to bring.†

Cannot cottages be built to pay?

125. Indeed, the only part of Archdeacon Hopper's statement to which I am inclined to demur, is that in which he says that "a cottage, built so as to be durable, cannot yield a rent equal to a good "interest for the cost of building, *plus* the expense of continuous repair." I do not despair of seeing the time when cottage property can be made remunerative, partly by the adoption of a more economical plan of building, and partly by an improvement in the circumstances of the labourer, enabling him to pay a higher rent. I have quoted, among my miscellaneous evidence, the opinion of Mr. Barwick Baker, that it is a mistaken charity, as well as a false principle of political economy, to let cottages at an unremunerative rent. I think the opinion is sound. It is questionable policy, even when dictated by benevolence, in a large landowner who lets his cottages at a rate below that current in his neighbourhood; and where low cottage rents prevail as a rule, it will generally be found that a low wage-rate prevails too. People seldom object to pay money for money's worth, and though when I hear of cottage rents as high as 4*l.*, 5*l.*, 6*l.*, and even 7*l.* a year, I think them as high as they ought to be under any imaginable improvement of the labourer's circumstances that is likely to come in our time, yet, on the other hand, when I find cottages let at a 1*s.* a week and the labourer's wage only 10*s.*, I consider that another 1*s.* put on to the rent, and 2*s.* added to the wage, would materially improve the relations of all parties.

Cost of cottages when local materials are utilized not enormous.

126. Even at present rents and out of present rates of wages, speculative builders and others who are not speculative contrive to erect durable cottages, by an economical use of materials, and by adapting their construction to the locality, at a price which certainly ought to pay. Almost every district offers its own most suitable material to the cottage-builder. In north and west Norfolk, the "carr-stone"; in south Norfolk and Essex, the clay lump or clay-stud; in the woodland parts of Sussex, the mode of weather-boarding without and plastering within; on the Cotswolds, the oolite lying in sizes just suited to the stonemason, a few inches below the surface,—each offers to the builder a suitable and inexpensive material ready to his hand. I am satisfied that where these advantages are made the most of, and I have seen admirable solid cottages constructed in all the four specified ways, a double tenement, which on every account is the most advantageous arrangement, with three chambers to each dwelling, or, as already suggested, with five chambers between the two, and the other fittings in keeping with this, can be built for a sum not unfrequently falling below, seldom rising much above, 200*l.*‡ Two such dwellings, with from 30 to 40 rods of fair garden ground, would easily let at from 8*l.* to 9*l.* a year; which would be a return that even Archdeacon Hopper would consider to be remunerative. I am by no means disposed to acquiesce in the proposition that cottages cannot be built so as to pay.

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* *See* "Opinions on the Subject of Cottage Accommodation," No. 31.

† No doubt, the repair and maintenance of cottages, especially if they have been allowed to fall into a bad condition through neglect of that homely maxim about the value of a stitch in time, is a serious matter. Sir Edward Kerrison has 330 cottages, which bring in a nominal rent of 1,000*l.* a year. In the 12 years that have elapsed since he succeeded to the property, he has expended 9788*l.* in putting them into order, and in this time has only been able to build seven new ones. See the account given by Mr. Freuer, Sir Edward's agent, of the admirable system of keeping a Cottage Register, by which the condition of any one of these 330 tenements in all important particulars can at any moment be known by the landlord.—"Miscellaneous Evidence," No. 18.

Actual cost of cottages in different parts of my territory.

‡ I will state a few of the grounds of this opinion. At Horsford near Norwich I saw a row of eight excellent, new brick cottages which had been built for 400*l.*, and were letting for rents amounting in the whole to 33*l.* a year. I believe these cottages have only two bedrooms each. Lord Leicester, building of brick, with 14 inch outside, and 9 inch partition walls, estimates the cost of a double cottage at 230*l.*, and has built a block of four cottages of stone found on the spot, with three bedrooms each to the two outside and two bedrooms each to the two inside, for 357*l.* Mr. Brock, a builder of several cottages, estimates the cost of "a "double cottage with five bedchambers, 32 feet long × 22 feet wide × 16 feet high to the wall plate, with a shed to each tenement "and separate privies, if of brick, at 210*l.*; if of clay lump, at 180*l.*"—(Alburgh Meeting, No. 21.) Mr. Barton, of Threxton (Swaffham Union), built a pair of cottages with three bedrooms each for 147*l.* 12*s.* for the pair, baking his own bricks (which cost him 14*s.* per thousand), and cutting down his own timber for the roof, which he valued at the same price at which he would have sold it. Captain Caldwell (Lord Ashburton's agent) states that the cost of a double cottage, of flint stone with brick coins, the timber foreign deal, two rooms and a pantry on the ground floor, and three bedrooms to each tenement, is 200*l.*—(Igburgh Meeting, No. 47.) At Great Yeldham, in Essex, Mr. Whitlock has recently built two single cottages of brick, the one thatched, the other tiled, with a keeping room, kitchen, and pantry on the ground floor, and three chambers above, at a cost of 70*l.* and 85*l.* respectively. —(Meeting, No. 55.) Mr. Kaye, bailiff to W. E. Hubbard, Esq., of Lower Beeding, Sussex, estimates the cost of three cottages, weather board outside, lath and plaster within, with two rooms, pantry, and wash-house below, and two chambers above, separate wood houses, privies, and pig styes, at 200*l.*—("Miscellaneous Evidence," No. 26.) Mr. Earwicker, who has built some of the Duke of Richmond's admirable new cottages in Sussex, estimates the cost of a double cottage such as his Grace erects, of a somewhat ornamental character, with 14-inch outside and 9-inch partition walls, of brick (bricks being very dear, 32*s.* per 1,000), at 300*l.* At Amney Crucis, in the Cotswold country, it was estimated that a pair of cottages, each with three bedrooms, the materials being all obtainable on the estate, could be erected for 180*l.*—(Meeting, No. 81.) Mr. Herbert Jenner Fust showed me at Hill, in the Berkeley vale, a pair of ornamental cottages, admirably finished and fitted up, with three bedrooms to each, which he had just built by contract for 250*l.* I have now collected instances from the whole of my territory.

A.

127. In the districts over which I have travelled, amid many instances to the contrary, it was pleasant also to find not a few of the largest landowners setting a noble example of their consciousness of responsibility in respect of the dwellings of the labourers who cultivate their land. I may select for special mention, the names of the Marquis of Cholmondeley and the Earl of Leicester in Norfolk; of the Duke of Grafton and Sir Edward Kerrison in Suffolk; of the Duke of Richmond, Lord Leconfield, and the Hon. Mrs. Vernon Harcourt in Sussex; of the Earls of Ducie and St. Germains in Gloucestershire. I do not mean to say that the estates of these noblemen and gentlemen are everywhere adequately supplied with labourers' homes; Lord Leicester has publicly admitted his own great deficiency;* but all are working onward in the right spirit to the right end, and their example tells upon other landowners with an effect proportionate to its conspicuousness. There are some grounds for hoping that, 25 years hence, the villages of England will present a different and a more pleasing picture to the eye of the traveller than they present now.

Improvement already going on.

128. One great difficulty in the way of any large plans of improvement is the extent to which the cottages in our villages, particularly in "open" parishes, are in the hands, not of the landowners, but of small, and often needy, proprietors. It is estimated that the proprietorship of less than half the cottages in Norfolk is in the owners of the soil. The small proprietor looks to his cottage property as a source of income purely, and of income derivable from it alone. He has no land connected with it; often, not so much as a strip of garden. He grudges every 6*d.* expended on repair. Not unfrequently he has mortgaged it nearly to its full value, and he is the proprietor only in name. As his tenants occupy his houses for their own convenience, and with no reflex advantage to himself beyond the payment of the rent (which he does not always obtain), he feels himself under no moral responsibility, such as a landowner would be almost forced, by his very position, to recognize. No doubt, if good cottages were built by the landowners in sufficient numbers, the bad ones would soon become tenantless, because the English poor have certainly sense enough to appreciate the comfort and the decency of a good home.† But till this is done it confessedly is a difficult and an anxious problem, how to improve bad cottages. The Rev. E. B. Everard, of Burnham Thorpe, offers a suggestion, which I think worthy of attention, here. "I am persuaded," he says, "that the most efficient means of providing good accommodation in our "rural districts, would be found in local societies for the *improvement*, not *building*, of cottages. The "system would be to buy up, as opportunities offered, cheap, *i.e.*, indifferent or bad, cottage property, "and to do this with a view to such repairs and alterations as would make bad good; taking care that "the price should be such as would leave, after all works were done, a sufficient margin to secure at "least 5 per cent. on the capital (in shares) subscribed."‡ Such a plan, well conceived and ably carried out, would be not only a possibly remunerative scheme of investment, but also an operation of the purest and most beneficent philanthropy.

Cottages held by small proprietors.

How to improve bad cottages.

129. With regard to the principles to be borne in mind in the construction and arrangement of cottages, I have only a few remarks that I wish to offer.

Construction and arrangement.

130. In many of the new cottages, the rooms, especially the upstairs rooms, are sadly too small. The size, I suppose, is dictated not by any deficiency in the space, but with a view to saving expense in the materials. Sir Willoughby Jones, at my meeting at North Creake, insisted strongly on the superiority of the arrangement which, in planning that a cottage shall have three bedrooms, places one of them on the ground floor; you thus secure space and ventilation above. The suggestion seems worth bearing in mind.§

Rooms should not be too small.

131. The fittings-up of cottages should all be of the simplest kind, and one great aim in the builder should be to furnish it with none of those ingenious but complicated contrivances, which work admirably for a week, then get out of repair, and if not quickly put in order again, spoil. There is nothing that is so difficult to get done in cottages as little repairs; and little repairs are always wanted where there are taps, and boilers, and kitchen ranges, and pumps, and piping. Simplicity both in the general plan and particular details of a cottage is the true law both of beauty and usefulness.

Fittings-up should be simple.

132. The two plans of clustering cottages into a hamlet or village, and of scattering them at intervals over the whole area of the parish, have each its advantages. The first brings the population nearer to the church and school; but also probably nearer to the beerhouse too: the second has the convenience of placing the labourer closer to his work upon the farm. At Rackheath, dispersion was thought to have a bad effect upon education: at Great Witchingham, concentration was thought to have a bad effect upon morals. The most awkward, perhaps, of all arrangements is that which prevails in many large parishes, Sible Hedingham for instance, where in a wide area a large population is clustered into a number of independent groups, each, probably, with its own beer-house, but remote alike from church and school, dissipating and thereby weakening the energies of the clergyman, and by its mere topographical configuration able to defeat the most vigorous action of benevolent and humanizing schemes.

Advantages of dispersion and concentration.

133. Lord Leicester, who, after long thought and much experience, thinks he has at last hit upon a model plan, builds his newest cottages in blocks of four, the two interior with two bedrooms, the two exterior with three bedrooms each. I do not myself see any advantage that the block of four has over the block of two;‖ while it seems to me to labour under several manifest disadvantages. It is not

Proper size of a block of cottages.

* *See* his speech, quoted in Commissioners' Sixth Report, p. xxii.

† Always excepting the cases of occupiers of lifehold or freehold cottages. Whether it be the immunity from paying rent or the sense of proprietorship that exercises a spell over them, it is remarkable with what tenacity the poor will cling to the most wretched hovel if only they can call it their own. But the small proprietor generally demands a higher rent than the landowner, even for an inferior cottage; and this would act as an additional motive to the labourer to induce him to change.

‡ *See* "Opinions on Cottage Accommodation," No. 39.

§ Sometimes, when admirable cottages have been built, the comfort of them is neutralized by unreasonable or arbitrary restrictions. I have in my mind the case of a village where the landowner provides excellent cottages but will not allow their occupiers to hang out a shirt on a clothes-line in the garden, or to keep a pig in the stye.

‖ There may be, certainly, a slight saving of money in the construction, particularly in the matter of outer walls, which require half as many bricks again as partition walls. Lord Leicester's outer walls are 14 inches thick; his partition walls only 9.

A. always that you can find four families who can live in peace and comfort in such close neighbourhood. The pranks of the children are apt to prove an endless source of quarrels and angry words. Again, unless there is an open passage way, which entails a loss of room, through the centre of the block, the two middle cottages cannot get their wood, coals, &c. to the rear without travelling through their neighbours' premises on either side; and the mere arrangement of the gardens, so as to secure independence, is a matter of some difficulty. I have no hesitation in saying that I infinitely prefer the arrangement of cottages in blocks of two—the "double cottage" system, as it is commonly called. A "row" of cottages in a country place is, of course, a simple abomination.

Importance of a good garden.

134. A good garden attached to his cottage is not only a great convenience, but a great gain to the labouring man. It is an addition to his domestic resources, which, notwithstanding his lower wages, places the material condition of the peasant, in many cases, on a level with that of the town artizan. It supplies him with all the vegetables he consumes. If well stocked with fruit trees, as cottage gardens often are in Gloucestershire, it almost pays his rent. There is a reciprocal and a beneficent connection between it and the stye; the garden half keeps the pig, and the pig in turn more than half keeps the garden. The garden enables the labourer to make a profit out of his own spare time; there, under father's eye, the children make their first rude essays in the cultivation of the soil. There is something even refining in its influence; the flower-beds, often tended with no ordinary care, at least gratify a pleasurable sentiment and develop a purifying taste. The heart is not irredeemably gross which can appreciate the simple beauties of nature. One of the saddest features in a case like that of Docking is to hear, "there are very few gardens."*

Best size for gardens.

135. A garden, to be profitable to a labouring man, need not be very large. Of ordinary land, 30 rods would be an ample quantity; of rich land, requiring a good deal of trenching to bring out its quality, an eighth of an acre would probably be thought enough. No man, I am told, ought to have more garden than he can cultivate thoroughly in his own time. If he has to hire labour the profit is gone; while 30 rods of thoroughly worked ground will bear a larger crop than a quarter of an acre badly done.†

Gardens *versus* allotments.

136. With a garden of a sufficient size attached to his house the labourer does not require, probably would not even desire to have, a distant allotment. The garden, it is obvious, has many superior advantages. It is close under the man's eye, and he can turn to account in it any ten spare minutes of time. It is manured, being within reach of the pig-stye, with a much less expenditure of labour. An allotment-ground is always an ugly feature in a landscape; the cottage garden, if only tolerably cared for, as certainly enhances the beauty of the scene. The large allotments which prevail in some parishes in Gloucestershire—occupations of from three to ten acres in size—are found to exercise an influence highly unfavourable to education, though probably contributing considerably to the material comforts of the people.‡ The farmers don't like them any better than the schoolmaster. They deprive the former of his proper supply of labour; they deprive the latter of his proper supply of pupils. Being worked entirely from within the family, on a sort of garden system of cultivation, they demand the whole time both of parents and children for many months, in the aggregate, in the year. When a man cultivates both an allotment and a garden he commonly regards the former rather as his little farm, cropping it on a three or four course system of husbandry, and growing his 10 or 20 rod patches of wheat, or barley, or beans, or potatoes. I have known cases where labourers, prohibited, by what I think are harsh restrictions, from keeping a pig, have thrown up their allotment, which they found they could no longer cultivate to a profit; but speaking generally, allotments are much prized, and on Sir Edward Kerrison's estate there is a keen competition for any vacant parcel. Both on Sir Edward's and Lord Cholmondeley's estates, which are managed by the same agent, careful supervision is exercised over the allotments, without which Mr. Freuer thinks they would be of little benefit to the people; and prizes are annually given for the best samples of cultivation, which are found to have operated with the very best effect; in fact, the two motives are applied which are in other cases found to be most effective in dealing with human nature—the motive of kindly encouragement, and the motive of salutary, but liberal, restraint.

The condition of his home affects the whole life and character of the man.

137. It would be a natural anticipation, entirely fulfilled, so far as my evidence goes, by the event, that any improvement in the condition and surroundings of the labouring man's home not only enhances his domestic comfort but raises his social status, and affects with a perceptible influence for good his moral character. Lord Kimberley, indeed, in the Norfolk Chamber of Agriculture, questioned the ameliorating influence of a good cottage upon the parents "brought up to dirty habits which they "could not change," though he admitted that "the children underwent a change in that direction." But though cases in which good cottages have not mended the habits of slovenly people, no doubt, can be produced in considerable numbers, I am happy to think that the balance of evidence inclines largely the other way. Mr. Edmund Oldfield, Mr. Lombe Taylor, Captain Caldwell (agent to Lord

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* "Opinions on Cottage Accommodation," No. 40.

† Mr. Stanton, sub-agent on Lord Cholmondeley's Norfolk property, considers that a man can do better with 30 rods of garden ground than 40. Mr. Freuer, Sir Edward Kerrison's agent, believes that the 20 rod allotments at Brome answer better to their occupiers than those of double the size. Lord Suffield's half-acre gardens at Frettenham are generally considered too large. The working men who met me at Newent think that "a quarter of an acre is about as much garden ground as a man can cultivate in his "own time; but if his master could spare him occasionally for a day or two, he could occupy half an acre profitably." *See* "Notes "of Meetings," No. 96.

‡ Mr. Fergus O'Connor's "Chartist Settlements" (as they are called in the neighbourhood), established in the union of Newent and described in my "Notes of Meetings," Nos. 90, 92, failed, not because they were vicious in principle, but because the system was worked without any practical knowledge. The "coloni" were artizans, tailors and shoemakers imported from the manufacturing towns of the north, who did not know how to handle a spade and had a sort of notion that potatoes and cabbages would grow without cultivation. The original allotments, also, were under-sized, varying from two to four acres, not enough to maintain a family on without other employment. I heard, however, of a case at Castle Hedingham in Essex, of a man's maintaining himself and his family on an occupation of four acres. But that could only be done by the very highest system of spade husbandry on the very best land.

Ashburton), Mr. Kersey Cooper (agent to the Duke of Grafton), Mr. Freuer (agent to the Marquis of Cholmondeley and Sir Edward Kerrison), Captain Valentine (agent to the Duke of Richmond), in addition to almost every clergyman who has given evidence upon the subject, all bear witness to the benefits being direct, rapid, general. The drunkard begins to find a better way of spending his time and his money; the slattern becomes a notable housewife; the habits and dress of the children indicate the difference that has taken place in the tone and circumstances of the home. The greatest arrears of civilization are where the domiciles of the people are squalid and neglected; in parishes like Docking or South Cerney, into which rubbish has been freely carted from neighbours' premises. Vain, say the clergy, are churches and schools till the people are provided with better homes. The statement I believe to be the simple truth; and I think the country has a right, in the interests of a class whose material and social condition is still anything but one on which the mind can rest with satisfaction, to call upon those who own the soil to see to it that their estates are adequately provided with decent residences for those by whom they are tilled. A.

138. Modes of hiring farm servants are very various; some of them, I venture to think, might be very much improved for the better; and others are attended by circumstances which, in their social influence, are as mischievous as anything can be. Women and the ordinary day labourer, as his name implies, are hired by the day, and generally paid their wages once a fortnight. The rate of wages for women is usually fixed at so much per day; but of the men, when engaged on day work, at so much per week. This might seem to lead to the inference that the man is hired by the week, or even, as wages are only paid once in that time, by the fortnight; but in practice it is not so, and though the more liberal farmers feel themselves bound to find work for their men "wet or dry," and others would not refuse out-door work, in cases where no in-door employment could be found, even on the wettest day if the men chose to brave the weather and undertake it,* yet there are other farmers of harder natures and tighter-drawn purse-strings, who will without scruple send a day labourer back on a wet morning or if there happens to be no directly remunerative job which they can set him to do.† This seems to me to be hard treatment of the men. If they are hired for the week they ought to be found in work for the week; and I believe, from what I have heard in many places, that to treat them otherwise generates a rankling sense of wrong in the minds of the men in relation to their masters, and produces that race of "shifty" labourers who have no regard for their employers' interests, of which the farmers in many places so bitterly complain.‡ 2. Modes of hiring farm servants.

139. The system of monthly hiring, which is the rule of domestic service, is applied in farm labour whenever workmen are engaged for the purpose by time at all, to the solitary instance of the harvest.§ Those who are emphatically called farm servants are hired mostly by the year.‖ This applies chiefly to the labourers without whose services the farm could not be carried on for a single day, and whom, therefore, the farmer considers himself obliged to secure by bonds not easily broken—the shepherd, the carter, the stockman, the ploughboys, the dairymaid. The usual periods of such hirings are in the spring, or, more commonly, in the autumn; and, where those abominations exist, the transaction generally takes place at the "mop" or "statute-fair." I believe that in law a verbal agreement, if it can be proved, is as valid as a written one; and as a matter of fact, the terms of the contract are seldom put upon paper; what weighs most on the mind of the young farm recruit, and impresses him with the strongest sense of obligation, is the mystical shilling which passes from the palm of his new master into his own, and which may be regarded as the agricultural *sacramentum*. Yearly hirings.

140. These yearly hirings appear to me to operate ill in many ways. The statute fair, which is one of their accompaniments in many counties, in Gloucestershire to wit, is one of those ancient customs, which, however out of keeping with our present stage of civilization, however demoralizing in their modern abuse, still hold their ground in this conservative country, simply because they are ancient.¶ A contract entered into between two parties, each probably previously a stranger to the other, and in which small account is made of character on either side, cannot but too often issue in a result unwelcome to both; the servant finds he has got an unsatisfactory master, the master that he has hired an unprofitable servant. The boys often run away, and the master does not think them worth the cost and trouble of a pursuit. The case of these boys, hired away from home at the age of 13 or 14 has become, in con- Their bad effects.

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* *See* "Notes of Meeting at Cromhall," No. 87.

† A case of this kind was mentioned to me in Gloucestershire in which an employer treats his men in this way, keeping back, however, from such as live in his cottages, the full fortnight's rent out of their wages. How do such employers expect their men to live? are they not directly tempting them to dishonesty?

‡ *See* "Miscellaneous Evidence," No. 24.

§ The modes of contracting for harvest work are very various; sometimes by the month, sometimes by the job irrespectively of time, sometimes at per acre. Sometimes the "job" includes carrying and building the stack, as well as cutting and tying; sometimes it is confined to the two latter operations, the carrying and stacking being done by the farmer's ordinary labourers at day wages, which, at such times, are generally double the ordinary rate. Carters, who have properly speaking no harvest, receive 1*l.* or 2*l.* as a gratuity for their work during the operation, instead. I have called it a gratuity, but it really is part of the hiring contract. No two counties—hardly any two farmers—follow precisely the same fashion in these customs. Modes of contracting for harvest work.

‖ In some parts of Sussex it is the custom to hire young lads and men, who live in the farm-house, by the half-year; they get half as much again, or even double the amount of wages in the summer half as in the winter. *See* "Notes of Meeting," No. 61. A Sussex custom.

¶ I need not here stay to describe the circumstances and consequences of a statute fair. It is probably the most demoralizing agricultural institution. In Norfolk, happily, it has died down in most of the places at which it used to be held, at Swaffham and Fakenham, for example—into little more than a pleasure fair, and the hirings appear to take place with just as great facility without it. But in Gloucestershire the evil of the statute fair is as rife as ever it was. Hiring fairs are held at Cirencester, Thornbury, Gloucester, and in most of the other towns. A few years ago a united effort was made in the county to put down the one at Gloucester, which is, I believe, the most considerable, and substitute for it a system of registration, but the effort proved unsuccessful from the difficulty in getting all the parties concerned—and particularly the farmers—to persevere in sustaining it. In Cirencester, those who were dissatisfied with the old state of things took perhaps, the wiser course of attempting to improve it, rather than rudely break it down. Instead of assembling in the street, the candidates for services are marshalled in different buildings, according to their sex, and a little more decency is thus infused into the transaction. But even so, there are certain inevitable evils arising from the indiscriminate mixture of several hundreds of young people in the same town, on the same day, for the same purpose, which no precaution can prevent, or even do much to mitigate. The grossness of the scene does not unveil itself till the shades of night have fallen. Then the orgies begin. Statute fairs.

A.

sequence of a change introduced by modern manners, one deserving very serious consideration. Five and twenty years ago, they were taken into the farmer's house, treated as members of his family, fed at his table, watched over in respect of morals in the way in which most masters consider themselves bound to watch over the conduct of their household. This is all changed. Owing to the greater refinement that has varnished the outer surface of the life of all classes of society, the presence of these raw, ill-mannered youths would now be considered intolerable by the farmer, and still more so by the farmer's wife, even in the kitchen. They are expelled from the house. They occupy any building, not always the most suitable, that happens to be vacant; or their rough beds are put up in the loft over the stable; or they lodge about, sometimes as chance may direct, sometimes under the terms of a special contract,* with strangers. Their washing and mending their mother still does at home, perhaps six or seven miles away; and one Sunday a fortnight, sometimes, every Sunday, is occupied with the journey to and fro. They board themselves, getting their victuals cooked as best they can. Of moral supervision they receive next to none. Perhaps a quarter of their year slips away before the clergyman has even caught a sight of them; and unless he succeeds in getting them to his night school in the winter months, he has hardly the opportunity of exercising any other influence over them.

The security supposed to be given by the yearly hiring illusory.

141. I think that in revising or defining the law between master and servant, this case of the farmer and his labourers hired by the year deserves consideration too. I am sure that many farmers themselves are thoroughly discontented with the present state of things, and would gladly welcome an alteration, if only they could enjoy under it the same security that they fancy they enjoy now.† I say advisedly, the security that they fancy they enjoy. For in many cases, in *all* cases where it has to be trusted to *as a security*, the security is illusory. The only security that can guarantee good treatment to a servant, or good service to a master, is the security of mutual confidence and mutual regard. I cannot see what gain it can possibly be to a farmer to be tied to, and unable to rid himself of, a worthless servant for a year. If the man is good for anything, the master can always make it worth his while to stay. The mere settlement of him in his cottage is a sort of lien upon his continuance. There are not many men with families who care to shift their homes every three or six months, or even every year. But I will not dwell longer on this subject. I touched upon it in my Report to the Education Commissioners of 1861. I will venture to repeat my words. I said:

Monthly hiring recommended in its place.

"It is not easy to see a reason why the hiring of farm servants should stand on a different footing "from the hiring of any other class of domestics; or why a month's engagement should be found a "sufficient security for mutual convenience in the one case, while a year's service is exacted in the "other. From all I can learn, I believe that no real hardship would be occasioned to anybody, and "that the relation between master and servant would be materially improved,—more consideration "shown on one side, and a more willing service rendered on the other; more value set on a good "character, and more anxiety felt to retain a comfortable place;—and an important social contract thus "be rescued from its present accompanying circumstances of degradation, if the law that governs farm "servants, as distinct from other classes, were repealed, and the custom of hiring for a year, and "the custom of holding statutes, were, happily for society, to expire together."‡

3. The beer-house system and its connexion with drunkenness.

142. The two deepest stains in the moral condition of an English village, are the unchastity of the women and the drunkenness of the men. When persons descant on the immorality of our peasantry

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* I mean that the carters often have their cottages rent free on condition of taking in one or two such boys

Opinions of the farmers.

† *See*, particularly, Mr. Frampton's Paper on Agricultural Labour, printed in the Appendix p. 21. "Were it practicable with "us, and could we feel assured of being treated fairly, *I should prefer the monthly hiring system*, month's wages, month's warning." In the discussion which followed, Mr. F. Everett said that he "had never hired a servant"—by the year I presume he meant—"nor "discharged one when winter was coming on." Mr. Frampton's paper is thoroughly well worth reading.

‡ "Education Commissioners' Report" (1861), vol. ii., p. 106. I don't know whether I am right in calling it a "law" which governs the contracts made with farm servants, and which I say might with advantage be "repealed." At any rate, it is a custom which has, practically, the force of law.

§ The following letter, which appeared in the "Times" of June 8, 1868, is written by a gentleman who took the chair at my meeting at Witham, and describes in a very clear form the present condition of the "beershop" nuisance. Two policemen, who attended and gave evidence at my meeting at Castle Hedingham, in Essex, spoke strongly about the exceeding difficulty of controlling the proceedings of houses which sell beer *off* the premises. Till I read the explanation given in Col. Shakespear's letter, I did not quite understand how this could be, as I fancied the in-door house was the more mischievous of the two. In the Union of Hailsham I heard of beer being frequently sold by retail in houses not licensed at all, the sellers running the risk of detection and penalties. I am satisfied that, in the interests of society, this whole question needs careful and thorough scrutiny. I append Col. Shakespear's letter:—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "TIMES."

"SIR,—In February last you were good enough to allow me to draw attention to certain provisions of the 'Nuisances Removal Acts,' and I now beg of you to extend the same favour in regard to Beer Acts; for, affected as they are by a clause in the Inland Revenue Act of 1863, a nuisance of another kind is gathering around us.

"Beerhouses are now so frequently styled 'the curse of the country' without any reason being assigned why so now more than formerly, that with your kind permission I will endeavour to explain the cause. The preamble to 1 William IV., cap. 64, runs thus:—'Whereas it is expedient for the better supplying the public with beer,' and agreeably to that Act every applicant to the Excise authorities for a licence to keep a house for the retail of beer to be drunk on the premises had to pay 2*l.* 2*s.* for the same; he must be a householder rated to the poor, and had to find sureties. The Act 4 and 5 William IV., cap 85, amends the above, and compels, in addition, a certificate of good character from six inhabitants rated to the poor at not less than 6*l.* each, such being vouched for by an overseer of the parish; but where there are not 10 inhabitants rated at 6*l.*, the certificate of the majority so rated is sufficient, and the licence was made 3*l.* 6*s.* 1¾*d.* That Act was again amended by 3 and 4 Victoria, cap. 61, the 'householder rated to the poor' was by it compelled to be the real resident occupier of the premises on which the business was to be carried on, who must be rated to the poor in sums of not less than 15*l.*, 11*l.*, or 8*l.*, according to the population of the neighbourhood or other circumstances, such as the distance from any polling place, &c.; and this Act imposed restrictions on the hours at which a beerhouse might be open—viz., from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m., or 11 p.m. or 12 at midnight on week days, according to the nature of the locality, and other times are specified in regard to Sundays, &c. There are heavy penalties for infringements of these excise laws, and the police have powers and authority to enter at any time and as often as they think fit, every house licensed to retail beer to be drunk on the premises.

"What I have stated is intended to show that for 33 years subsequent to 1830 the principles on which beerhouse licences were granted contained some guarantees of respectability, and furnished a wholesome restraint against lawlessness and vice without too much interference with liberty. As the licence to retail beer to be drunk on the premises permitted the taking off the premises, the poor man had every facility for obtaining beer to take to his home whenever he had the money to pay for it. I now come to the turning point from all those salutary laws and to the most important part of my letter; for public morality, hitherto so well guarded, has been most seriously encroached upon, and the law hourly evaded by the effects of clause 1 of 26 and 27 Victoria, cap. 33, passed on the 29th of June, 1863, which empowers a beer dealer, *i.e.*, one who sells wholesale, or not less than 4½ gallons at any one

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they have these two forms of vice principally or solely in their mind. The English villager is not otherwise wanting in the principles of virtue. Considering their poverty and their facilities,—the way in which articles of property belonging to their master lie about, unwatched and easy to be secreted—their honesty is surprising. Among many of them, where they have not been subjected to pauperising influences, there is a fine spirit of independence.* They often display wonderful sympathy, and real kindliness of feeling one towards another, in their hours of need. They take an honest pride in their work, for the work's sake. Their master's well-being largely depends, not only on their sagacity, but on their trustworthiness; and they rarely betray or prove themselves unworthy of the trust. But when all has been said that can be said in their praise there remain, it must be confessed, two deep stains. The women set lightly by their honour; the men do not reckon drunkenness in the catalogue of sins. When speaking of the condition of cottages, I traced the former evil to its source; the drinking habits of the men may be attributed partly to the repulsiveness of their home, and partly to the attractions of another place in which they often spend more time than in their home; I refer, of course, to houses of whatever kind, in which exciseable, intoxicating liquors are sold.

Drunkenness not believed to be increasing in rural places.

143. I was happy to find in almost every part of the country which I traversed a very general testimony borne to the fact that drunkenness, in country places, is decreasing rather than increasing. Young men, in particular, are observed to care less about beer, and more about dress. They like to have a suit of cloth clothes for Sunday, a watch, a well bound Church service, and so forth, while their fathers never thought of indulging in any luxuries of the kind. And, of course, money spent on these objects is so much withdrawn from the capacity and the inclination to spend money on beer. Still, admitting the improvement, there is too much cause for that loud cry that rises both from farmers and clergy, that the curse of the village is the house which sells beer. These houses are alleged, I fear with truth, to be multiplied, for the sake of the money they bring in to the national exchequer, to an extent far beyond the legitimate wants of the community; those licensed under the new system are said to be practically exempt from nearly all control; the police state that they find more trouble in dealing with the houses where the beer is not allowed to be consumed on the premises than where the customers can go in and drink; the Sunday traffic in these houses is felt to be an almost unmixed evil; and altogether, as will be seen from sentiments uttered in almost every one of my public meetings, there is no subject within the range of this inquiry on which I have found a greater strength of feeling or a more remarkable unanimity of opinion. It was, of course, here as everywhere, easier to point out and lament the evil, than to suggest a remedy. The remedies, however, that were suggested were such as these: give the licensing power to the magistrates; if you allow it still to reside with the excise, require a sufficiently high qualification in the ratepayers who sign the petition for the licence, to be something like a guarantee of character;† remove the disabilities which at present prevent a poor man from brewing his own beer, which I suppose to mean, repeal the malt tax; close the houses absolutely on Sundays, except against *bonâ fide* travellers; make it much easier for the magistrates to proceed summarily against a disorderly house;‡ render the recovery of a licence, when once forfeited for misconduct, more difficult, if not impossible.

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time, not to be drunk on the premises—to take out, in addition to his wholesale licence of 3*l.* 6*s.* 1¾*d.*, a retail licence of 1*l.* 2*s.* 0½*d.*, by which he can also sell by retail—*i.e.*, any quantity less than 4½ gallons, but not to be drunk on the premises.

"And now comes the explanation of the misfortune in the Act last-named. The certificates of character and qualifications required from the retailer as before-named are in no way required of the beer dealer, nor is there any restriction as to his hours of sale, nor police supervision over him; the clause above cited grants him an immunity from such troubles; to obtain his retail licence he need only produce to the excise authorities his wholesale licence, to get which the only requisite is paying the duty of 3*l.* 6*s.* 1¾*d.*

"The result of this combination of these two licences is that we have growing up among us throughout the country a class of beerhouses of the lowest order, over which practically there is no means of control, for they may be open at any hour of the day or night, and may be kept by anybody who can pay 4*l.* 8*s.* 2¼*d.* for the two licences, and often are so by loose characters and others under the influence of those most interested in the general consumption of beer. It is by no means an uncommon thing in regard to these houses of dealers and retailers of beer not to be drunk on the premises, that persons sit and drink in a back parlour or adjoining outhouse, away from general view, or stand in the highway, but close to the door or window of the beerhouse, and drink their fill handed from the bar, or even beer may be passed through a window or over a wall on to the adjoining premises of a confederate. Thus is contempt for the law engendered among the least-informed portion of the people, and great irregularities are apparently sanctioned with impunity to the injury of the general moral welfare of the nation.

"Having so far stated my complaint, I feel bound to point at least to a check, and I submit for consideration that when a beer dealer thinks fit to become also a retailer of beer not to be drunk on the premises, he should be placed on the same footing in regard to character, qualification, and supervision, as the person licensed to retail beer to be drunk on the premises, or that he be compelled to take out a brewer's licence and to brew the beer he offers for sale.

"I am not in favour of paternal supervision and restrictions over poor people, but I do advocate that their beerhouses, while giving them every reasonable facility for obtaining beer, be kept respectable, convenient, and comfortable, and as the poor cannot do that for themselves, not having, like the rich, a great choice of houses for their patronage, the law ought to do it for them in all cases.

"There is no doubt whatever that the advantage taken of clause 1 of 26 and 27 Victoria, cap. 33, by the very persons who mostly need restraint is demoralizing in the extreme. I have reason to think the use made of this clause was not for a moment contemplated by those who introduced it; if that is the case, the sooner legislation puts it right the better for all parties.

"Your obedient servant,

"Witham, June 6, 1868. "J. D. SHAKESPEAR, J.P., Lieutenant-Colonel, half-pay, R.A."

* At Olveston and Almondsbury, in Gloucestershire I was told that it was considered the bitterest and most disgraceful thing of all "to be buried by the parish." In my own neighbourhood, I am sorry to say, there is much less feeling of the kind. The people are not mendicants, but they have a sort of notion that, in the first moment of distress, the parish is bound to come to their aid. There are no two qualities that need more development in the poor than the qualities of providence and independence.

† A case was reported to me in Sussex which illustrates the necessity of this. A man, who kept a beerhouse in a distant hamlet of the parish of Horsham, kept it in such a way as to be a perfect nuisance to his neighbours. Turned out of his house, for some reason or other, by his landlord, he found refuge in a house not a hundred yards off, where he wished to carry on his old trade as a retailer of beer. Amongst his immediate neighbours, who had suffered from his former disorderly proceedings, he could get no one to sign his petition, so he goes into Horsham, 3 miles away, procures, possibly by means easily conjectured, the requisite number of signatures, gets his licence from the excise, and wins the day.

I often read in the newspapers when the nation's quarterly accounts are made up flourishing paragraphs about the increase of income from the excise being one of the great indices of national prosperity. It certainly indicates that people are spending their money freely on drink and tobacco, and so far (as public houses can no longer give credit), I suppose, that they have money to spend. As a measure of national prosperity, in the true sense, I cannot myself appreciate the phenomenon.

‡ In more than one place I was informed that the lower beerhouses, besides being the resort of the worst characters of the neighbourhood, are little better than brothels. *See* Sir Willoughby Jones' statement at my "North Creake Meeting," No. 44.

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The evil admits rather of moral than of legislative remedies.

144. It will be seen, at once, that many of these remedies are vague, and some perhaps impracticable; and, indeed, it is always hopeless to reach by law an evil which lies properly within the domain of morals.* My correspondent, the Rev. Edgar Montagu, cries out loudly, make women feel and blush for, more deeply than they do, the shame of bastardy; I echo the cry with another, make men more sensible than they are of the sin, and more ashamed of the selfishness, of drinking. The farmers themselves, loudly as they exclaim against the beer-house system, are too apt, in mere good nature, to encourage in their men a taste for liquor. Extra jobs are remunerated in drink; wages are supplemented with beer or cider; at a harvest home it would be thought an impeachment on the master's hospitality, if the men did not get, as the phrase is, "well on." And all these are influences on the bad side; they tell against the principle of sobriety; they naturally make men think that the master who does not care about seeing his men tipsy at one time, ought not to care, so long as his property does not suffer, about seeing them tipsy at any time. Many farmers, I believe, with the high motive of helping their men to escape from the bondage of a degrading vice, are trying to break through the custom of paying part of their wages in drink; but they are met with the stubborn resistance of a tradition which has nothing to plead in its favour but its antiquity; but which, with unreasonable minds, in that very antiquity finds its power.

4. "Largesse" and "harvest frolics."

145. It is a fact, which every one must lament while he admits it, that the English working man is far behind the continental working man in his conception of the mode in which it beseems a rational creature to spend a holiday. His notion of pleasure is too often coarse and animal; the idea of beer is the predominating one in his mind. I have sometimes thought that if he had more frequent holidays as the Frenchman has, he would perhaps use them better; and that he recoups himself for the drudgery and exhaustion of his everyday life by sensual indulgence on his rare and sombre opportunities of recreation. Be this at it may, everybody who has lived in a village knows what are too commonly the orgies of a club-day; everyone who has made the attempt knows how hard it is to substitute sober enjoyment for vicious excess at a "harvest-home." In Norfolk, the harvest-home is called the "harvest-*frolic*"; and the degradation in the name is by itself sufficient to indicate the degradation in the thing. The "frolic" is accompanied, preceded, or followed by another thing, called "largesse," unknown to me by experience in southern or western England, but which in Norfolk, and I believe, the Eastern Counties generally, once was universal, and still to a considerable extent prevails. I will describe this thing in the language of one who saw it in operation, was shocked at its baneful effects, and endeavoured to rouse a general public determination to put it down.

The custom of "largesse" described.

146. "The custom," says the Rev. Scott F. Surtees,† "is as follows:—The harvest ended, the "master sometimes gives his men a supper at his own house; but that is the exception. He more "generally gives a sum to be spent by them in supper at a public house; after this supper, which is "sometimes attended by persons of both sexes, and at which the language, the songs, the utter absence "of decorum, the drunkenness and riot surpass I believe all and more than we can conceive to be "possible amongst a society calling themselves Christians, the harvest party, half stupefied by the "debauch of the previous night, start 'begging largesse.' This largesse gathering is not confined to "their own parish, but is extended from house to house throughout the district wherever a friend or "tradesman of their employer is to be found. At some places they get beer, at others they collect "money, stopping at all the public houses in their way; and the sum so collected, if sufficient, is spent "in another supper, but more often expended wholly in beer. Respectable men, who at other times "never enter a public house, are frequently thus seen disgracing themselves, and speak with bitterness "of the tyrant custom which compels them to do as others do. The consequence is that the harvest "debauch is oftentimes prolonged for days."

The Banham "monster harvest home."

147. Thirteen years ago, the Earl of Albemarle and other leading gentry and clergy of the neighbourhood, endeavoured to inaugurate a better era at Banham by substituting for the harvest frolic and its accompanying custom of largesse a monster tea-meeting, attended by from 2,000 to 3,000 persons, which it was hoped that the rustic mind, enlightened by some admirable addresses which were delivered on the occasion, might be brought to appreciate as "a more excellent way." The Earl of Albemarle, who presided, gave utterance to the hope that "largesse had got its death-knell;" and the "Times" newspaper, in a leading article, in which the writer gave his lordship the praise that he deserved for his honest and earnest endeavour to "reform the manners of the Eastern Counties," was "disposed, "from the spirit in which he had commenced operations, and the hearty acquiescence in his views "displayed by his country neighbours, to anticipate favourable results."‡ I am informed upon authority upon which I believe I can fully depend, that the attempt was by no means a complete success at the time; that the day could not be brought to a close without "much drunkenness;" and that the experiment "has never been repeated at Banham."

Attempted on too large a scale.

148. The attempt, probably, was made on too large a scale. A "monster meeting" is not the best remedy for a social evil. The mere conflux of a crowd is what Roman Catholic divines call "*fomes* "*peccati*." Three thousand people, accustomed from their infancy to the licence and libertinism of a "frolic," were not likely to be won over to sobriety and decorum by any amount of speeches delivered to them by their betters with whatever good intentions at a tea-meeting. An experiment of more moderate dimensions would probably have achieved a greater measure of success. Three times in the course of the last eight years we have conducted a general harvest-home in my own parish, tarnished by no drunkenness, which everybody seemed to enjoy, and which, if I live long enough, I hope to see repeated as many times more. But only by slow degrees and by persistent effort can we expect to

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* It is a question now 1,800 years old, "Quid leges sine moribus vanæ proficiunt?"

† *See* a pamphlet entitled "Banham Harvest Home;" containing a speech of the Earl of Albemarle, with a preface and appendix by the Rev. Scott F. Surtees, rector of Banham, 1855, p. 3–4.

‡ "Times," of October 1, 1855.

rid the English peasant's mind of the notion that a holiday means a day of drunkenness and profligacy. I am afraid that the law cannot step in to mend things here. It is a moral evil, to be cured only by moral remedies. It needs for its cure a greater sense of responsibility in the masters, as well as a greater strength of principle in the men. A.

149. I have said that I believe that the harvest frolic in its old corrupt form, and "largesse" too, still prevail to a considerable extent in Norfolk; but I believe, also, that the latter evil is steadily diminishing under the combined influence of various causes, while many employers, and among them the Earl of Leicester,* are substituting a fixed money payment for the entertainment that they used to give their men. I confess, as far as my own feelings go, I would rather see the harvest-home purged of its demoralization than changed into a simple money payment. These old English customs, however degraded, point to a time when the relation between master and man was ennobled by a higher sentiment than the greed of gain; and in this nineteenth century anything that breaks down the distinctions of caste, and gives an opportunity for the effusion of the feelings of good fellowship and true hospitality, is a link in our social system not lightly to be snapped in twain. Harvest frolic and "largesse still prevail.

150. A Norfolk clergyman who, I venture to think, would share my views, and who has given me much valuable information upon many points, and upon this among the rest, thus describes, in answer to my inquiry, the present condition of the harvest frolic and of the largesse system in his neighbourhood:— Description of their present condition.

"Both largesse and frolics, or harvest suppers," he says, "prevail in this part of Norfolk, as they "did also in the parts of Essex and Hertfordshire in which I formerly lived; and as they are "generally conducted here they are productive of much drunkenness and mischief. Against largesse "I have set my face ever since I have been in Norfolk, and I am glad to say that, to the best of my "belief, it has almost died out in this parish. My attention was first drawn to the evil of the system "in Hertfordshire, where on one occasion when I was in a field I rented, where one of the parishioners, "a most respectable woman, the wife of a cottager, was hoeing, her husband and another man came "up to me and asked for 'largesse.' The woman immediately earnestly entreated me not to bestow it, "and said to me in the presence of her husband, 'My husband is generally good and kind, and seldom "'gives me an angry word; but after the feast provided by 'largesse,' he invariably comes home tipsy "'and gives me a good beating, which he never does at any other time. Ah, sir,' she said, 'we "'women dislike the very name of 'largesse.'' I consider 'largesse' to be but another name for begging "and drunkenness, and that it is discreditable both to the giver and receiver; to the giver, because, "with his eyes open, he contributes to drunkenness and debauchery; to the receiver, because it is sheer "begging, as 'largesse' is asked not from the employer or those with whom the men are in any sense "connected, but from strangers, and even from those not living in the parish, as the men will frequently "beg for a distance round their village extending to three, four, or even six miles.

"The harvest home as conducted in this part of Norfolk is very objectionable. Frequently "money, generally from half-a-crown to five shillings a man, is given by the employer in lieu of a "supper, and with this the labourers procure a supper at some public house, where, there being no "restraint over them (the master or employer not being present), the drinking is excessive, and rioting "and fighting are frequently the result. When the supper is given by the farmer it is customary for "the men to come again the next morning to consume the remains, and generally after the breakfast "they adjourn to the public house and spend the remainder of the day in drinking. Even in the "case of the supper given by the employer drunkenness is very general, as it is not considered either "generous or fair to limit the supply of beer. The harvest supper is not considered a matter of "charity or kindness on the part of the employer, but as a regular part of the harvest wages, and "therefore the labourers think they have a right to all they can get to eat or drink. It is not "considered at all wrong for a man to get intoxicated on these occasions; indeed, it is rather the "contrary way—a man is not considered to have kept the harvest feast properly unless he does get "drunk. The employers do not discountenance, as they should do, this feeling, but give way to it, so "that men who are habitually steady, sober, and respectable, will on these occasions regularly break "out. Attempts have been made in some parishes in this neighbourhood to commence a better state "of things, by having a general harvest feast for the whole parish, with attendance at church (not "compulsory) in the morning. But these attempts have, after a year or two, all proved unsuccessful. "The labourers did not like having a restraint imposed upon them, by the presence of the more "respectable parishioners, in respect of drink, language, and songs, the latter of which are frequently "obscene and disgusting; and the employers, finding the dissatisfaction on the part of the labourers "gave way and returned to the old system. I do not now know of any place in the immediate "neighbourhood where a general harvest festival for the whole parish is successfully carried out. I "may mention that this drinking is not absolutely necessary, and might be abolished by firmness on "the part of the employers, for I have been accustomed in this parish to have supper parties attended "by 50 or 60 labouring men who have remained till 11 or 12 at night and have thoroughly enjoyed "themselves without a single case of drunkenness occurring, and this even when habitual drunkards "were among the company. The reason for this was that I took care, first, that the beer should not "be too strong, and secondly because it was understood that any one who misconducted himself in "respect of taking too much drink, or improper language or behaviour, would not be invited again. "As my supper was a free gift, and not looked upon as a matter of right, I never had occasion to "exclude any one on any of these accounts any year."

151. I fully agree with my correspondent that all that is required to put this evil down is firmness on the part of the employer; a steady setting of the face against drunkenness in every shape, at all times. The evil could be mitigated, if not put down.

* Lord Leicester gives his men 5*s.* instead of a "frolic," and 10*s.* instead of harvest beer.—*See* "Miscellaneous Evidence," No. 1.

A. But the thing which farmers as a body dread almost more than anything else is a reputation for inhospitality; and this, combined with a not unnatural reluctance to do an unpopular thing—the commonest form of moral cowardice—is the reason why no resolute effort has yet been made by those who alone can make it successfully, to mitigate an evil which is universally admitted and universally deplored. The remedy cannot come from peers or clergymen; it must come from the farmers themselves.* If they would only unite vigorously for the purpose—a thing that they themselves admit they never do—there might soon be an end of all that is evil in harvest frolics and statute fairs.†

5. Effects of the preservation of game.

152. The extent to which the system of game preserving is carried in many parts of England, and particularly in the county of Norfolk, is assuming a serious significance both in a moral and in an economical point of view. The farmer cannot cultivate his land with the proper measure of profit, and there is a tangible loss thereby sustained in the resources of the country; while the way in which, and the extent to which, preserves are stocked to meet the present taste for battue-shooting and to satisfy the notion that you have had no sport unless, like Samson with his Philistines, you have slain "heaps "upon heaps," act as irresistible incentives with the peasant, who loves his bit of sport as truly as the gentleman, and whose honest earnings are not sufficient to enable him to overcome the temptation thus thrown in his way, to both poach and steal. The sport of shooting certainly assumes proportions in Norfolk that, so far as I have observed, are unknown elsewhere. It is the one thing cared for. It has enhanced within the last 25 years by I know not how much per cent. the value of land.‡ Fabulous rents are offered for the occupation of a mansion and the right of shooting over a few thousand acres of stubble and plantation, where the hirer possibly does not intend to reside more than a fortnight, or at the outside a month in the year. The art of preserving is studied and cultivated as if it were the great business of life. The highest ambition of the sportsman is to exhibit from his game-book at the end of the season the greatest aggregate of slaughtered game. Indeed, this document is almost as valuable to the owner of a property as his title deeds, and I suppose that no one would ever think of either renting or purchasing an estate in Norfolk without having this proof of its value submitted to his inspection. Fifty brace of partridges shot in a day would be thought no extraordinary performance for three or four guns; and when battue-shooting has commenced, it would be deemed poor sport if the day's spoil were not reckoned by hundreds.

Two sorts of game: one hurting the pocket of the farmer, the other the morals of the labourer.

153. Game in Norfolk is classified into two species—"ground game" and "winged game," the first belonging to the quadruped, the second to the biped order. The first species is the one that works most mischief to the farmer;§ the second species is that which most harms the peasant. Rabbits and hares play havoc with the farmer's oats and barley; partridges and pheasants corrupt and demoralize the virtue of the labourer. Adequately to stock these vast preserves and these illimitable stubbles, the keeper is obliged to lay in, in the spring, a proportionate supply of pheasants' and partridges' eggs. These eggs are sold, I know not how far openly, at 12*s.* and 18*s.* a dozen. To show the extent to which trade in these articles is carried on I will relate the following anecdote, told me by a gentleman who is fully alive to the demoralizing tendency of the present system of things. Himself and a friend, not with any purpose of buying, but merely as trying an experiment of curiosity, went to a well known purveyor in Norwich one market-day and asked for 2,000 eggs. "Longs" or "shorts?" was the question put in reply.‖ I forget which of the two classes was selected, but the information arrived at was, that though not in stock at that moment, the quantity could be procured by the following Tuesday. There is, I believe, a legitimate way of procuring eggs so ordered;¶ but there is also an illegitimate; and I was assured, upon more than a single authority, of what it requires no credulity to believe, that many a lad tending sheep or scaring rooks has been taught his first lesson in crime by the agents of these egg-purveyors, who will offer them 4*s.* or 5*s.* a dozen for any number of eggs they can procure. Thus, while the magistrate punishes, the game preserver through his servant encourages, the poacher; and a system of things is growing up which in its development seems, to my humble judgment, to be fraught with mischief to the morality of at least one important class of our countrymen who are affected by it. Game preserving, carried to this excess, I regard as a simple evil; and I venture to raise the question whether noblemen and gentlemen are morally justified in buying their pleasure at this price:—

"Est modus in rebus; sunt certi denique fines."

6. The co-operative principle.

154. With remarks on one more subject I shall have done; and as my later pages have been written under the influence of somewhat depressing thoughts, it will be pleasant to part company with my readers in a rather more cheerful mood. If there are many things to make a patriotic mind sad as it contemplates the social condition of England, there are others—and I hope I have not lost sight o. them altogether in the foregoing pages—of a more cheering character, sufficient to encourage effort and to prevent either the statesman or the philanthropist from yielding to despair. One such thing is the

* I should perhaps say that these remarks upon harvest homes are intended to refer only to what I understand to be the system in the eastern counties. In my own part of England I know of no objection that can fairly be taken to the way in which the farmer and his men keep their "feast of ingathering." It is an occasion of conviviality certainly, and some of the men perhaps may be tempted to take more beer than does them good; but it is not a debauch, nor do I think that the strictest *censor morum* would wish it, in the interests of morality, to be discontinued. I, for one, certainly should not.

† "If farmers would unite among themselves—but the worst of it was they would not—the hiring system might be done away "with."—Speech of Mr. Samuel Wentworth, in the discussion on Mr. Frampton's paper on Agricultural Labour, Appendix, p. 22.

‡ I heard of an estate, which may extend over 6,000 acres, which has changed hands twice within about this period of time. The second purchase-money is said to have been 40,000*l.* in excess of the first.

§ The statement in the text is true of the game itself; but I am informed that where the system of feeding winged game prevails,—and it prevails wherever partridges and pheasants are largely preserved,—enormous quantities of rats and other vermin are attracted, with of course the natural consequences to the farmer.

‖ I understand that in the mystical language of these transactions, which sometimes needs interpreting, "longs and shorts" indicate pheasants' and partridges' eggs respectively. The epithets are believed to refer not to the shape of the eggs, but to the length of tail of the two sorts of birds.

¶ I mean that there are mews where tame birds are kept for the express purpose of laying the eggs, just as innocently as a man may make profit out of keeping poultry.

action of the co-operative principle, especially in its elevating effects upon the condition of the sons and daughters of toil. A.

155. The principle of co-operation is asserted by its most prominent advocates to be the one great solvent of the most difficult and agitated social problems of the day. It is to put an end to strikes; it is to adjust the relative claims of capital and labour, which is the question of questions just now. I have no faith, myself, in panaceas, nor that any one mode of treatment, of man's devising, can cure the complicated diseases of modern civilization. Still, I have seen co-operation at work; and I believe it, when not pressed extravagantly far, to be sound in principle, and, when prudently conducted, to be beneficent in its results; and if it does offer the solution of difficult economical problems, I believe that to the sagacity and benevolence of a country gentleman belongs the merit of having discovered it, or, at least, of having been the first to apply it.

illustrated at Assington in Suffolk.

Mr. Gurdon's first experiment.

156. In the year 1830, 14 years, therefore, before the commencement of the enterprise of the Rochdale Pioneers, which has attained such gigantic proportions, the idea suggested itself to a Suffolk squire* that he would attempt to apply, by way of experiment, the principle of co-operation or co-partnership to a farm. Selecting 60 acres of land of medium quality, furnished with a rough but not unsuitable homestead, he formed his little company of shareholders, all of them taken from the class of farm labourers, to which he gave the name of The Assington Co-operative Agricultural Society. The number of the original shareholders was 15, who put 3*l.* a piece into the concern, by way of subscribed capital; the landlord, to give his bantling a chance of life, liberally advanced to the co-operators the sum of 400*l.* without interest, on loan.† The society has grown and prospered. The occupation has been increased from 60 acres to 130; the number of shareholders has been enlarged from 15 to 21. The present value of the shares, as the bailiff told me, is "all of 50*l.*" All years have not been equally remunerative, but there has not been one since the concern started without some little matter to divide. The company have repaid the landlord all the borrowed money, and all the stock and implements on the farm are now their own. The stock consists of six horses, four cows 110 sheep, and from 30 to 40 pigs. The rent of the land is 200*l.* a year, the company paying tithe, rates, and taxes. The farm is held on a 14 years' lease, which is on the point of being renewed. The land is farmed on the four-course system of husbandry, and ordinarily employs five men and two or three boys. The members are not bound to work upon the farm, which, indeed, could not find employment for all; but it is understood, though there is no rule to the effect, that if a co-operator is out of work elsewhere, he has a claim to employment before any other man. When a co-operator works on the farm, he is paid wages at the usual rate; and if he were not an efficient labourer, there would be no scruple about discharging him. The affairs of the concern are managed by a committee of four, but the practical direction of the farm rests with the bailiff, himself a co-operator, but employed as a servant of the company, and paid 1*s.* per week above the usual rate of day wages. Some of the members of the committee cannot read or write. Two fresh members are elected in rotation every year; and though want of scholarship would not exclude him, yet if a man were not thought sufficiently intelligent for the business he would have to discharge, he would be refused when his turn came. All the voting is by ballot. No member is allowed more than one share; only labourers of the parish are eligible for membership; and if a man goes to live three miles away from the parish, he must dispose of his share. As long as he remains a member, he must, by the rules of the society, be a member also of the Stoke and Melford Benefit Club. A member can sell his share, with the landlord's and committee's approval. When a fresh member is admitted, he pays 5*l.* down, and the remainder of the current value of the shares by successive instalments. The landlord chose the original members, and claims to have the approval of new members; but he does not interfere with the company, as regards the cultivation of the land, more than he would with any other tenant. The premises are required to be kept in repair by the tenants, the landlord finding rough materials. They are to be insured in the amount of 500*l.*, and every 12 years the farm is revalued. A member, falling into difficulties, can have a loan advanced to him up to half the current value of his share; a privilege, however, I was informed, which has rarely been used. The annual profits are divided equally among the shareholders. Among the members are four widows, one of whom has four small children; they do what they can for themselves, and up to the present time have been able to maintain themselves by their work and the dividend on their shares, without the aid of parochial relief. Indeed, the guardians would disallow relief in the case of any person possessed of property of the amount represented by the value of a share, so that the scheme has a direct tendency to diminish pauperism.

The second experiment.

157. The first experiment apparently succeeded so well, that in 1854 Mr. Gurdon was tempted to try a second, and started the "Assington Co-operative Agricultural *Association*." The new concern began with 70 acres of land, and 36 members, each subscribing 3*l.* 10*s.* by way of capital. Again, the liberality of the landlord was taxed to supplement this inadequate amount of capital by a loan, without interest, of 400*l.* The company has so far prospered that, though the times have been somewhat hard with them in consequence of the burden of this debt (which is now, however, wholly repaid), and the taking in and stocking a considerable accession of land, their present condition is as follows:—they now occupy 212 acres, at a yearly rent of 325*l.*, the company paying tithe, rates, and taxes, which amount to about 50*l.* a year. The company is entirely out of debt; the stock of the farm is valued at 1,200*l.*; the original 3*l.* 10*s.* shares would sell freely for 30*l.* There has not yet been anything worth speaking of in the way of profits to divide; and what has generally been distributed has been some article in kind, as a ton of coals, or something of the sort to each shareholder; but the members are satisfied with the state of things, and the prospects of the concern are bright in the future. All the

* J. Gurdon, Esq., of Assington Hall, near Sudbury.

† The capital was below the ordinary estimate per acre; but seems to have been sufficient to keep the land in good heart and cultivate it profitably.

A. members but six are of the class of farm labourers; the six excepted ones are a miller, a blacksmith, a shoemaker, a wheelwright, and two carpenters. Female labour is only employed at weeding time, or for a job of stone-picking; and at present there are only three boys working on the farm, one of 10, the second of 14, the third of 16 years of age.

158. The societies are not yet incorporated, but intend to be. The squire, I believe, has ceased for some years to be resident at Assington; so that the success of the two experiments may fairly be set down, not to any sentimental fondling on his part, but to the sound principles on which they were based; and the prudent management by which they have been conducted. The only exceptional advantage which the societies have enjoyed, as they do not appear to be at all favoured in the matter of rent, was in the landlord's original loan, in both cases now paid off, to enable them to stock their farms.

Sources of my information.

159. I paid a visit to Assington, to see phenomena with my own eyes. I gathered the information, which I have summarized in the preceding paragraphs, from Mr. Hedges, a large occupier in the parish, and churchwarden, and from the two bailiffs, John Crisell and John Marshall, upon the co-operative farms.* Judging as well as I could judge from appearances, I have no hesitation in saying that the experiment has been an eminent success, and that it is an experiment well worth trying in other localities.†

Objections raised to the scheme.

160. The only objections of any force taken to it were that of Mr. Hedges, that if the system became general, it would extinguish the tenant-farmer class; and that of Mr. Maud, that the tenant-farmer class being extinguished, there would be a chasm in our social, and particularly in our parochial, system that it would be difficult to throw a bridge over. But these objections, though theoretically forcible, may be practically disregarded. It is not likely that the small-farm system will ever become general, or the capitalist tenant farmer be displaced by a body of co-operators little if anything above the rank or intelligence of labouring men. No landlord would retrace the steps of the last half century, and break up his estate again into a number of small holdings. I think it very questionable if these co-operators would be able to manage a larger business than they are at present conducting. I am not at all the more assured of the permanence and solidity of the great Rochdale enterprize because I am told that there is invested in it, in one form or another, a capital of several hundred thousand pounds. Concerns may become too unwieldy to be manageable, too gigantic to be safe. The very success of the Assington experiment appears to me to be due, in part, to the moderate limits within which it has been carried on.

Its advantages.

161. Mr. Maud, though thinking that the drawbacks of the system outweigh its benefits, enumerates among these latter some very considerable items. It attaches, he says, the labourer to his parish, in fact to the soil. It counteracts the drain of which farmers so loudly complain; that is, of their best men into other employments supposed to be more remunerative. It is a decided help, Mr. Maud allows, to the labourer in a pecuniary point of view; and if widely adopted, would greatly diminish poor-rates, *i.e.*, pauperism; and, with pauperism, crime.

162. To these admitted advantages may be added others. At the same time that the system displaces no labour, the co-operative farms employing no more hands than if they were occupied by a single tenant, it diffuses among a much larger number of the population an interest in the soil, and with that, an interest in the prosperity and stability of the country. In these revolutionary days, the tendency of the system is decidedly anti-revolutionary. The co-operator is a man who knows and feels that he has something to lose. And not only so, but the system increases that honest spirit of independence and self-respect which I am sure is as necessary in the lowest class as in the highest to rescue it from degradation. Mr. Maud says that it has not yet done much for education; but I think it, infallibly, will do. It is hardly conceivable that a system which has such a direct tendency to develop the sense of personal interest, should not at the same time develop a desire of knowledge, which may be called the correlative of the sense of personal interest. It is the poor drudge, to whom to-morrow is as to-day, without prospect and without hope, who is content to remain in his ignorance.

Assington co-operative store.

163. The two farms are not the only instances of the application of the co-operative principle in the little community at Assington. In the year 1863, there was also established there a co-operative store. The idea of it probably grew out of the success that had attended the co-operative farms; but partly also was due to suggestions made in a useful little periodical called "The Co-operator." The projector of the scheme, I believe, was a person resident in Assington, who has been a gentleman's servant, but is now retired upon a small independence, and, one of the true benefactors of society, occupies his leisure by trying to be as useful to his neighbours as he can. If, as has been asserted, the "enthusiasm of humanity" is the central principle of Christianity, this worthy man has certainly caught something of its fire. I had the pleasure of seeing him; and from him and the manager of the store I took down the following particulars in my note-book:—

164. The store is called the "Assington Industrial and Provident Society." As already stated, it was established in the year 1863. It has, therefore, completed its first *lustrum*, and may be fairly considered to have passed through the perils of infancy. It started with 36 members; it now reckons 88 names on its roll of shareholders. There have been at one time as many as 104, but some of these have left the parish and withdrawn from the concern. The value of the shares is 1*l.*, and each member is expected to hold at least five shares. Five per cent. interest is allowed to each shareholder on his capital, and the balance of profit is divided among the members, who are purchasers, in proportion to

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* I was unfortunate in not finding the clergyman, Mr. Maud, at home. He has, however, kindly given me his view of the matter in a letter which I have printed in my "Miscellaneous Evidence," No. 19.

Clergymen might apply the co-operative principle to their glebe land.

† It is an experiment as it seems to me that many a clergyman might find it advantageous, both to himself and to his parish, to try upon his glebe. I read recently an interesting paper addressed to the Newbury Farmers' Club by Mr. F. W. Everett, in which the writer lamented, on economical and social grounds, the disappearance of small farms, meaning by "small farms" holdings between the size of 50 and 250 acres. He considered that many articles of daily consumption, requiring close personal attention, such as poultry and stock, were produced more successfully on small farms than on large ones. The co-operative system would encourage the reappearance of small farms, without the reappearance of a class that neither did themselves nor anyone else much good, the class of small farmers.

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the relative amount of their dealings. The amount of members' purchases in the September quarter 1867 was 660*l.*; of non-members', 45*l.* The store is licensed to sell beer off the premises; the beer is brewed by the manager, and sold at the uniform price of 1*s.* a gallon. The amount sold in the same quarter was 56*l.*, or about 20 hogsheads. Credit is not given to non-members, nor to members beyond the value of their shares. If, at a division of profits, a member does not choose to take his share in money, he can have it added to the amount of his capital. The average dividend, which is declared quarterly, on the amount of purchases last year was 13½*d.* in the 1*l.* The manager is paid a fixed salary. The establishment consists of a manager, his wife, and a shopman. The establishment expenses are 25*s.* a week,—14*s.* to the manager, 8*s.* to the shopman, 3*s.* to the woman. The concern is directed by a committee of shareholders, is registered, and is conducted according to a code of rules which has the sanction of the Registrar of Friendly Societies in England.

Its value appreciated.

165. I was assured that the members have a very lively sense of the value of their institution. Upwards of 60 of the shareholders are agricultural labourers, and some of them have been heard to say that they "have no call to look after their rent now," as its amount is almost made up out of their dividend on capital and purchases. The manager, Mr. John Deal, considers that the condition of the labouring men who are members either of the farms or of the store is very much bettered thereby, especially in the case of shareholders in the farms. I think there can be no doubt that he is right.*

The Tortworth store described by the Earl of Ducie.

* I have met with another instance of a rural co-operative store in my district, in the village of Tortworth in Gloucestershire; but I have preferred to describe in the text the Assington experiment for two reasons: first, because it is an experiment of earlier date; and, secondly, being entirely free from what is called patronage, it better illustrates what people, when so disposed, can do for themselves without any fortuitous or adventitious aid. The Tortworth store flourishes under the countenance of a benevolent nobleman, and much of its success is attributed to the indefatigable exertions of the curate of the parish; and though, probably, it has won its way by its own merits, the world might be apt to think that it is to these exceptional circumstances that its success is due. Lord Ducie described the working and the results of the Tortworth store in a letter which appeared in the "Times" of April 9, 1868, from which I cannot do better than make the following extracts:—

"In March, 1867, some 20 of the most intelligent persons in my employ met and agreed to attempt a co-operative store for groceries. Nearly 50*l.* was subscribed by them on the spot as share capital, and a committee was elected. Suitable accommodation was easily provided, rough shop fittings were extemporized, stores were purchased, and in a few days sales commenced. Ready money payment was established, and has ever since been rigidly enforced.

"The committee was composed of persons of various grades, including day labourers. A carpenter working half-time at his trade, and giving his afternoons and Saturdays to the store, with the occasional assistance of a schoolboy as clerk, was found sufficient to carry on the business. Beginning with but a moderate amount of skill, he has improved with practice, and has kept himself fairly on a level with the increasing custom.

"The weekly supervision of the committee, which meets in the store itself, has kept the supplies well up to the demand, and the personal benefit which every member of the committee derives from the store secures a keen and steady interest in the enterprise and a careful consideration of every purchase of stock-in-trade. The store is conducted on the principle of the northern co-operative societies; the goods are sold at the ordinary shop prices, and at the end of every quarter a division of profits is made among the purchasers. Shareholders take double the profit of non-shareholding customers, and receive in addition five per cent. per annum interest on their paid-up share capital.

"The London co-operative stores, selling at a low price and retaining only a sufficient profit to meet the ordinary expenses of management, are, no doubt, well suited to the class by which they were instituted. The store at Tortworth seems, however, best fitted to the circumstances of an agricultural district. The system of quarterly dividends insures at least a quarter's saving, and the store operates to some extent as a savings-bank; labourers who had always been behind the world find themselves at the end of a quarter in the novel position of capitalists, and are astonished to learn that while they have been receiving their goods at the usual prices and of a better quality than formerly, a fund has been mysteriously accumulating which is their own, and which is large or small in proportion to the extent of their purchases. A man with a large family, and whose expenditure on the necessaries of life is consequently large, thus finds a new light thrown upon the text which assures him that happiness is among the possessions of the man whose quiver is full of young children.

"The majority of the poor are deeply, almost hopelessly, in debt at the village shops. Some, however, roused by the advantages to be derived by dealing at the store, have already freed themselves, and others are for the first time stimulated to forethought, and economy in order to rid themselves of their liabilities and to avail themselves of the benefits which their more prudent or more prosperous neighbours enjoy. The moral action of the store thus becomes of great value, encouraging a virtue which precept alone has long failed to promote.

"The store is in an agricultural district in which the villages are straggling; abundance of water everywhere, the ancient frequency of waste lands inviting squatters, or the exigencies of the small dairy farms, have produced a very scattered population. The nearest shops of any pretensions are four miles distant, though small village shops of an inferior description are not uncommon. The position of the store is favourable; there is easy access to Bristol, where large wholesale provision warehouses exist. Candles, bacon, and cheese are all made in the neighbourhood; a contract with a local baker provides bread, and a carrier delivers all goods at the store at a moderate charge.

"The total sales for the year ending March 23, 1867, have amounted to 1,648*l.*—a sum which the promoters of the scheme never even ventured to dream of on commencing business. A percentage of this amount is due to increased consumption. Complete confidence in the quantity and quality of the article sold, and the prospect of the dividend at the end of the quarter, which is now beginning to be comprehended as an equivalent to a reduction in price, encourage the poorer customers to purchase a larger quantity of the necessaries and even of the comforts of life than they could formerly indulge in.

"The shareholders at the end of the first year are as follows:—Labourers, 25; carpenters and masons, 11; tradesmen, 9; farmers, 6; gardeners, 6; clergy, gentlemen, and domestic servants, and various occupations, 16. Large purchases have been made by non-shareholders, receiving only half profits.

The sales have been, for the first quarter, 320*l.*; second, 349*l.*; third, 468*l.*; fourth, 511*l.* The dividends to shareholders have been, in the pound expended, for the first quarter, 3*s.* 4*d.*; second, 2*s.* 9*d.*; third, 3*s.* 2*d.*; fourth, 3*s.* 6*d.* For various reasons, which I need not discuss now, it is not probable that the dividends will in future range higher than 3*s.* in the pound. These are the general results; but I think that the following statistics of individuals will prove of greater interest. I take as typical cases the accounts at the end of the year of three labourers who joined at the commencement:—

	Paid-up Capital.	Dividend on Money Expended.
A	£1 0 0	£5 0 7
B	1 14 10	2 10 0
C	0 19 3	3 17 0

These men earn 12*s.* each per week; the difference in the amount of their dividends arises from the different amounts expended by each. A, for instance, has a large family, some of whom add to the family income; his purchases have been large, and the result is a dividend which much more than pays the rent of his house and garden. These men have also received 5 per cent. upon their paid-up capital.

"I need not give statistics of persons in better circumstances, whose purchases, and consequent dividends, are frequently larger. The first year of the store has just ended, and the committee have ventured upon bolder flights and fresh enterprise. They have added a drapery branch, having expended 230*l.* in stocking it. They have determined to pay their salesman 2½ per cent. upon sales in lieu of a fixed salary, and have secured the whole of his time. They have also decided to pay committee-men 6*d.* each for every attendance, an humble extravagance which will contrast favourably with the practice of more ambitious institutions.

"I trust that I am not over-sanguine in attaching much importance to this movement. I do not expect the renovation of society by means of cheap groceries, but when country co-operative stores can be established I do look for a more thrifty population, better supplied with better necessaries of life, and deriving a certain advantage mentally from the interest which they learn to take in the

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166. One of my Gloucestershire correspondents appends to his parochial return the following postscript:

Advantages of co-operative stores.

"May I be allowed to express my regret that no question has been asked relating to the shops at which our agricultural labourers generally deal. These are kept principally by people of insufficient capital, unacquainted with business rules and methods, imperfect judges of goods, bad accountants, sometimes unable to read and write. The consequences of this latter defect are frequent disputes as to indebtedness. Government might well interfere with such shops in the matter of credit,* which on the present system, is equally injurious to tradesman and customer. I think a great step towards remedying this evil would be that Government should offer assistance towards establishing co-operative stores by pecuniary advances, as they now do towards drainage and cottage building."

Evils of the credit system.

167. The Assington experiment shows, I think, conclusively that no Government assistance is required; nor, indeed, could it be well granted, as I know not what adequate security co-operators would have to offer for borrowed money, that a Chancellor of the Exchequer would be likely to accept. But in the other remarks of my correspondent I entirely concur. He has not noticed one feature in the shop-dealings of the agricultural labourer that has always impressed me; and that is this—that the smaller are the means of the purchaser, the higher is the price that he pays for his goods. He buys his tea by the ounce, his sugar by the half-pound, and all the commodities he requires on a similar scale; and both tea and sugar are high in price, and low in quality. It is only by this mode of dealing that many a country shopkeeper, with his heavy burden of debts, contrives to keep his head above water. His customers who pay atone for the delinquencies of his customers who do not pay. A ready-money system would at once cut at the roots of this evil. Better goods could be obtained at lower prices; the dishonest man could no longer live at the cost of his honest neighbour.

Ready-money dealings encourage providence.

168. Another great benefit that would accrue to the agricultural labourer—indeed, to the labouring class generally—from ready money shop-dealing, would be its value to him as a lesson of thrift and providence. If the English labourer's lot is hard, its hardship is in no small measure due to his own want of common management and foresight. He lives, emphatically, from hand to mouth. He seldom puts by. Young men, earning high wages, with no one to provide for but themselves, spend recklessly all they earn. They never think of the time when perhaps they will wish to marry, have to furnish a cottage, and set up housekeeping. The wages are always anticipated. If a man meets with an accident which throws him out of work, you will find in nine cases out of ten that he hasn't half-a-crown of money in the world. And this thriftlessness is intensified by the facilities offered by the credit system. A man who has no need to pay, makes no provision for paying. The money that ought to be spent in wiping off the score against him at the shop is too often spent, without a qualm, in self-indulgence at the beerhouse. Ready money dealing, such as is enforced at the co-operative stores, would oblige men to look at least a little forward.

Retailing beer at a store would diminish drunkenness.

169. I think also that if all co-operative stores would adopt the practice of that at Assington, and sell wholesome, home-brewed beer † at a moderate price, to be consumed off the premises, a great step in advance would have been made towards the extinction of drunkenness. Men would then buy no more beer than they wanted, and would drink it at their supper and with their family at home. They would get a better article at five-and-twenty per cent. less cost. As credit cannot now be given at beer-houses, or, if given, can only be given at the publican's own risk, the two establishments would, so far as this is concerned, stand on the same footing. It is easy to see which of the two, in the interests of society, most deserves encouragement.

Other advantages of co-operation.

170. There are many other obvious advantages in the co-operative system; in the opportunities it gives the labouring man of a profitable investment of small savings; in its binding together a class, socially often too much isolated, by the bonds of a common interest; in its placing within the reach of the poorest comforts and conveniences previously unattainable; in its action in the way of developing business habits, and so fostering general intelligence; but if it can be shown, as I think it can be shown demonstrably, to have a direct tendency to encourage providence and diminish drunkenness, enough will have been said in its favour to induce every well-wisher of the working classes to bid it good speed.

Conclusion.

171. I ought not to conclude this report without expressing my acknowledgments, which I most gladly and gratefully do, both of the readiness with which information was everywhere afforded to me, and

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small commercial experiences which are thrust upon them. I believe also that a landed proprietor will benefit both himself and his dependents by encouraging the movement, and that a clergyman who will assist and give his parishioners the advantage of his superior intelligence in their attempts at self-help will not transgress the bounds or the duties of his office. Let me conclude by adding that to the curate of this parish, the Rev. R. Tilbury, a very great proportion of the success of the undertaking is due.

"I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

"April, 1868. DUCIE."

A feature of difference between this store and that at Assington is, that at Tortworth non-members are allowed a share of the profits.

* Government, certainly, have interfered "in the matter of credit," in the case of public houses; and, generally, by the Statute of Limitations. I do not know whether it would be wise or practicable to press the principle of this Statute further in the case of small debts, making them irrecoverable within a less period than six years. It would be a waste of pity to expend much of it upon the shopkeepers. They are generally only too ready to draw away a customer from a rival by the offer of credit, and the fact that this is the case acts unfavourably upon the honesty of the people. When a man has exhausted his credit at one shop, he knows he can get a fresh lease of it at another; and so, as Lord Ducie says, he falls "almost hopelessly into debt." I have always warned shopkeepers who I thought would listen to my advice, that if they let a labouring man get on their books to an extent beyond 2*l.* they must never expect to see their money.

No doubt shopkeepers are badly treated sometimes by unprincipled customers, whom they trust on the faith of promises which are never fulfilled. They complain also, not without justice, that the remedy offered them by the County Court is illusory, and consider that they are only throwing good money after bad in attempting to recover debts through its processes.

† Not that the beer need be home brewed. There are now brewers in all parts of the country who make and sell a wholesome, pleasant-drinking beverage at from 10*d.* to 1*s.* a gallon, which would answer every purpose.

A.

of the courtesy, kindness, and hospitality with which I was everywhere received. Coming, as I thought I should come, among agriculturists on a somewhat unwelcome errand, I expected to encounter not a few rebuffs, possibly not a few unpleasantnesses. I do not remember that I met with one; certainly, not with one that has left any painful impression upon my memory. There was a little heat in the discussion at the Central Chamber of Agriculture; but perhaps I provoked it by some want of tact, and by treading too carelessly on explosive ground. But if there was heat there was no bitterness, and the truth often comes out all the better from a debate that is somewhat warm; and I hope that those among whom I have been will have given me credit for conducting the inquiry with fairness and candour. As I am printing all the evidence I have received, absolutely suppressing none, the value of my Report can be tested by comparing my statements with the facts upon which they are founded. If I know myself, it is not the temper of my mind to form foregone conclusions, or to delight in painting things in other colours than their true. I may, no doubt, in some of my descriptions, have committed errors; some of my conclusions may be pronounced hastily drawn or inadequately sustained: but if there are errors, they are errors of inadvertence; if my reasoning is illogical, it will correct itself by failing to carry conviction. I would be the first to rejoice at being shown any mistake, either of fact or argument, which I may have made. I venture to think that Her Majesty has never appointed a Commission of Inquiry upon a more important subject; and I trust that my own share in the labour of that inquiry may be instrumental to the public good. It is perhaps right to add that I have had no communication with my colleagues throughout the whole course of my proceedings, and that the value, therefore, of any agreement in our several reports will be enhanced by the fact that they are entirely and absolutely independent.

172. Thanking the Commissioners for their confidence, and yourself for the unvarying kindness and courtesy of all your communications,

I remain, Sir,
Yours most faithfully,
JAMES FRASER,
Assistant Commissioner.

Ufton Rectory, Reading,
June 1st, 1868.

P. Selby, Esq.,
Secretary to the Commission
on the Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture (1867).

REPORT.—By Mr. HENLEY.

To Her Majesty's Commissioners.

B.

Gentlemen,

1. I have the honour to submit to you my report on the "Employment of Children, Young "Persons, and Women in Agriculture," in the counties of Northumberland and Durham.

Private instructions.

I was instructed to select, in the first instance, a district in Northumberland suitable for making a minute inquiry, and afterwards to prosecute a more general one over the remainder of the county; and I was furnished with "circulars of inquiry," &c., &c., to be placed in the hands of "landed proprietors, "clergy, farmers, farm labourers, medical practitioners, officers of health, relieving officers, and other "functionaries or private individuals who are conversant with agricultural life under its various "conditions."

2. Glendale Union having been pointed out to me as affording a suitable field for minute inquiry, I proceeded thither on the 8th of July 1867. It comprises 45 parishes and townships, extending in a southerly direction from Wark and Carham on the Tweed over an area of 147,698 acres by Ordnance Survey, with a population of 13,210 and a rateable value of 129,290*l.* It is a purely agricultural district with the exception of some small collieries.

To this district the greater part of the following Report refers. It is mainly based on the replies which I received from 50* gentlemen, chiefly occupiers of land, to the circulars above mentioned. A detailed summary of these replies is given in the Appendix.

Appendix E.

Registrar-General's Report, 1864.

"Glendale in Northumberland" says the Registrar General "is a model district in statistical tables. With Farnborough, Bellingham, and Rothbury it stands a monument of salubrity to which a sanitarian immediately turns when he seeks a comparison or would direct an aim. In the 10 years 1851 to 1860 the average mortality of Glendale was only 15 deaths to 1,000 living."

System of tillage.

3. The cultivation of the land is principally on the five-course system of tillage; that is, it remains two years in grass. On the Cheviot Hills some large sheep farms are included in the district. The farms are of great extent and occupied by gentlemen of good social position and high intelligence. It is mentioned by Mr. G. H. Ramsey, in his evidence before the select Committee on Agricultural Customs in 1848, that "he believed 20 of Lord Tankerville's farms in this district were let for 20,000*l.* "a year." There are now many farms let at rents far above 1,000*l.*

4. Although there are no "private gangs" in the sense in which the term is understood in the eastern parts of England, as described in your sixth report, yet, according to the strict definition given in your circular of Inquiry of a private gang, viz., "a group of children, young persons, and "women in a farmer's own employ, and superintended by one of his own labourers," such, undoubtedly exist in this county. They may indeed be met with on every farm; but under circumstances entirely different from those which appear to characterise them in the eastern counties.

Terms of service.

5. As there are very few villages in this part of Northumberland, the farmers are almost entirely dependent on their cottages for the labour of their farms, and the men are generally hired by the year. The term of service commences south of the Tweed on the 13th of May, and north of the Tweed on the 26th of May; it is therefore practically impossible for a labourer to go northward, as he and his family would be houseless between times.

6. "Hind" is the name given to the carters who work the horses; each man looking after two horses. There are also shepherds, spademen, and byremen.

Payment of labour.

7. It is the custom of the country to pay the labourers mostly in kind, but a few prefer money payments. Their wages may be put at 15*s.* to 18*s.* a week, including everything, and taking the average price of corn as a basis. The hind who is paid in kind has a cow kept for him, and receives also 5*l.* or 6*l.* of stint money in lieu of an allowance formerly given for the keep of a "dry cow." He has a certain amount of corn, permission to keep one pig, or two as the case may be, a house rent free, coals led, and potatoes planted. The three last items are more or less considered as the retaining fee of the woman worker, formerly known by the name of the "bondager." Where the hind is unable to find a cow, the master will in some instances "put one on" for him.†

Advantages of system.

8. The advantages of this system are certainty of payment for the whole year, both in sickness and health; absence of temptation to spend money, and of any necessity for overtime or over-exertion at piece-work; a constant supply of good wholesome food at cost price, including abundance of meal and milk for the children, besides the various cakes of barley and peas, brown and white bread, butter, cheese, vegetables, and home-fed bacon; and fuel brought to the door from the pit's mouth free of charge.

Disadvantages of system.

9. The disadvantages and objections are as follows:—That the hind is at the mercy of a bad master or a bad steward; that if the harvest is wet he is paid in bad corn and bad potatoes; that having no ready money he is at times compelled to barter his corn; and that he and his family must occupy the house which is given to him, however miserable a tenement it may be, and however distant from any school suitable for his children.

10. The payment in corn is no doubt unequal, as good land and high farming produce the earliest and best crops. These are soonest harvested, and thus the grain is of greater value to the hind than that which is produced on inferior land and by lower farming. The profit of a cow may also vary proportionately to the goodness of the land; but this is of course well known to all the men in the district, and bargains are made accordingly.

* Namely, 3 landowners, 31 occupiers, 9 clergymen, 2 Presbyterian ministers, and 5 schoolmasters.

† In South Northumberland it is common to engage the yearly hinds with the understanding "no work no pay," so that they come on the rates when sick. (*See* Appendix D. 12.)

B.

11. It might be supposed that under this system disputes would frequently arise between masters and men, but I never heard of any complaints. The men say, "We get the best corn on the farm, we "cannot expect more," and it redounds to the credit of the system, as well as to the credit both of employers and of employed, that at the Wooler Petty Sessions in the year ending December 31st, 1866, not one conviction of "servants in husbandry misbehaving" is recorded.

Appendix A.

12. From my own observation in many cottages, and much conversation with the wives of the labourers, I am convinced that those who are paid in kind, or "corn conditions," are the best off; and though at times the want of ready money may press, the children's earnings bring a good deal into the family. Children are paid in cash, and this is usually half-yearly. Even after they have reached the age of maturity the whole family make common cause with a common purse. Cows are also a great source of profit.

Children's payments.

13. I have included in Appendix A some interesting details as to the value of the payments to the hinds, with copies of the "conditions" usually signed on their engagement. To these I have added a similar paper bearing date in 1857, which will show how considerably wages have advanced in this district in the last 10 years, especially for women.

14. The day labourers are called "day tale men" (told by the day). There are other independent labourers who work "at their own hand" as it is called. These men receive 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* a day.

Day tale man.

15. I must now refer to the system known by the name of the "bondage," about which so much has been said and written. Great misconception has gone abroad on the subject.

Bondage system.

16. In this thinly populated district there are very few villages, and it is therefore necessary for the occupier to have upon his own farm all the labour he may require. To secure this the hind is bound to find the work of a suitable woman whenever she is needed. The woman thus hired is called the "bondager" or "bound woman." Her earnings are paid to the hind, who engages to give her wages, lodging, food, and washing. The usual payment to the hind for the bondager is 1*s.* a day, and 2*s.* 6*d.* or 3*s.* at harvest time for a certain number of days. The wages given by the hind to the woman would at the present time be 12*l.* 10*s.* a year, that is 8*l.* 10*s.* for the summer half-year, and 4*l.* for the winter. Her earnings would probably amount to 15*l.*, or under the most favourable circumstances to 17*l.*; 300 days at 1*s.*, making 15*l.*, and 2*l.* extra for harvest. This leaves a very small margin for her maintenance; but, as I mentioned before, part of the hind's privileges of free house, coals, and potatoes are supposed to be compensation for this.

Earnings of bondager.

Wages of bondager.

17. Of late years many objections have been raised to this system, mostly coming from the hinds themselves, principally on account of the loss entailed upon them, if they are compelled to hire a stranger, not having any member of the family capable of working the bondage. They usually say, "The woman only earns her wages, we meat and wash her for nothing." It certainly cannot be said that any hardship is inflicted on the bondager, as she enters into the engagement of her own free will, and the whole arrangement is a simple matter of business among the three parties concerned, master, man, and bondager. On the other hand, when there are sufficient members of a family to "work out," and dispense with the probable discomfort of introducing a hired stranger into the house, it is a great advantage in every way.

Objections.

18. The system is also objected to, both publicly and privately, on the ground of morality and decency, from the probable necessity of having to lodge the hired woman in the same room as the family. In the old description of cottages this was often unavoidable, and the practice may be justly censured as indecent; but there are many instances of a family dividing the one room by the box beds, and making a separate place for the hired woman. I shall refer to this subject of crowding in a later part of my report under the head of cottages.

On the ground of morality.

19. The old cottages are, I hope, fast passing away; but with all the disadvantages under which these hinds' families labour, I was unable to trace any excess of immorality as connected with the bondage system.

20. Owing to the circumstances above stated large families are in great request, as it is necessary to have female labour on a farm, particularly during the turnip season. Thus the bondage system is not universal and is gradually dying out; and the name "bondager" is becoming unpopular, "woman worker" being now substituted. Sometimes a spare cottage or "bondage house," as it is called, is given to a single woman rentfree, coals being led, and potatoes planted for her, in return for which she is bound to work on the farm at a certain rate. When there is an aged parent or relative for whom a house is required this is an excellent arrangement; but when, as happens in rare instances, such houses are let to one or two single women, it cannot be said that the practice is conducive to morality.

21. Women are extensively employed throughout the whole year, and their labour is considered essential for the cultivation of the land. The work of two women is usually required for every 75 acres of the light land, and a larger proportion for that which is heavier, or farmed on the four-course instead of the five-course system. Their labour consists in the various operations of cleaning the land, picking stones, weeding, &c.; turnip hoeing, haymaking, and harvest work, rooting and shawing (that is, cleaning turnips); barnwork, with the thrashing and winnowing machines, filling dung carts, turning dung heaps, spreading dung, and sowing artificial manure; turnip cutting in the winter for sheep, &c.; and occasionally driving carts or harrowing; in some instances forking (pitching) and loading hay or corn, though when such is the case two women are put to the work of one man.

Employment of women.

Kinds of labour.

22. The Northumbrian women who do these kinds of labour are physically a splendid race; their strength is such that they can vie with the men in carrying sacks of corn, and there seems to be no work in the fields which affects them injuriously, however hard it may appear. The universal opinion and feeling is that it conduces to health. Mr. Henderson, steward of South Rock farm, in Alnwick Union, says, "Women carry up stairs to the granary sacks of corn of the following weights:—

Not injurious.

8 stone of wheat, 112 lbs.
9 „ of oats, 126 lbs.
8 „ of barley, 112 lbs.

23. The barn work consists of passing the sheaves of corn to the man who feeds the thrashing machine, clearing away the straw, and sacking the corn, sometimes carrying it up to the granary. This barn work they consider the hardest part of their labour, for it has the exhausting effect of factory work, owing to the constant strain of attending on a machine.

Barn work.

B.

24. Reaping machines have generally put an end to the "shearing" (reaping) which women considered laborious. They are now merely employed in putting the corn together for men to tie up and "stooke" *i. e.* shock.

Appendix E. question (l). Do. *Evidence, Glendale,* 2. *Evidence, Glendale,* 6.

25. It has been frequently suggested to me by many gentlemen and occupiers of land, whose opinions are entitled to the greatest respect, that the practice of women driving or leading horses, either on the road or the farm, is both dangerous and objectionable, unsuitable in every point of view. The Rev. T. Knight says, "They ought to be exempt from such labour as no female should be "employed in, viz., the filling and driving of dung carts, and the turning of dung hills." Mr. G. Culley also remarks, "Women should not be put in charge of horses and carts, which I think dangerous, "nor employed in heavy work, such as filling dung, as on many farms in this district." Mr. Brown, surgeon, Wooler, "thinks that women should not be allowed to go with horses drawing carts or "harrows, as he has known of accidents happening from this cause." The evidence of Patrick Baker, overseer at Lowick, is, that "there is some employment not suitable for women, such as leading horses "and carts." He considers that "women's work in the fields degrades them."

26. I have always found that such work was not forced upon the women. Their own words are "we "fight to drive the carts, it is easier work than loading." They are undoubtedly as fit to be trusted as those of the same sex, in a higher social position and of greater rank, who drive horses in the highest condition in every description of carriage; and with regard to the latter few would be bold enough to suggest that they do not show as much science and nerve as many men, or to propose legislative interference.

27. It has been also represented to me that such work as turning manure heaps, filling dung carts, &c. is insuitable for women, and the first feeling may be that it is so; but it must be borne in mind that if such labour were not desired by the women and tendered by the farmers, these women would for many weeks be compelled to remain idle in their cottages from want of occupation, to their own and the hinds' loss.

Field work thought degrading.

28. There are many who hold the opinion that field work is degrading, but I should be glad if they would visit these women in their own homes after they become wives and mothers. They would be received with a natural courtesy and good manners which would astonish them. Let the visitor ask to see the house; he will be "taken over" it, with many apologies that he should have seen it not "redd up." He will then be offered a chair in front of a large fire, with the never-absent pot and oven, the mistress meanwhile continuing her unceasing family duties, baking, cooking, cleaning, &c. Not one word of complaint will he hear; but he will be told that, though "working people," they are not poor; and a glance at the substantial furniture, the ample supply of bacon over his head, the variety of cakes and bread on the board, and the stores of butter, cheese, and meal in the house, will convince him of the fact. When he inquires about the children he will hear that though they have not much to give them, the parents feel it to be their sacred duty to secure them the best instruction in their power and "*that* they are determined they shall have." The visitor will leave that cottage with the conviction that field work has had no degrading effect, but that he has been in the presence of a thoughtful, contented, and unselfish woman.

29. There is one very important fact bearing on this subject, viz., the great proportion of unmarried women among those who are employed in field work. In the Glendale Union, out of 373 adult women returned in the Commissioners' circulars of inquiry as "working out," only 29 were married. Throughout North Northumberland the daughters are contented to forego the pleasures of town life and higher wages in order to live with their parents, thus leaving the mother free to attend to her home duties. But they cannot remain at home, unless they are prepared to accept any description of work that is offered to them, including perhaps that which has been censured.

30. On the contrary in the southern part of the county single women seldom remain at home, but go out to service. The consequence is that the mother is compelled to go into the field, taking her eldest girl from school, or hiring one (as the case may be) to look after the house and young children. The girl thus employed loses her schooling, and the mother on her return finds that she has to begin a second day's work to "bring things into order."

Dress of women in Northumberland.

31. The dress of these north country women is admirably adapted for their work; being made to fit easily it does not encumber them, and being of strong materials it defies all weathers. Generally it consists of a pair of stout boots, a very short thick woollen petticoat, warm stockings, a jacket, &c.; over all a washing pinafore with sleeves (called a slip), which preserves their dress from the dirt. Their faces are protected by a shade or "ugly" of divers colours. Thus equipped they present a great contrast to the draggled appearance of the women who only work in the fields occasionally, wearing some thin gown, with perhaps the addition of the husband's coat and boots. Nor is the difference less striking in the results. The occasional worker not being inured to field labour frequently suffers from exposure to weather, while the very appearance of the habitual workers is sufficient to prove the healthiness of their mode of life; and the medical evidence is overwhelming as to the absence of disease and of the usual complaints attendant on debility. Dr. Cahill, of Berwick-on-Tweed states "from his know-"ledge of the town and country population" that "the women of the latter are far more healthy than "the women of the former, and tenfold less affected by female complaints. He considers that their "field work fits them to be good bearers of children, and the strength of the population is kept up by "them; and that the surplus of the agricultural population that enters the large towns maintains the "standard of health and strength by marriage with the inhabitants of towns."

N. Northumberland, Evidence, 3.

Children's work.

32. Children seldom, if ever, go to work in the Glendale Union before 11 or 12 years of age, and then merely for summer work. Their employment is herding potatoes and corn, turnip hoeing (two being put to the work of one woman), hay making, assisting at harvest by making bands, &c. &c., weeding and picking up stones, getting up potatoes, and making straw ropes for thatching. Both boys and girls begin work at the same age, their physical strength at that time being about equal.

33. Horses are never entrusted to the care of boys before the age of 14; consequently till that time it is only summer work for which they are required, so that they are able to continue their school attendance during the winter.

B.

34. The turnip crop may be considered the principal one in this district, and as the turnips are drilled on the ridge, at hoeing season the women and children are formed into a line, and directed by a steady man, called the "woman's steward." Each woman takes one drill, two children doing the work of a woman. Five women on this light land are expected to do two acres in a day. It astonished me, as a southerner, to observe children hoeing and singling the turnip crop, and doing their work in a first-rate manner. I had the advantage of seeing on a farm belonging to Mr. George Rea 55 people at work hoeing turnips in one field, of whom 36 were women and girls, the youngest child a girl of 11. They were under the charge of three stewards, who kept excellent order. As some of the workers had to come from Mr. Rea's other farms they were brought to and fro in carts well lined with clean straw. Such cases should be considered in any recommendation for restriction as to the distance to which children should be allowed to be taken to work. Turnip crop.

35. As the farms are generally provided with cottages for their cultivation, women and children employed upon them have no great distance to go to work, although in exceptional cases, when the work lies at the extreme boundary of a large farm, their walk may be somewhat extended. Distance not great.

36. The hours of labour for women and children are nine and a half hours in summer, viz., from six to six, with two hours and a half for meals, that is two hours for dinner, and a short break at nine and at four. In winter the hours are regulated by the light. These hours of work are earlier and longer than in the south. On the other hand, the women and children are able to return home for a long rest in the hottest time of a summer's day, when they find their dinner cooked for them; and as the majority are single women the early start from home cannot be prejudicial. Hours of labour.

37. I am persuaded that any restriction or interference in the present system of employment of women and children would be detrimental to the social condition of the district, and destructive to the turnip husbandry of Glendale Ward.

38. At certain seasons it is absolutely essential that all the labour on the farm should be united—men, horses, women, and children working together. And though the work at such seasons is severe, the pressure only lasts for a limited time. The system was established in this district by Culley in the last century, and is ably described by that distinguished agriculturist, Mr. Grey, of Dilston, in the journal of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, 1841:— *See Bailey & Culley's Survey of Northumberland, 1797.*

"Turnip cultivation is the branch of rural economy in which the district peculiarly excels, which exercises by far the greatest influence upon its prosperity, and has produced the greatest effect, as I have previously stated, upon the value of the land and the well doing of all who possess and are connected with it.

"Turnip culture is like gardening on a large scale.

* * * * * *

"The process when conducted on a large scale presents a scene of uncommon animation and interest, and might afford to Adam Smith himself an apt illustration of the advantage of the division of labour."

Although Mr. Grey's report was published 27 years ago, I found matters remaining exactly on the same footing.

39. The Glendale hind has been accustomed to shift his quarters frequently, and sometimes for slight causes, such as the refusal by his master to allot him a favourite horse, &c. &c., but oftener for graver reasons, such as the desire of advancing his family either by work or education. Some however, remain for a long time in the same service, and I beg to annex a list given to me at my request by Mr. Langlands and Mr. Marshall, which will prove that under some circumstances they lose the roving spirit. Frequent removal of hinds.

With Mr. Langlands:—

John Hall, 44 years, 30 of which he has been steward.
John Scott, 29 years, now steward at Harehope.
George Strong, 20 years.
Margaret Elliott, a deceased husband and herself, 22 years.
Andrew Best, 11 years.
William Clough, six years.
Alexander Rogerson, shepherd, eight years; succeeded a brother who was 15 years; he succeeded the father, who was 21 years.
James Rogerson, shepherd, 37 years.
The blacksmith and carpenter have lived with Mr. Langlands 44 years.

With Mr. Marshall:—

One man, 61 years.
One groom, 27 years.
One do., 10 years.
One steward, nine years.
Three shepherds, nine, five, and two years.
Two hinds, 11 years each.
One do., 6 years.
One do., 2 years.
One do., 1 year.
Two do., engaged last May, one of Mr. Marshall's men having died and another left his service.

40. The opinion of John Hall, a fine specimen of a Northumbrian, who has been 44 years with Mr. Langlands and is now steward, is that— *Glendale, Evidence, 28.*

"An oft removed family,
And an oft removed tree,
Never thrive so well
As those that settled be."

41. Benefit societies do not prevail in this district, probably on account of the farm servants being hired by the year and their wages being thus secured during sickness. There are two such yearly societies at Wooler, dividing annually. The first contains 89 members, of which only 16 are agri- Benefit Societies.

B.

cultural. The second contains 77 members, 23 agricultural. Many of the members belong to both societies.

42. The Post Office Savings' Bank at Wooler has only about six agricultural depositors, and not one has made use of the Government insurance.

43. Considerable sums are lodged in the Alnwick Savings' Bank from this class. The Vice-Chairman of the Alnwick Board of Guardians, informed me "that there are 1,905 depositors in the Alnwick "Savings' Bank, a very large proportion of whom are agricultural labourers." He adds, "From my "own observation I am of opinion that before marriage the provident habits of females are greater than "that of the males, and amongst the larger depositors the principal part of them are either agricultural "labourers or shepherds. I have known several of the depositors commence farming with the produce "of their savings, and that successfully."

Wooler Dispensary.

44. A dispensary is established at Wooler for the purpose of affording medical and surgical aid gratuitously to the necessitous poor. Every annual subscriber of 1*l.* 1*s.* has three tickets of recommendation. There is also a cow club in Alnwick for the whole district; a friendly society, "to "indemnify the insuring members from loss by the death of their cows. Insuring members consist "only of farm servants, cottagers, mechanics, and the labouring class generally. In the year ending "the 12th of May 1867, 21 losses were made good by this society, saving many families from serious "loss."

Cow club.

Appendix A.

45. From the returns of the Clerk of the Glendale Union, which I beg to append, it appears that out of 621 paupers who were relieved in the ninth week of the Michaelmas quarter, 1867, 199 were non-resident.

North Northumberland.

46. The districts comprised in the unions of Berwick-on-Tweed, Belford, and Alnwick do not differ materially in the kinds of work or the hours of labour, from the Glendale Union.* The chief difference is that in parts of these districts sea-weed is used as manure, and much labour is spent on carting it from the sea shore; a considerable part of which labour falls on the women.

South Northumberland.

47. I shall therefore pass to the south of the Coquet,† and borrow again from the same able author whom I have before quoted, Mr. Grey of Dilston.

Journal of the R. A. S. of England, 1841.

"In the southern parts of the county the valleys of north and south Tyne, with others branching from them, and also that of the Wansbeck, contain land of excellent quality, and afford many specimens of superior husbandry; but in general the farms are on too small a scale, and their occupiers too limited in means, to entitle them to a place in the lists of those distinguished agriculturalists who occupy extensive farms in the highly cultivated districts of Glendale and Bamborough Waeds. The Vale of Coquet too is fertile and well cultivated."

Hours of work.

48. About the Coquet the hours of work are somewhat different; women and children commence at 7 in the morning instead of 6, and work on till 6 in the evening, with breaks of a quarter of an hour at 10, an hour in the middle of the day, and a quarter of an hour again at 4.

S. N. Evidence, 12.

49. South of the Wansbeck the hours are shortened. Thus, at Ponteland, Mr. Spraggon, relieving officer, says:—

"The women who are not confined" (Mr. S. does not use the word in its common acceptation, but in the sense of "hired,") "go out from 8 till 6. They have an hour and a half for dinner, going and returning in "their own hours, 15 minutes at 10 and 4."

50. This arrangement extends to the extreme south of the county, though some of the northern farmers who have migrated south carry with them their own hours and kinds of labour.

51. In the description of work performed by women the south differs from the north. In Mr. Spraggon's evidence I find:—

"It is not customary here and would not be tolerated to fill dung carts, turn dung heaps, or drive carts."

Married women work in the fields.

52. But the great difference between the systems of the north and the south as regards female labour is this, that as a rule, in the former, single women are most employed, being free to go to work at any hour in the morning, and ready and anxious to undertake any kind of labour; whereas, in the south, many married women go out to work, neglecting their homes, and leaving a child that ought to be at school to look after the house.

53. In the south and west of Northumberland large tracts of land are in pasture and moorland, affording but little scope for my enquiry; though the valleys of the Tyne, both north and south, contain some highly cultivated farms, many of which are occupied by northern farmers, whose hours and kind of labour exactly accord with those which are described in my former statement.

Farm labourers.

54. The farm labourers south of the Coquet are paid in money, instead of the "corn conditions" of which I spoke in Glendale and the north.

55. The hind's wages in South Northumberland may be stated at fully 1*l.* a week. Usually he receives 16*s.*, a free house, coals led, some potatoes, and often some corn at Christmas.

56. There is a great difference in the food of the north and south. The former follow the habits of the Scotch and principally live on porridge, crowdy (*i.e.* scalded oatmeal), barley, and pea flour made into cakes, bread of whole meal and fine flour. Milk, cheese, and butter, home fed and cured bacon. They rarely touch butchers' meat, though at times the master may sell them some. They have always a hot meal at their long midday rest.

57. In the south the butcher's cart is always on the road. "They eat a vast of meat." Meal and milk are not used; the children lose by this, as the bread and tea are poor substitutes. And whether from this cause, or the mixture with an urban manufacturing and mining population, their inferiority in physical power to the northern agricultural class is very evident.

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* The answers received to the Circular of Inquiry from these districts are embodied in Appendix E. The evidence taken there will be found in Appendix C.

† From South Northumberland I received 20 answers to the Circular. The substance of the statements in these papers will be found in Appendix E. The evidence taken in South Northumberland forms Appendix D.

58. Mr. Lumsden "does not believe that the labouring classes hereabouts are so strong as formerly. They "have entirely changed their food, given up meal, milk, &c. &c., and taken to white bread and butcher's "meat. He quite believes that it takes three men now to do the work of two." B. S.N. Evidence 24.

Mr. Lumsden's opinion as a practical man is of great value, as he has been employed for 21 years by Sir M. White Ridley, M.P., to drain his extensive estates, and now occupies a considerable farm.

59. It may not be out of place while on the subject of food to draw your attention to the concurrence of medical evidence against the excessive use of coffee and tea, in which the working women of Northumberland appear even to surpass those of a higher station. Not unfrequently they indulge four times a day in this enervating beverage, which they procure by bartering their valuable meal with travelling hucksters.

Mr. John Paxton, medical officer of the Berwick union, says:— N. N. Evidence, 2.

"The change of food of the working people is deteriorating their physical health and strength. The use of coffee not free from adulteration instead of oatmeal and barley bread is the chief cause. This alteration has taken place since groceries, such as coffee, tea, and sugar have become lower in price and more attainable to the working classes."

Dr. Dodd of Rothbury remarks that— N. N. Evidence, 5.

"There has been a great change within the last 20 years in the food of the people; with an increase of drinking they have taken to tea and coffee three or four times a day, given up porridge and milk," &c., &c.

Mr. Brown, surgeon, Berwick-on-Tweed, says:— N. N. Evidence, 1.

"There is one growing evil, the giving up cows of their own and taking so much to tea and coffee."

Dr. Turnbull of Coldstream: Glendale Evidence, 4.

"The change of diet is injurious, substituting weak tea for oatmeal and milk."

Mr. Patrick Baker, overseer at Lowick, speaking of the "corn conditions:"— Glendale Evidence, 6.

"The present system obliges them to have six months' credit, and they are at the mercy of people who go about with carts and barter things with them for their corn. They part with corn for coffee and other things which do them no good."

60. The farm labourers of Northumberland have the great advantage of cheap fuel, coals being carted for them to their doors free of charge. The glorious coal fires unknown to our cottagers in the South of England, where fuel is a rare luxury, enable them in the first place to cook their food, for which purpose every cottage is provided with a pot and oven fixed on each side of the fire; and in the second place, to dry their working clothes at night, by which means they keep off rheumatism and its attendant evils.

61. In a severe winter the result is sometimes very striking; thus the Registrar-General, in his Report for 1864, says:—"The [general] rate of mortality was 18 per cent. higher than it was in the two preceding March quarters. In the northern division the rise in mortality was only four per cent." Registrar-General's Report, 1864.

62. These advantages must be weighed when speaking of Northumberland and its wages, and comparing them with other counties. These, together with the good habits of the people, account for their wellbeing and excellent social state.

63. I may sum up as to the general condition of the people, by quoting the evidence of Mr. McCabe, surgeon, Matfen. He has been a union medical officer in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire; has also been in business in America, U.S., and has been living in Northumberland for a year and a half. He says:—

"He has never found working agricultural labourers so well off in any place, including America. In fact, there are no poor people at all here."

64. I entered the county of Durham* on the 11th of November. At that time the autumnal work upon the land for women and children had ceased, and as circumstances obliged me to conclude the inquiry on the 20th of December, I had not an opportunity of forming a sound opinion upon the various matters intrusted to my investigation. I found the condition of the agricultural population entirely different from that of Northumberland; in fact, the manufacturing wealth of the county has so absorbed the population that a pure bred Durham farm labourer is very rare. Durham.

65. In order to explain the condition of the people I must touch upon the cultivation of the land upon which they are employed. The land is much subdivided, that is, broken up into small farms, the quality of the land in a great part of the county not being tempting to farmers of large capital. The labour upon these small holdings is done by the farmer and his family, perhaps assisted by one or more young people hired into the house and living with the family. These hired boys rarely remain long in farm service, the higher wages around them from iron, lead, coke, or coal naturally tempting them away, and Mr. Parrington, agent to Lord Boyne, remarks in his evidence that farm labourers are not so skilful as formerly from the absence of long training in farm service, where they were taught every kind of labour required on a farm. Cultivation.

66. These small farmers are always spoken of as an honest, industrious race, and though in their hard struggle to live their children fail to obtain sufficient school instruction, being usually taken away from school at a very early age, as their parents were before them, to "pick up a bit of schooling when "they can," yet they hold a position that bridges over the distance between capitalists and labourers. Having had the advantage of meeting the tenants of Lords Eldon and Boyne, through the kindness of Mr. Snowball and Mr. John Parrington, the agents, I was much impressed with their intelligence. Small farmers.

67. Mr. Flavel, auctioneer in Sedgefield, speaks of the small farmers in that neighbourhood as having in many instances begun as working men, and Mr. R. L. Pearson, relieving officer of Stockton, makes a similar remark as to his district.

68. On some estates the farms are thrown into large occupations. This is the case on Lord Durham's property, on that of Mr. Burdon, of Castle Eden, and in other cases. In these the Northumberland or Large farms.

* An abstract of the answers to the Circulars of Inquiry from Durham will be found in Appendix F.: the evidence taken there constitutes Appendix G.

B.

Scotch system is adopted; the hinds (already described by me when speaking of Northumberland) being hired by the year, and being usually procured from Scotland, Northumberland, Cumberland, or North Yorkshire at some of the hiring fairs. I only found one calling himself a Durham man in this capacity. The wives and children of these people are the only pure agricultural labourers, the extra women being easily procured from the numerous pit villages. These hinds carry with them the characteristics of their own countries. Thus the wives of Scotchmen and Northumbrians are far more particular about education for their children than the more southern people. I found a strong example of this when visiting one of Lord Durham's farms with Mr. Morton. On questioning a woman as to her children, she told me that she "had two children at the Presbyterian school, paying 4½*d.* each for "them, and one boy, 13 years of age, working out. She took her boys away from the National school, "though it was cheaper and nearer, because she did not like the way they were taught" (*see* evidence of Mrs. Forester).

Age of children.

69. The wages of Durham are so high as compared with other parts of England that I may dismiss the idea of children being sent to work at too early an age from the pressure of poverty upon the parents, and as a matter of fact the evidence will show that they are not so employed, with the exception, perhaps, of those of the small farmers, who are taken from school, not to work for wages, but, as I have mentioned above, to assist the parents. Some few, indeed, begin work about the ages of 9 or 10, to assist in the barking season (*see* evidence from Castle Eden), but this is only for a limited time, and is light exceptional work.

Work of women.

70. The women who work in the fields merely do the light work common to the south of Northumberland. The hours of work also are short, being from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with an hour for dinner.

71. Having thus described the various districts which I visited as to their cultivation, as to the organization of their agricultural labour, and as to the general condition of the labourers, I will proceed to speak of the other matters to which my inquiry was directed. What follows applies to the whole of Northumberland, except where it is expressly confined to one part. With much more qualification, a good deal of it will apply also to the county of Durham, though, as explained above, the strictly agricultural population is there so very limited, and my time there was so short, that the application of my remarks to it is not of great importance.

72. "Are the females or the young subject to any ill-treatment?"

Effects of employment on morals.

The evidence on this point is overwhelming; no ill-treatment is attempted, and none would be possible. (*See* Appendix E., question (i).)

73. As to the "effect of the employment of females in agriculture on morals and on their proper "training for domestic duties," the information given to me is conflicting.

74. The bulk of the evidence I have received does not bear out the opinion that field work is one of the great causes of immorality; and indeed, it is difficult to understand how such employment can have an influence for evil, considering the conditions under which it is exercised. Whilst the work is going on the utmost order must be enforced by the stewards to carry on the business of these large farms, otherwise the whole machinery would be thrown out of gear; and during the mid-day rest the women and children do not remain in the field, but return home together for their dinner, so that no opportunity is given for licence or disorder.

Training for domestic duties.

Evidence not unfavourable.

75. The evidence as to the fitness of field work for training women for domestic duties is also conflicting, but on the whole favourable; and from personal observation in a great number of cottages, I am convinced that the women in Glendale district who have "worked out" are not to be excelled as wives and mothers. They have learnt from the earliest age to turn their hands to every description of work, both inside and outside their homes, and if they are somewhat deficient in needlework, this may be accounted for by the roughness of a hand accustomed to hard out-of-door labour. Nor is the want of aptitude for needlework seriously felt, for among several families there are generally one or two girls who, being physically incapacitated from field work, can devote their hours to this employment.

Appendix E., question (k).

76. The great demand which exists in the towns for country servants, shows in what esteem the latter are held. The Hexham Board of Guardians in their return, when speaking of field labour, say "We do "not think it has necessarily any bad effect on their morals. Wherever young people of either sex are "congregated together, without proper supervision, evil is likely to arise. As to their training for "domestic duties, were they constantly in the field they could not have such training; but this is not "the case, and the constant demand from towns for country servants shows that both in morals and "domestic duties they are in advance of those of a like standing in towns."

77. In Durham the majority of the women employed are married, excepting the girls hired into farm houses. It is hardly necessary therefore to enlarge upon this question as to them.

Bastardy.

78. The great blot on the character of the agricultural population of Northumberland is the prevalence of bastardy. This is referred to by many of the witnesses. It is important, however, that the discredit arising from this cause should not be exaggerated. In comparing the bastardy statistics of different districts, it must be borne in mind that there are several circumstances which tend to make a rural district appear worse than it really is. In the first place, nearly all the births are registered in the country; "In the large towns, it is probable that the children born out of wedlock are not "registered to the same extent as other children" (Registrar-General in 19th Report). In the next case (as is remarked by one of the witnesses), many illegitimate children in towns are registered as legitimate, the proceeding being possible there, though not in the country, where everyone is known. Further, the figures given by the Registrar-General show the numbers only of the children who are born alive. Now the proportion of such children born of the healthy women of the country is no doubt larger than in other cases, and infanticide, which is supposed to be very common in some towns, is rarer in the country, and is quite unknown in Glendale.

79. By a return furnished to me by the superintendent registrar of the Glendale district, I find that out of 1,000 children (whose births had been registered there consecutively) 116 (or 11·6 per cent.) were born out of wedlock. The proportions for the other districts (calculated in the same way) are,— B.

Tynemouth	5	per cent.
Newcastle	6·58	"
Morpeth	8·3	"
Castle Ward	9·1	"
Alnwick	9·6	"
Belford	10·1	"
Berwick	10·4	"
Bellingham	11·2	"
Hexham	11·11	"
Haltwhistle	12·8	"
Rothbury	13·2	"

80. With every qualification the rate is undoubtedly a high one, and many causes have been stated to me in explanation of it.

81. The Venerable Archdeacon Hamilton who has had great experience of the habits of the people, both in his present living and at Berwick-on-Tweed, and has studied this subject, attributes this laxity of morals to the prevalence of border marriages in past days, causing the marriage tie to be lightly held; and many others are of the same opinion. The evil is said to be increased by other causes, such as hiring fairs, overcrowding of cottages, the licence given in farms to night visitors, and the shifting character of the population, which has little or no influence brought to bear upon it by employer, clergyman, or schoolmaster. By some it is attributed to field work, while others speak of the bondage system.

82. The Rev. T. R. King, vicar of Carham, says in his return, "Out of 237 families in this parish, "12 months ago 44 have left the parish, and 29 changed their place of abode within the parish, "while in the same period 52 new families have come into the parish."

83. The Rev. Thomas Knight, of Ford, in his answer to the "enquiry," writes:—

"There can be little doubt that the employment of females in agriculture is one of the causes of the low state of morality in this district. In large gangs from 12 to 20 there are too often some who are given to indulge in improper conversation by which the minds of the young are corrupted. * * * Yet in justice it ought to be mentioned that though the tone of morality be unfortunately low in this district, the crimes of infanticide and adultery are unknown. The women who have once fallen never become utterly depraved, but generally marry and turn out good wives."

84. The information collected by me does not support the belief that the low state of morality in this respect is due either to employment in the fields or to the "bondage" system. Thus Mr. Carr, for 20 years Relieving Officer and Registrar of the Wooler District of the Glendale Union, furnished me with a list of 58 mothers of illegitimate children; of these only two were returned as bondagers. Of the rest,

15 were domestic servants.
26 field workers living at home.
9 under their parents' roof.
4 in the workhouse.
2 widows.

Other returns from the county point to the same conclusion.

85. According to a return by Mr. Hopper, the Master, there were, in November 1867, 14 women with illegitimate children in the Stockton-on-Tees Workhouse. Of these 7 had one child, 1 two, 4 three, and 2 as many as four children. Of 11 of these women the previous occupation is returned as "household," one had been a pottery hand, and one had been engaged in "brick-yard work." Only one is marked as "agricultural," and she had but one child.

86. Mr. Watson, Relieving Officer and Registrar, Morpeth Union, informs me that in the Bedlington or mining district the illigitimate births formed seven per cent. of the whole number registered, while in the Morpeth or agricultural district they amounted to 9·6 per cent. He gives the following summary of the history of the mothers:—

Living with parents; town	14	Nearly all work in fields or gardens.
" " country	9	
Living at service in towns	10	
" " country	4	(Of these three were house-keepers.)
Living alone in Morpeth	3	
" with sister	1	
Widow residing on own farm	1	
Lunatic woman in asylum	1	
Remainder unknown	7	

Two out of the number were Irish. The number unknown were apparently domestic servants who had been residing in both town and country, and had no parents to go to, and who were confined in Morpeth.

87. In the Ponteland district of the Castle Ward Union the mothers of the illegitimate children were:—

Town girls	2
Country girls	9
Pit girls	4

B. In the Stamfordham district the mothers were:—

	In Cases.
Pitman's daughters	8
Brickmaker's daughter	1
Waterman's daughters	2
Furnaceman's daughters	2
Mother employed in glass-works or paper-mill	2
Innkeeper's daughter	1
Domestic servants	5
Farm servants	9
Hind's daughters	2
Farmer's daughter	1
Widow's daughter	1
Vagrant's daughter	1

Appendix A.

88. The remarks as to the absence of infanticide and adultery are borne out by other testimony. According to a return furnished to me by the clerk of the peace (and also the chief constable), no conviction for child murder took place during the years 1860 to 1863, and the cases of concealment of birth were very few. The coroner's return for the Northern Division of Northumberland for 1866 shows a similar state of things. The various ministers of religion concur in stating that breaking the seventh commandment is almost unknown in this district; and it is entirely free from the vice of towns, prostitution. Mr. Wightman, Superintendent Registrar and Clerk of the Glendale Board of Guardians, a gentleman to whom I feel deeply indebted for his constant attention to my wishes says, "As it is creditable and partly of a redeeming character to set against the prevalence of illegitimacy "amongst our labouring population, I think it only fair to tell you that several of the mothers are "afterwards married to the fathers of their children, for instance, Mr. Carr (Registrar) from recollec-"tion marked 10 in his list enclosed (out of 58), who were so married, after the birth of the child, and "there might be others that had escaped his memory. I think fully one-fifth of the whole would be "afterwards married."

Appendix A.

Age of children.

89. There is a general concurrence of feeling among employers and workers that no child should begin labour before 10 years of age; and it rarely, if ever, happens that they are employed in North Northumberland at an earlier age. I never found a mother of a family, however large, who did not assent to this, usually adding "Ten is young enough," which in Northumbrian dialect means "too young." In rare cases the eldest child is sent out by the pressure of a large family rather earlier than may be desirable as regards its education, so as to provide schooling by its earnings for younger ones; but any restriction upon this would only drive the mother out to work, while the eldest child would be kept at home to attend to the household duties, and would therefore be no way better off in point of instruction.

90. The returns in south Northumberland do not show any children at work under 10 years of age. I cannot do better than quote on this subject the return of the Hexham Board of Guardians, where this point is carefully and ably handled:—

Appendix E., question (l).

"Few, if any, farmers in this union employ either boys or girls under 12 or 13, and they would prefer not to have either till they are 14 or 15; but they must learn to work, and their parents press to have them employed, that they may be taught."

And again:—

"To prohibit female labour in this district would simply be to prohibit farming."

Appendix E., question (m).

The Bellingham Board of Guardians return this answer, that:—

"Children of either sex under 12 years of age are of little use to the farm, and ought to be at school under that age."

Appendix A.

The Morpeth Board of Guardians:—

"That, in the opinion of this meeting, no legislative interference is required in this union for a better regulation of agricultural labourers; for, as a rule, with rare exceptions, women are only employed in the summer months from 7 in the morning till 6 in the evening, and in the winter from 8 in the morning till 4 in the afternoon, with ample allowance of time for rest and meals during the day; and, that in this union, the age at which children are to be employed may safely be left to the discretion of their parents."

91. I need not occupy your attention with the restriction as to the age of children in Durham, because they are not employed for agricultural wages at an early age, though, as I mentioned before, some very young children assist their parents who are farmers. Others keep house to allow the mothers to go out to work, and this is an admitted evil. I have found a girl under 8 years of age in charge of a cottage and children; all untidy and neglected.

Restriction of distance.

92. With regard to "restrictions of distance in reference to age" I have only to remark that such restrictions would not apply to Northumberland, as the labourers live on the farms.

93. Mr. King of Carham mentions an exceptional case:—

Appendix E., question (n).

"I should prefer a minimum limit of one and a half miles, and certainly a maximum limit of three miles for all under 17; above that no prohibition. In respect to the first point in this parish there is only one village, Wark, where there is any independent population, and it is more than a mile from any other farm so that the limit of one mile would amount to absolute prohibition."

94. In Mr. Rea's case, already mentioned, of moving children from one farm to another in carts, any restriction would be quite uncalled for.

B.

95. I proceed to notice the three methods pointed out in your circular of inquiry "by which "the prescribed amount of school attendance of children employed in agriculture might be "obtained." School attendance.

1.) By half day at school and half day at work. (Factory Act, 7 Vict. c. 15. ss. 31–9.)

All agree as to the impracticability of this scheme in Glendale, owing to the distance of the schools from the homes of the working classes.

96. (2.) By alternate whole days at work and whole days at school. (Factory Act, 7 Vict. c. 15. 31–39.)

This plan would not answer. The whole population is not more than sufficient to carry on the work of agriculture when it pleases Providence to send the season. Then every hand and every day must be turned to account on the farms, or the precious moments will be lost. From spring to autumn the farmer's mind is constantly strained to take advantage of every variation of wind and weather, and the loss of alternate days at this season would be irreparable.

97. (3.) By school attendance for a certain number of hours during the preceding six months. (Printworks Act, 10 & 11 Vict. c. 70. ss. 2, 3, 26.)

You will observe by the answers to the circulars of inquiry and the evidence annexed that a plan similar to this is now carried out in the district by the parents themselves, as the best method of obtaining for their children the instruction they so highly value. When the potatoes are housed in the autumn the work of the children ceases for that season; and fortunately in North Northumberland they are not required at home to attend on younger members of the family by the absence of the mother at field work. Therefore, during the winter season they can always attend school, and they do so as much as is in their power, braving all difficulties of distance and weather.

98. If, then, a modification of the third method appear preferable, what amount of school attendance could be fairly demanded during the winter months?

Upon this subject I consulted the schoolmasters of the district, and I think their opinions coincide in some measure with the minute of the Privy Council of the 29th of April 1854:—

"To accept in schools under certificated masters an annual attendance of 88 instead of 176 whole days in school as the condition of a capitation grant for boys over 10 years of age." Minute of the Privy Council.

99. Mr. King's views on this subject are returned as follows:—

"I think the third method might be adapted to our circumstances,—the year being divided into the two portions, May to Martinmas, and Martinmas to May. In the former portion any attendance at school of children over 10 years old would be difficult, and perhaps undesirable to enforce. During the winter portion most of the children up to 12 years do attend, and I think compulsory attendance would be beneficial. I should myself suggest 150 school "attendances," as estimated in the Revised Code, as the minimum, and strongly recommend the calculation to be made by "attendances" not by days or hours." *Appendix E., questions 23–26.*

100. The Hexham Board of Guardians say:—

"It would be quite practicable to enforce a certain amount of school attendance up to the age of 12 or 13, but either half day or alternate day attendance at school is utterly impracticable. *Appendix E., question 26.*

"We are prepared to recommend that no boy or girl be allowed to be employed under 12 or 13, without producing a certificate of attendance at school, for a certain number of days, during the preceding six months."

101. The children generally come back to school about the 11th of November, Martinmas term, and remain more or less till the 12th of May; but in calculating the amount of attendance deduction must be made for sickness, for Christmas holidays, and for the very severe weather in winter, which sometimes renders it impossible to get to school. Masters all agree in saying that slight causes do not stop them. Probably about six weeks are required to restore children to their position in the school after summer absence; yet the majority of the schoolmasters prefer this method as the only practicable one for ensuring continuity and regularity of attendance. I am aware that their opinions on this subject must be weighed with great care, as they naturally and properly look to the teaching side of the question; but the assistance given by the children to the support of the family is the first consideration, and the pressure particularly falls on large families of young children.

102. I may mention that in Durham the hinds or any class of agricultural children are so very few that I cannot form any estimate of the probable result of the adoption of either of the three methods of enforcing school instruction pointed out by you.

103. "How far is the school attendance affected by the distance that the children have to go to "school?"

On this point I beg to refer to a table showing in one of its columns the distance from each township in the Glendale Union to a school, (*Appendix E., question* 43,) and this may be taken as a specimen of the whole district. On the hills the shepherds are of course at a still greater distance from the schools in the vale; yet these men ask no assistance, but take care to provide education for their children, either by boarding them out in the small towns, or by keeping a master among themselves, usually called the "Scotch lad." Mr. Wightman says:— School attendance affected by distance.

"It has been customary for shepherds residing in the Cheviot Hills (Grey's Forest and Selby's Forest), when they have young families, to hire a young man to teach the children during the winter. They provide him with board and lodging among them. Latterly I have noticed grown up youths from 14 to 18 at lodgings in Wooler during the winter months, obtaining a more advanced education than they could at home by the former plan, which shows that some anxiety exists amongst the parents to do the best they can." *Appendix A.*

104. Through the kindness of my friend Mr. Pole Ward I was enabled to visit a school of this description, that of Anthony Dagg, a shepherd on the Cheviot Hills, in the Rothbury Union. His simple history is soon told—

"He has 11 children, and about 20 years ago he hired a schoolmaster for them, and took the chance of getting other scholars. After a year or two, he took his master and then two other shepherds into partnership. He has lived on both sides of the Border, and thinks if anything that the people on this side are better educated. * * * He would most decidedly object to religion being excluded from school; that, he is certain, would be the opinion of the working people in this highland of the Cheviots." *N. Northumberland, Evidence, 15.*

B.

105. The following fact was communicated to me by the Rev. John Young, who has been for 38 years Presbyterian minister at Bellingham.

Northumberland, Evidence, 2.

"A few shepherds on the hills keep a schoolmaster among them, and they lately commissioned me to procure for them Virgil, Horace, and Cæsar. Of these people one family come nine miles to church on foot; one is a woman, the rest are men."

Such are the shepherds of the Cheviot Hills, a class always spoken of with great respect, as themselves highly educated for their station, making great sacrifices for the education of their children, and possessing great knowledge of the Bible.

106. The rest of North Northumberland is well supplied with schools. With regard to them, the Venerable Archdeacon Hamilton says,—

Appendix A.

"I feel confident you found them sufficient in quantity and generally in quality for the requirements of our people. The advance which has been made in our educational institutions, both in our towns and in our country parishes, during the last 20 years, has been everything that we could desire, and the little which remains to be done will in a few years be accomplished. The demand for education, combining religious training with real and sound primary instruction, is universal, and the supply has kept pace with the demand. * * * All that we really require is that our country schools be raised in their educationary power, by some relaxation in the requirements of the Committee of Council on Education, so as to allow schools not having certificated teachers, nor yet accommodation equal to the present requirements of the Revised Code, to obtain two-thirds or even one-half of the Capitation grant on passing their children in the several standards set forth in the Revised Code."

107. The schools generally appear to be sufficient in number in South Northumberland, but you will note that in some instances they do not satisfy the requirements of the people as to quality.

108. Mr. Dods of Anick Grainge, Hexham Board of Guardians, reports:—

Appendix E., question 27.

"There is a dame's school in the village where some of the very young attend, but it is just about useless."

109. The Rev. Mr. Fiskin, United Presbyterian minister, Stamfordham—

Evidence S.N., 4.

"Is desirous to raise the standard of teachers in elementary schools in the district, as educated men are always the most competent instructors and better able to ground children in primary education.

"They are far below the Scotch schoolmasters. This is of the greatest consequence in the country, as the towns can help themselves, but the country is the feeder of the towns, and the people go there in the grossest ignorance. The people in this district are not so desirous for education as those in the north. They are not so firm or anxious for it as the Presbyterians."

110. In a scattered population the distance must necessarily be great for some children yet the evidence I have received shows that the wish not to neglect school is so strong, that those children who come from the greatest distances are generally the best and most regular in attendance, though they have to encounter all varieties of weather.

Evidence S.N., 6.

111. Mr. C. Hedlock, master of the Roman Catholic school, Stamfordham, says:—

"That the greatest distance any children come to school is three miles. The attendance of those at a distance is best, and they are always first in the morning."

The evidence of Mr. Thomson, Bellingham British school, is that—

S. N., No. 8, Evidence.

"The attendance is very little affected by distance; they come four miles."

Mr. Bainbrigge:—

"It affects school attendance greatly in the country."

Mr. Rodger of Embleton:—

Appendix E., questions 26, 27.

"Public opinion would send any man earning wages in this parish to the position of a brute, who did not send his child to school.

"There are six schools unassisted by government in this parish to meet the difficulty of poor children who have to travel miles through frost and snow to school, and it is a positive disgrace to the Legislature that results should not be paid for unless under a certificated master."

The Hexham Board of Guardians report that—

Do.

"In some instances and districts of the union it is" (affected by distance) "but not generally." "It is frequently affected by the parents not liking the teachers, and by their fancying (sometimes justly) that they do not get value for their money."

112. It will be seen that the children have sometimes as much as three miles to walk to school; and though the elder ones do not appear to be inconvenienced by the distance, it naturally prevents the very young children from attending, and renders impossible any general use of infant schools. In consequence of this the masters complain that the children come to school not knowing their letters.

113. The parents would not be satisfied with any increase in quantity which would lessen the quality of the teaching. They are excellent judges of the relative merits of the several schools, and will gladly discuss with any one visiting their cottages the benefit their children derive from the instruction they receive, as well as the shortcomings they observe.

114. The schools are usually mixed, boys and girls being taught by a master. As a rule there is no enforcement of particular doctrine against the parents' wishes, and the people willingly avail themselves of the instruction offered for their children. It is a very gratifying feature in this district that the various denominations of Christians are willing and able to mix together in a common school.

Complaints of certificated masters.

115. I found a very strong feeling in the county of Durham among the working people and small farmers against the system of instruction pursued by the certificated masters. It is alleged that class teaching does not teach the individual child, that no school work is given them to take home, and that too much of the school time is expended in singing and relaxation. Whether there is any foundation for these opinions I am unable to say, but of the existence of the feeling there can be no doubt.

B.

116. I could not ascertain that the school attendance was materially affected by considerations of expense. The answers to the circulars show that the parents, feeling it a sacred duty to let their children receive all the instruction they can, seldom fail to pay for their "schooling." In the case of paupers the guardians not only pay fees at any school selected by the parents, but take care through their officers to enforce attendance. School attendance not affected by money.

117. The evidence of Mr. Wightman shows that—

"In this union the guardians pay about 20*l.* to 25*l.* a year in fees. The school fees vary in the district from 1*d.* to 5*d.* per week." *Glendale, Evidence*, 44.

118. The probable average would be as per Chatton school list, which I beg to append:— *Appendix A.*

1st Class, 5*d.*
2nd do. 4*d.*
3rd do. 3*d.*

an allowance being usually made in the case of a third child. These fees the people willingly pay.

119. The Hexham Board of Guardians state that school attendance is not at all affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents. *Appendix E., question* 28.

"The school fees of the pauper children are all paid by the union, and the wages earned in the district, from 17*s.* to 20*s.* in the week, are quite sufficient to enable any working man to pay for the education of his children."

120. In Durham I always found that the children of the lowest paid labourers, the agricultural, were stated by the schoolmasters to be more constant in their attendance and more exact in their payment of fees than those of the mining or manufacturing labourers, with the bright exception of the lead miners. The London Lead Company's school is a model one. It has been ably reported upon by Mr. Foster (*Education Commission, Report*, 1861) but I am happy to add my testimony to its merits, and to express my obligations to Mr. Bainbridge, the manager of the works.

121. Some of the schools are self-supporting. In the village school of Milfield the children pay for the master, fire, and books, the building and repairs being kept up for them.

122. In the way of industrial training Glendale union possesses nothing beyond the ordinary sewing classes; but I have reason to believe a noble lady has in contemplation the establishment of a school for training young women for domestic service. Industrial Training.

123. Although not in this district, I may mention the Bamburgh Castle school supported by the trustees of that charity. A limited number of girls are here received at nine years of age and upwards, clothed and fed by the trustees till they are 15, and trained for household work. It is not essentially an industrial training school, but is practically so used. Bamburgh Castle school.

124. Evening schools are not much in favour. Most of the masters, if not all of them, have made efforts to establish them, but unsuccessfully, principally owing to distance and the occupation of the hinds at evening stables. Mr. G. Hughes, of Middleton Hall, Wooler, remarks in his able return that the principal difficulties in the way of maintaining evening schools arise from their— Evening schools.

"Coming in contact with the evening employments of the people, and the unfitness of their mental faculties for exertion and retention after a day's bodily labour. I find, however, that my people consider that they have derived benefit from the night school, and I hope to get numbers sufficient to form a classs for next winter. Of my night school of last winter, one young man was a member who has since then considerably improved his social position by gaining a situation of trust in Newcastle. I gave two or three prizes, the competitions for which were very creditable. One of them, for an Essay on Cottage Gardens, was taken by the father of a family, who with a few other fathers took an interest in the movement of night school tuition. These night schools would afford an excellent field for assistant school teachers."

125. In Mr. Langlands' return I observe,—

"The chief difficulty arises from sufficient numbers attending, which is often caused by the regulations for farm houses, especially as regards stables at night."

126. The Rev. Thomas Knight.—"Young people in this immediate neighbourhood have generally "speaking attended the day school well. Those from the farm homesteads farther away seem "disinclined for the long walk after working all day in the fields. The horses also require looking "after in the evening."

127. The Rev. J. R. King, Carham says, in answer to Question 53,—

"The first great difficulty is that which most impedes a clergyman's influence in the district altogether, both in respect of religious and moral teaching and schooling in the narrower sense of the term, viz., the migratory character of the population. It is so common a practice with the hinds to shift their quarters every May day, that in a great number of cases one hardly gets the influence over young persons which would induce them to go to a night school, before they are gone altogether.

"A second serious difficulty is the arrangement by which each lad in charge of a pair of horses has to look after them in person at 8 p.m., thereby cutting into the only time during which an evening school could very well be held.

"A third difficulty is the distance, which of course tells more heavily after a day's work than in the case of the younger children.

"In the only place, Wark, in this parish, where an evening school could probably gather large numbers, the school is carefully kept out of the clergyman's control, and there is no evening school."

128. John Hall, steward to Mr. Langlands, Old Bewick, with whom he has lived 44 years, mentions that his "regular school instruction ended at 13½ years of age. He attended the night school for "six or seven years afterwards." *Glendale, Evidence*, 23.

129. The following is a list of the evening schools in Glendale Union, with the number of scholars on the register of each:—

B. EVENING SCHOOLS.

—	On the Register.			
	Summer.		Winter.	
	Under 12.	Above 12.	Under 12.	Above 12.
Carham	—	—	—	14
Old Bewick	—	—	—	15
Middleton Hall, parish of Ilderton	—	—	3	9
North Hazelridge, parish of Chatton	—	—	—	12
Crookham, parish of Ford	—	—	1	5
Ford	—	—	—	8
Chillingham	—	—	—	17
Mindrim	—	—	—	10
Total	—	—	4	90

130. From North Northumberland there are returns as to evening schools at Woodhorn, Bothal, and Cornhill, and in South Northumberland at Corbridge and St. John's Lee.

N. Northumberland, Evidence, 26.

131. Mr. Oliver, florist and gardener at Eslington Park, mentions that he "went to work 54 years ago, "at 10 years old, and never went again to a day school, but attended the night school till he was 22. "He kept bees as a boy, and saved all his money to buy books."

132. Some aim at higher pursuits and a better scale of education, as we may learn from the evidence of Mr. Duncan, English Presbyterian schoolmaster at Wooler, who says that—

Glendale, Evidence, 10.

"At this time there are four boys in his school learning Latin; one the son of a gamekeeper, another the son of a shepherd, the third the son of a skinner of sheep, and the fourth the son of the widow of a railway porter. Two others learn French and Euclid; one of these is a shepherd's son, the other a hind's. This shows the anxiety of the parents for education."

133. George Bowmaker, clerk to Mr. Grey, of Milfield Hill,—

Glendale, Evidence, 43.

"Was educated at the Milfield school from 5 to 13 years of age, and then went to farm work, attending winter school to 16, and evening classes till 19; all the school instruction he ever got was at the village school. All the people at Milfield could read and write. It must be a man's own fault if he has not education."

134. I gladly mention the great assistance I received on all these subjects from the schoolmasters of the district, and without any disparagement to others, I must in justice say, that I could not fail to observe the great order and discipline maintained in the schools of the certificated masters.

School attendance.

135. Owing to the great size of the parishes, and the intermingling of the townships, and also to the habit which prevails of sending children out of the parish to some favourite school, it is difficult to form an accurate correct estimate of the average proportion of the children under instruction to the whole population of the Glendale district. I append a table, however (Appendix E., Questions 42–44), which embodies all the information which I have been able to collect. The Returns from which it is made up are from the schools specified, and may, no doubt, in some cases have included children whose homes are outside Glendale Union. But, with a district so large, it is not probable that any considerable error has been thus introduced; there is no reason to suppose that the number of children who come to Glendale schools from without is not balanced by the number who go out of Glendale to school. The numbers stated are perhaps in some cases too low, on account of the exclusion of all children but those of agricultural labourers, as was indeed required by the directions in the Form of Inquiry. One school too is omitted, no return having been received from it. But despite these circumstances, the table shows that in the summer, 1 in 7·3 of the whole population of Glendale is at school, and in winter as many as 1 in 5·9. The average attendance too is high, being 81·5 per cent. of those on the school books in summer, and 82 per cent. of the corresponding number in winter. An examination of the table will show further that the attendance of the younger children is best in summer, and of the older children in winter. The whole number brought under instruction is therefore greater than would be implied by the above figures.

136. The fluctuating nature of the population renders any return, based on the yearly attendance of certain children at particular schools, most fallacious as a basis for estimating the number of years usually given to school instruction.

137. Before quitting this subject I cannot refrain from pointing out that the farmers of this district, so far from being lukewarm in promoting the education of the children of their labourers, or hostile to it (as they are said to be in other parts of the country), give every possible encouragement to the schools; in some cases supporting them altogether, and in others paying the school fees of the children entirely or in part.

Effect of teaching.

138. What is the effect of teaching on the future lives and character of the people?

Sir Francis Doyle says, in his report on Northumberland, 1842:—

"What I saw of the Northern peasantry impressed me very strongly in their favour. They are very intelligent, sober, and courteous in their manner. Their courtesy, moreover, is not cringing, but coupled with a manly independence of demeanour: added to this, crime as I was told, and, as indeed from the annals of the Northern Circuit I was previously aware, is all but unknown in agricultural Northumberland."

This I can fully endorse; and I desire to express in the strongest terms, my sense, not only of the courtesy of the working people, but of the interest taken by them in this inquiry. They are a remarkably sober race, rarely touching beer at their work, and they bear a high character for honesty. Crime of a serious character may be said hardly to exist among them, as is shown by the statistics of the Wooler Petty Sessional Division.

Appendix A.

139. I was directed to discover by personal inquiry and examination the actual state of education among the young found at work, and I was to "regard the question of education, not in the restricted "sense of the mere ordinary elements of instruction, but in the wider and more important one of the "training of the future agricultural labourer in habits of industry, honesty, and fidelity to the trust "reposed in him, and of so opening and informing his mind, as to make him a more skilful and "efficient farm servant." B. State of education.

140. Through the kindness of the occupiers of the land, and the readiness of the people themselves to afford information, I had no difficulty in pursuing this most important part of the inquiry.

141. To begin with what are spoken of above as the "elements of instruction."

In Glendale, I found almost without exception, that the children and young persons could read and write, and do plain figures more or less well, but sufficiently for their position; and though many were unable to answer simple questions in history and geography, still they had the elementary groundwork to build upon for the future.

142. I am confirmed in this opinion by the letter of the Venerable Archdeacon Hamilton already quoted. Indeed the want of education here is looked upon as such a disgrace, that there is little fear of parents' negligence in this respect.

143. Mr. King, of Wooperton, remarks that—

"The majority do attend school for about half the year, and by working the remaining half year are enabled to pay for their own education and assist in their maintenance. I consider," he adds, "that the majority of the children of agricultural labourers are sufficiently educated for their rank in life." *Appendix E. question* 26.

144. As regards the wider and more important question, viz., the training of the future agricultural labourer in such habits as may make him an efficient farm servant, I have already endeavoured to show that this, the main object of a child's education, is attained; and that apart from the mere instruction of the mind, the working people are so brought up as to be useful to themselves and others, free from crime, and able to avail themselves of any opening which may offer to benefit their condition. In fact, the stewards on the large farms are almost to a man Northumbrians who have commenced life as hinds.

145. In Glendale, cottages are built upon the farms and held by the tenants with the other buildings necessary for the cultivation of the land. The returns show that about two cottages are required for every 100 acres of tillage. Cottages.

146. The hinds and other labourers, who are hired by the year, receive cottages in part payment of their wages, and must occupy them for the year with their families, in whatsoever condition they find them.

147. The cottages are generally returned as sufficient in number. In some few instances, when the land is laid down in grass, they may be in excess. Their condition varies very much. There are probably some of the best and some of the worst in England in this district. A rapid change is however taking place, and ere long those that are so miserably defective will have disppeared. Sufficient in number.

148. Public attention was directed to this subject in the year 1841 by the late Rev. Dr. Gilly, of Norham, in a pamphlet entitled "The Peasantry of the Border," with a motto, "Give them good "cottages and help them to educate their children." Following this came the Northumberland Cottage Improvement Society, formed at a public meeting at Alnwick, Mr. Charles Bosanquet in the chair, and Mr. Ralph Carr, Provisional Secretary; the first rule of which was— Pamphlet of Dr. Gilly.

149. "That a society be formed for encouraging and recording the improvement of cottages in the "northern division of Northumberland."* Cottage Improvement Society.

150. The old cottages were built of rough stone, having thatched or pantiled roofs, no ceilings, but bare rafters and earthen floors, one room about 18 feet square, with a space opposite the door for a cow. This last arrangement is entirely exploded in Glendale, and the cow is banished from the dwelling place to more convenient and suitable quarters. I found, however, one case of this kind in another union in the county.

151. In these miserable tenements all the light comes from one very small window not intended to open. This, with the grate, used to be carried away at a change of tenancy.

152. According to Dr. Gilly "When the hind comes to take possession he finds it not better than a "shed. The wet, if it happens to rain, is making a puddle on the earth floor. (This earth floor, "by the bye, is one of the causes to which Erasmus ascribed the frequent recurrence of epidemic "sickness among the cotters of England more than 300 years ago.) It is not only cold and wet, "but contains the aggregate filth of years from the time of its first being used. Imagine the trouble, "the inconvenience, and the expense which the poor fellow and his wife have to encounter before they "can put this shell of a hut in anything like a habitable form. They have to bring everything with "them; partitions, window frames, fixtures of all kinds, grates, and a substitute for ceilings, for they "are as I have already called them, mere sheds. * * * The average size of these sheds is about "24 ft. by 16 ft. They are dark and unwholesome. The windows do not open, and many of them are "not larger than 20 inches by 16; and into this space are crowded eight, ten, and even twelve persons."

153. To this day there are hinds' cottages, to which this description exactly applies. In cases of illness and death the evil becomes terrible, when there is but one room for the living and the dead.

154. Dr. Walker gives an account of entering one of them during a visitation from typhoid fever. After stating that—

"He had attended many cases of typhus fever, which he attributed to the situation of the cottages, the deficient drainage, the over-crowding of the building, the bad ventilation and want of cleanliness on the part of the inmates," he proceeds to describe how "in one cottage at his first visit there were dead bodies in the two box beds. The other bed contained two children ill with fever. Five other children were also suffering from it and lying on a shake-down on the floor. The father, mother, and the father's mother were in the same room, divided only by the box beds." *Glendale, Evidence*, 1.

* For this information I am indebted to Mr. Carr, who kindly gave me a copy of their report.

B.

Crowding of cottages.

155. I can testify to the crowding of these cottages, as well as the wretchedness of their state internally and externally; but at the time of my visit there were new ones in the course of erection.

156. Looking at the question simply as a matter of business it will be found that farms, at the expiration of their present leases, will not let without suitable cottage accommodation, which is as essential as suitable stabling for the horses. A good hind in the present day requires extra wages in money or kind to bribe him to occupy what is so miserable for himself and his family; and the farmer must either pay the extra wages or remain content with second class labour. And as these poor homes become more scarce, so will the pressure for good ones become greater.

Appendix E., question 37.

157. Mr. Charles Rea remarks—

"That the cottage accommodation is very defective in this district, and prolific of evils to the morals, health, and comforts of the labourers, one apartment being in many cases the sole accommodation for a large family. With the exception of six cottages on my farm the remaining 10 are old thatched erections, with mud floors, and no ventilation beyond the door and chimney, few having any internal partitions.

158. Since I received Mr. Rea's return I have seen some excellent plans of cottages proposed to be erected on the farm he mentions. Too many of the old cottages still exist, but the landlords are quite alive to their defects and to the duties they owe to the labouring classes who live on their estates.

159. Through all these difficulties the labourers of the North exhibit the greatest pride in the arrangement of their homes, and the interior affords a great contrast to the exterior. They spare no pains to keep it clean; the furniture is good and bright; there are false ceilings of calico to cover the nakedness of the rafters; the partitions are cunning and curious, and the disposition of ornaments, crockery, &c., &c., shows great taste and care.

Record of the Cottage Improvement Society.

160. It must be said in justification of landlords that on this subject public opinion has made a rapid change. Some new cottages, mentioned as models by Mr. Lowry in the report of the Cottage Building Society, 1847, would now be considered totally insufficient; none of them have more than one room and a loft for a bed, and many are not provided with any sanitary arrangements. These one-roomed cottages, which 20 years ago were considered perfect, will become one of the great difficulties in the way of improvement. As they have good walls, roofs, ceilings, and floors, it can hardly be expected that the landlords will deliberately pull them down and lay out money in building others on an improved model; a kind of outlay, it must be remembered, which at best is rarely remunerative. The cottages lately erected are of a superior description, being built of stone with slated roofs and floors of Caithness flags, cement, or tiles; sufficient bedrooms, with milk house, pantry, and suitable convenience of piggeries, &c., &c., outside.

161. On the large estates of Earl Grey and Mr. Cresswell Cresswell attention is particularly attracted by the excellence of the cottages. The Dukes of Northumberland have in this county built and improved 931 dwellings for farm and other labourers on their estates during the last 20 years. The work of improvement is rapidly progressing, and I could mention many other estates on which they are all that could be wished, but the list would be too long.

Glendale, Evidence, 9.

162. The ground floor cottages, commonly called "two ends," are the most popular. The occupier gives good reasons for this. Mr. Tait, shepherd, of Paston, says:—

"How is the mother to cook the dinner and look after a sick bairn when it is upstairs? She is always on the stairs. Some people would say that the upstairs rooms are more healthy. They would nae say so if they would try them in the cold of the winter."

163. There is reason in this, because many of the upstairs rooms, even in the new cottages, are in the roof and not ceiled; consequently they are cold in winter and hot in summer. The people prefer very large living rooms, 18 or 20 feet square, as fuel is plentiful and the warmth can be kept up. As the daughters of the family remain at home for field work more space is required for house room than in the south, where they usually go out to service.

164. In this large downstairs room the parents and young children sleep, and one or two additional bedrooms are as much as they can furnish and occupy.

Glendale, Evidence, 36.

165. Some cottages constructed by Mr. Snowball on Mr. Fawcett's property, at Branton, with two upstairs rooms over a large sitting room, a back kitchen, and dairy are much approved by the occupier, Mrs. Henderson, who says, "There are not better cottages than these in the county;" and also by Mr. Turnbull, the tenant. He remarks in his return—

Appendix E., question 30.

"That good cottages are essential to the comfort and health of the families, and generally prized by the labouring class. Here they are all that can be wished, having one large kitchen, dairy, and wash-up place on the ground floor, and two bedrooms upstairs."

N. Northumberland, Evidence, 10.

166. Mr. Davidson, the relieving officer at Alnwick, while speaking of these cottages, remarks "they "are as convenient as can be."

167. A proprietor may, perhaps, feel some mortification when he finds upper rooms of cottages on which he has expended so much capital without any proportionate interest, made into store rooms for corn and lumber, as I have observed in some cases; but every day it will become more apparent to him how truly the people appreciate their improved condition, and he will find that it tends to cure what is considered by many a great evil, viz., the yearly change of service.

N. Northumberland, Evidence, 3.

168. Dr. Cahill draws attention in his evidence to some common oversights in cottage building.

"The new bedrooms are too small, the front doors are in many instances built to the north instead of the south. Sanitary regulations, as to privies, ashpits, pigsties, and cowsheds, are much neglected. In some instances the position of the house is on the slope of a hill, on a lower level and on the same line as the out-buildings for cattle where the straw is allowed to rot for many months, and the drainage from thence in some cases causes fever and other diseases. Box beds are very objectionable, and propagate fever after it has been originated by other causes."

N. Northumberland, Evidence, 4.

169. In the evidence of Mr. Hunt, surgeon, at Belford, we find—

"Most of the new cottages are inconveniently constructed; they are neither suited for health nor sickness. "The small upstairs rooms are hot in summer, cold in winter. The most suitable construction is a ground floor; the mother then being able to look after her children in time of sickness."

B.

170. Mr. Brown, surgeon, Berwick:—

"The use of box beds is very injurious. They are sort of coffins for the living, and they are especially bad in disease." *N. Northumberland, Evidence*, 1.

171. These box beds are constructed like berths in a ship. They can be closed in the daytime with a sliding panel or curtain, and thus serve as dressing rooms. In the old cottages they were a necessary protection against wet and cold; and as long as unceiled roofs remain box beds are likely to hold their own.

172. Mr. Brown, surgeon, 36 years practising at Wooler:— *Glendale, Evidence*, 2

"Cottages built in this district are for the most part too small. The chief room has not sufficient space, and in cases of fever the people were better off in the old cottages than in the new. The ventilation was better, and consequently recovery was more frequent."

173. Mr. Watson, relieving officer, Morpeth, says:— *N. Northumberland, Evidence*, 9.

"It is very important to look to the staircase (in cottages), as if this goes up from the sitting room it acts as a shaft to send vitiated air up, and in one very bad case at Widdrington, two boys, two girls, a servant girl and a man, all died of diphtheria. It was attributable to this cause."

174. The pressure for cottage accommodation is not so great in the south as in the north, owing to the comparatively small quantity of tillage land, and in some districts to the greater number of towns and villages in which labourers can live; but many of the returns point out that the cottages are not yet considered sufficient. Cottages. S. Northumberland.

175. The Rev. John Bigge, vicar of Stamfordham, informs me that—

"There are 30 farms without any hinds, the farms being worked by the farmer and his own family."

And again, speaking of his own parish with a population of 1,049, he says:—

"There are 130 houses with more than one room, and 64 with only one room."

176. It is satisfactory to think that this deficiency will soon be supplied, as throughout the length and breadth of this large county the earnest attention of the landowners and agents is directed to the subject; and handsome and substantial cottages, built of the excellent stone which abounds in the country, are now being erected on all sides.

177. Mrs. Colbeck, Walwick Grange, says:—

"My idea is, that the cottage accommodation in this parish is very bad, and the effect must be injurious as regards the morals of the rising generation. The average cottage in this parish consists of one room of perhaps 12 feet by 15 built of free stone; a few roofs are thatched, the rest are slated. I do not think the majority of windows in the cottages open, but the door generally stands open the greater part of the day. Little or no drainage." *Appendix E., questions* 30, 37.

178. The Hexham Board of Guardians say:—

"During the last 20 years a very great deal has been done towards increasing the cottage accommodation, both in numbers and in convenience, and if the same goes on, as it is likely to do for some years longer, all will be attained that is needed." *Appendix E., question* 30.

179. Mr. Charlton, of Hesleyside, chairman of the Bellingham Board of Guardians, remarks:—

"Many of the old cottages in this union were greatly deficient in accommodation, often consisting of only one room; but within the last 15 years many new cottages on improved plans, and containing two or three large rooms, have been built." *Appendix E., question* 30.

180. Mr. Thomas Lawson, of Longhirst, says:—

"Cottages do not all possess enough of distinctive accommodation for morality and comfort; all new erections are an improvement on what prevailed before. * * * Cottages are indispensable to the proper occupation of a farm, and up to this point will pay for erection fully up to the wants of an agricultural labourer; but beyond this they will rarely yield more than three per cent., and if much increased they become a nuisance by their lowness of rent tempting an indolent occupant or one whose labour is not suited to local wants or profitable local increase of labour." *Appendix E., questions* 30, 41.

181. Mr. King, of Carham, says:—

"Of 150 cottages in this parish belonging to 18 farms, 100 in all are modern and afford tolerable and generally good accommodation. Ten farms containing 81 cottages are thus satisfactory throughout. One with six cottages has not a decent habitation on it. Four others have only good cottages for the superior servants, and 39 bad ones out of 47. The cottages form part of the farm buildings, and are, therefore, the property of the landowner included in the lease of the farm to the tenant. Rent is rarely paid, the cottage being included in the bargain made with the hinds at the annual hirings; when rent is paid it varies from 1*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*, the maximum being rare." *Appendix E., question* 37.

182. I beg to call your attention to a small detail in cottage building, which adds materially to the comfort of the inmates. In all Mr. Cresswell's cottages a course of common slate is laid in cement the width of the wall, about three inches above the ground, which effectually prevents the damp from rising. Sir M. W. Ridley, M.P., uses Caithness flagstones for the same purpose.

183. As my instructions are "To notice and describe any instances you meet with, in which the distribution of agricultural labour exists in the manner most favourable, both to the adult males and to the young, and to the females of the family," &c., &c., &c., I must not omit to mention a few of the beautiful villages in this district. Etal, with its pretty garden fronts and picturesque thatched cottages; Ford, unsurpassed in situation and the dressed appearance of its buildings and walks, testifying to the care and taste of the noble owners; Chatton, with its church, schools, and improved cottages, which tell at once of active pastoral care. These villages in comfort and wellbeing may bear comparison with any part of England; and even some of the large farms are villages in themselves. Instructions to Assistant Commissioners.

184. At Mr. Langland's, Old Bewick, the cottages are all that can be desired; the school, and a small Norman chapel recently restored by the unwearied efforts of the occupier, make a perfect picture of country life.

B. Question 39.

185. "Is the Union Chargeability Act, 28 & 29 Vict. c. 79., March 1866, having any effect in causing an increase of cottage accommodation?'

The majority of answers to this question are in the negative.

Appendix E., question 39. Mr. George Culley, of Fowberry Tower, says:—

"No; as there was no inducement in this neighbourhood to limit accommodation under the old parish chargeability."

Ibid. The Hexham Board of Guardians reply:—

"It has had no effect whatever. There were no close parishes in the Union. Did not hinder cottage building."

Ibid. Mr. J. Angus, Vice-Chairman of the Morpeth Board of Guardians, writes:—

"None; it is a complete robbery on the agricultural parishes."

Ibid. Mr. T. Lawson, of Long Hirst Grange, says:—

"No. It might decrease its progress, as 100*l.* on cottages in a town will produce double rents of the same sum on a farm."

Question 40.

186. Money borrowed under powers of the various Acts of Parliament through the Inclosure Commissioners has been considerably used for drainage and farm buildings, but not to any great extent for cottages.

187. The reasons alleged for this have been:—

1st. The rule of the Inclosure Commissioners insisting upon three bed rooms and a sitting room.*

2nd. The refusal of the Inclosure Commissioners to allow any walls at present standing to be used for the new building.

3rd. That the borrowed money cannot be used for conversion and improvements, such as turning three cottages into two, &c. &c., adding the necessary outbuildings.

4th. That the bearing power of the timber as required by the Commissioners is excessive.

188. Mr. Cresswell, whose opinion is entitled to great consideration from his experience on this subject in speaking of 10 cottages that he proposed building on one of his large farms, remarks that he had been—

"Deterred from borrowing money by the very stringent regulations laid down by the loan societies as to the number of sleeping apartments to be provided. Many other gentlemen, I believe, have been prevented in the same way from borrowing money. I have had a good deal of experience in building cottages of various sizes, and find that the one most suitable for the agricultural labourers in this county must contain a living room, 20 feet by 16, where two beds can be placed at the end opposite to the fire, for the father and mother and very young children; two bedrooms over the larger one with a fire-place for the sons and daughters of the family; a back entrance, with lobby to wash up, and a good sized pantry, coal-hole, privy, ash-pit, at the back, with a sink and drain to carry off slops. A pigstie is considered indispensable. I always place it at some little distance from the cottages, with a good drain from it."

189. The whole matter is treated very fully by Mr. T. Sample and Mr. J. Wilson in the following joint letter:—

We have considered "question 40" in the Commissioners' circular of inquiries, and from the experience we have had in the building of cottages with money borrowed from public companies under the inspection of the Inclosure Commissioners, we are of opinion that very much more money would be used for this purpose were it not for the following reasons.

First. That the Commissioners require three bed-rooms and one sitting-room to each cottage, except in special cases.

The above condition requires a greater amount of accommodation than can be afforded by a reasonable expenditure of money. If the living room were made sufficiently large to accommodate a bed in the corner, and with two rooms above and scullery behind, we consider the accommodation would be ample. But in order to comply with the present requirements of the Inclosure Commissioners, the three bed-rooms are usually made so small as to be both unhealthy and inconvenient.

Secondly. We have a great wish that we might be in a position to apply money under the inspection of the Inclosure Commissioners to the raising and alteration of existing walls, so as to make three cottages into two with additional upper rooms. This would be a great boon to the county of Northumberland, where, as you are aware, there are thousands of single room cottages with excellent walls which could be easily altered into more commodious houses. There are many instances also where a new roof is required upon an old wall which is as sound as new, and which is another case we ought to be in a position to meet.

Thirdly. We must not omit to mention that we consider the bearing parts of timber in farm buildings in many cases unnecessarily heavy and clumsy, whilst the required dimensions of scantlings not unfrequently cause timber to be cut very much to waste.

We hope the Commissioners may feel disposed to meet our views in this matter.

(Signed) Thos. Sample, Jacob Wilson } Land agents.

Appendix A. 190. Mr. Bolam, land agent; Mr. Woodward, architect, Roby Castle; and Mr. Craster, have stated their views on this subject in letters which I beg to append.

191. The same letters contain also remarks on the third of the reasons above referred to; with regard to which Mr. George Culley, the high sheriff, in his return says:—

Appendix E., question 40. "If loans could be granted for improving old cottages as well as building new, a great impetus would be given to cottage improvement."

192. Some misconception exists upon the second point, viz., the refusal of the Commissioners to permit the use of existing walls, and possibly upon others.

* [Except in some cases where several cottages are built, and then a proportion are allowed without the three sleeping rooms.]

B.

193. This misconception may have arisen from a mistaken reading of a rule of the Inclosure Commissioners, No. 2:—"The whole of the plans must be sent in at the same time by the company to the "Commissioners, and must show any existing buildings as well as those proposed to be erected; existing "buildings to be coloured 'brown,' new buildings 'red,' and any repairs or alterations intended to be "executed by the landowner 'blue.'"

194. Or the mistake may be connected with that part of the explanation of the Lands Improvement Company which is marked in red ink, as follows:—"And that the mere repairs of buildings and of other improvement works are not allowed under the Acts."

195. Certain it is, that the matter is not clearly understood by persons wishing to borrow money for the improvement of their cottages.

196. It is to be regretted that this should be the case, as the intentions of the Inclosure Commissioners, and the spirit in which they wish to carry out the important duties entrusted to them, are clearly expressed in the following paragraph of a letter addressed by them in July 1865 to the Secretary of State:—

"As regards the plans of cottages, the Commissioners have adopted and sanctioned many plans of cottages, both in England and Scotland, as proposed by landowners, and have always been willing to adopt any plan which affords a reasonable amount of accommodation, and provides for the separation of the sexes, and for health and comfort as well as decency; but they have refused to sanction charges upon estates for cottages where they believed that these requirements were not provided for, and they have been gratified to find that many proprietors both in England and Scotland concur in their views, that where these requirements are not complied with, the cottages should not be charged on the estates."

197. Again they say,—

"It is further stated that in new cottages box beds are gradually disappearing; but the general feeling encourages there being one bed in the kitchen, where the young children can be attended to during the day, and in some cases, where the kitchen was sufficiently large, the Commissioners have sanctioned such a plan."

198. There is, however, another objection to the building of cottages more difficult to meet than those which I have stated; it is the loss incurred by a landowner who engages in cottage building.

199. It must be remembered that the Treasury money is not generally available for this purpose, so that the Company's powers have to be sought.

Circular of the Lands Improvement Company.

200. The terms of the Lands Improvement Company are fair samples of the rest:—

"The company's commission above alluded to, where a landowner executes his own works and contracts for a loan from the company, is 5*l.* per cent., which, as already stated, is added to the gross sum charged upon the inheritance. So that if 2,000*l.* were outlaid on improvements, about 2,140*l.* (including all expenses) would be charged on the lands."

* * * * * * *

"The rate of rentcharge to repay capital and interest in 25 years is, at the present time in England and Wales, 7*l.* 1*s.* per cent. per annum for loans, &c. under 500*l.*, and 6*l.* 14*s.* 1*d.* per cent. per annum for loans above 500*l.*"

201. And as the cottages of Northumberland may now be stated to cost from 100*l.* to 200*l.* each, and the average rental to be 3*l.* per annum, the loss of interest to the landowner, putting aside all the expense of repairs, must be considerable.

202. The following extract is from the pen of a gentlemen of very great experience who kindly wrote to me on this question.

"The main discouragement is the payment of 5*l.* per cent. on the amount of the advance as a profit to the company, for which the landowner receives no consideration. He also grudges the expense of the superintendence of the expenditure by the officer of the Inclosure Commissioners, which he regards as a costly ceremony without any corresponding advantage. Dealing honestly himself, he overlooks the necessity of this superintendence as a protection against fraud on the part of those who are disposed to deal otherwise than honestly.

"I should think the best course is that suggested, of authorizing the Public Works Loan Commissioners to lend on advantageous terms, for the purpose of labourers' dwelling houses in the agricultural districts."

203. The relaxations required are fully explained in the letters I have submitted to you. As regards the obtaining money on easier terms, either by extending the time for the repayment of capital or by the reissuing of a Government loan for the purpose of building cottages, though the subject has been pressed upon me in conversation, I am not able to submit to you any written documents except those already quoted.

Public gangs.

204. It may be worthy of a passing remark to mention one case of a harvest gang from Scotland that I found working on one of the large eastern farms, because such a case will come under the Act of last session "to regulate agricultural gangs," 30 & 31 Vict. c. 130. These people, 14 men and 4 women, came from Peterhead under a ganger who undertook work by contract, paying his gang by the week, he will therefore (if he wishes to employ women), under section 10 of the Act, be compelled to obtain a licence from two or more justices at the petty sessions. This he cannot obtain in Scotland, as the Act is only applicable to England, and I conceive that as a stranger he would find great difficulty in procuring a licence from the justices in England; but I must say that if the particular gang I met was a fair sample of the system, their absence would be no loss to Northumberland.

Hiring fairs.

205. My attention was drawn to the subject of hiring fairs for servants (statutes and mops) at a late period of my inquiry by a letter which had been addressed to one of the Assistant Commissioners by a gentleman in another county. I therefore attended several hiring fairs in the counties of Northumberland and Durham, and consulted many persons of experience on the subject. Hiring fairs in Northumberland and Durham are of two kinds, for hinds and single servants, the former are hired for the year, the latter for six months. The hiring fairs for hinds usually take place about March, the service commencing on the 12th of May.

206. Nothing can be more important to a man than hiring himself for a year. He must ascertain the house he will be compelled to occupy with his family, the character of master and steward, and what

B. Conclusions.

the wages are to be for himself and family. He is more likely to ascertain this in an open market where he sells his only produce, his labour, than in any other way. The labour of every member of his family must also be taken into account. No register office would supply the information of an open market. The single servant has not the same responsibility, having only the shorter service of six months and a single risk. It is proposed to establish register offices in lieu of the fairs. This was tried by the Newcastle Farmers' Club, March 19th, 1859, and again in February 1860 and October 1860, but without result. Many persons, whose opinion is entitled to the greatest consideration, maintain that hiring fairs are productive of great immorality, but it is generally admitted that the railways are, to a great extent, amending this, conveying the young people to the fair in the morning instead of overnight, and it must not be forgotten that the fair is the holiday of the working man, whose long life of labour is too seldom cheered up with a gleam of sunshine. Personal observations at several fairs did not impress me with anything objectionable, but the usual enjoyments of race meetings, flower shows, &c., were making many very happy faces.

207. Mr. Rodger, of Embleton, remarks in a letter to me,—

"I see nothing the Legislature can do in the matter of hiring except to place, as done under Lord Elcho's Act, employer and employed on the same footing and to afford every opportunity of cheap and speedy justice to master and man alike. The hirings or statutes are a great nuisance to the farmer, not from the circumstance of people being hired, but from the numbers of persons who make a holiday of it and direct the attention of those seeking places from the serious business of the day. The mere fact of standing in the market place is a matter of mere taste, and so long as farmers prefer to transact their own proper business in a great measure on the street of the market town instead of in the corn exchange, there can be no hardships in their labourers doing the same in fine weather. In wet weather the corn exchange should be thrown open to them, especially to the women and children."

208. The Morpeth Chamber of Agriculture have considered the subject in the spirit of "amending "rather than destroying." Many efforts have been made to improve the tone of the fairs, thus at Hexham the public rooms were offered at a very low fee, but the people preferred the open air. In a town in the county of Durham the clergyman and others had kindly provided tea and coffee for the girls, but when I visited the rooms, between one and two o'clock, only some old women and children had availed themselves of it, as the girls refused to enter without their partners for the day, which did not surprise me. On this subject I have been favoured with a letter from Mr. Bosanquet, of Rock, whose name as a philanthropist and farmer will carry great weight. This is printed in the Appendix.

Appendix A.

209. The opinion given by Sir Charles H. J. Anderson to the Education Commission in 1861, though referring primarily to Lincolnshire, is so much to the point that I venture to quote it:—

"Young men and women are hired at statutes. Much has been said about their standing like slaves to be hired. This is *bosh*—mere vulgar claptrap. *They wouldn't do it if they didn't like it.* Recruits are examined to see if they are able-bodied, a boat's crew at school or college are picked men, and so it must be in all cases where physical strength and activity are required.

"These statutes are their only holidays, and they meet each other, spend their money, dance, sometimes get drunk, being encouraged to do so by the drapers and innkeepers. When statutes are done away or given up, they attend in the same way on market days, standing in the streets to be hired. A holiday is valued in proportion to its rarity. A day's recreation, judiciously managed, might be made an instrument of great value in a parish.

"Attempts have been and are being made to substitute register offices. These may help some to get places, but as farmers *must see* the *height* and *strength* and *health* of the men and boys they want, there is no mode so convenient as where they stand in great numbers, and the masters can select those they fancy; but it is a pity written characters are not more common."

Conclusions.

210. I beg leave now to state shortly the views which I have been led to form on those points which are described in your instructions as "the principal points of the general question."

211. Legislation is not required in Northumberland for the purpose of fixing the age below which boys and girls should not be employed in farm labour, as the parents never send their children out to work at an age which is physically and morally injurious. There is a general concurrence of opinion that no child should be employed before 10 years of age.

212. There is no necessity for limiting the hours of work of boys or girls, &c., as in the words of Mr. Fife, the eminent surgeon in Newcastle,—

S. N. Evidence, 2.

"The duration of the hours of labour, depending as they do on the season of the year, the condition of the crops, and the state of the weather, must vary; but periods of great activity are usually followed by comparative rest; upon this subject any legislative enactment must be vexatious and obstructive."

213. It is not necessary to secure by legislation proper meal times for the young and females engaged in farm labour; the time allowed is ample.

214. It is not necessary to limit by legislation the distance to which children should be taken to work, as no abuse exists.

215. It is not necessary to provide by legislation that females should be protected from unhealthy or unsuitable employments in agriculture, as the medical testimony is conclusive as to the healthy nature of their employment, and there is no evidence that such employment is morally injurious. On the contrary, it tends to rear a fine race of women, who make the best wives for labourers, and are invaluable in a national point of view as producing and rearing a fine population.

Appendix E., question (l).

216. Mr. Thomas Lawson, of Longhirst, who attaches great value to the employment of women in field work, in answer to the question whether any restriction should be placed upon it, replies:—

"Most certainly not; I would sooner recommend that every young female should, on physical and national grounds, be obliged to work a certain number of days for a certain number of years at field-work (of all classes)."

Circular of inquiry, No. VI.

217. This is, perhaps, the most convenient place to notice a regulation recommended in your sixth report as applicable to public gangs, and circulated in your inquiry as to private gangs, viz., "That the sexes should be separated."

B.
Conclusions.

218. This would be fatal to any employment of women and children in field work, as in nearly all the operations of farming the whole force must be employed together. But even if separation were practicable, it would be most undesirable, as the presence of fathers and brothers at work is a great protection to the weaker and younger members of a family, not only during the hours in the fields but while going to and fro. No grievance is alleged, and any gratuitous interference with a system that works so well is greatly to be deprecated.

219. Another question of great importance is raised in the next clause, where it is suggested, "That "a certain amount of school attendance should be compulsory on all children from the time of their "beginning to earn wages by working in a private gang."

220. In this district no legislative compulsion is required, as the parents themselves generally send to school during the winter months those children who have been at work in the summer.

221. If on general grounds it is thought necessary to lay down a rule on the subject, it must be confined (in order to avoid injury to this district) to a provision that each child shall make a certain number of school "attendances" (say 150) in the winter months.

222. "The actual state of education among the young found at work" may be said to be satisfactory, owing to the desire of all classes to promote it, but principally to the value set upon it by the working people themselves, on the high ground of religious duty to their children. So far as it is defective, the defect is due to the first of the six causes noticed in your "Instructions," viz., to the want of schools readily accessible to the children, and it is only to a very limited extent that this want exists.

223. It was not my province to inquire into the quality of the school teaching, but I may remark that the Northumbrians are worthy of good teachers, as they possess, in the words of the Venerable Archdeacon Hamilton, "brains of a very superior order."

224. It was gratifying to find how few instances of total ignorance I met with among the children and young persons at work. They are hardly worth recording, being so exceptional. The standard of instruction was of course unequal, but there was an absence of that gross ignorance which is said to prevail in other less favoured counties.

225. I cannot too often repeat, that in this district the pressure for education comes from the people themselves, though the higher motives which dictate it may have been instilled into them by their spiritual pastors. The population in the north of the county possess this feeling to the greatest degree.

226. There are, no doubt, difficulties here as well as elsewhere as to the scholastic education of the labouring poor, arising chiefly from the reluctance of parents to forego the wages which their children can earn by working in the fields; but it is only in the southern part of the county that the difficulty is aggravated by the employment of married women in field work. And it must be borne in mind that the real education of these children is carried on not more in the school than in the field, in which they acquire a practical knowledge of work and habits of obedience, punctuality and observation, and in short, are trained to do their duties in that state of life to which they are called viz., that of farm labourers.

227. No words can express my sense of the ready kindness with which, as your Assistant Commissioner, I was received by the inhabitants of Northumberland and Durham of every class. To the clergymen of all denominations, to the professional gentlemen, to medical practitioners of all grades, clerks of the Board of Guardians, land agents, schoolmasters, relieving officers, &c. &c., who never grudged giving up to me their valuable time, my sincere thanks are due; but I am especially grateful to the occupiers of land throughout the county for the manner in which they welcomed me to their own houses and farms and their labourers' cottages, thus enabling me to judge for myself in the prosecution of my inquiry. Without their hearty co-operation my endeavours must have been fruitless, or at the best have resulted in nothing but a collection of hearsay evidence. To the working people also, among whom I spent so many happy hours, ever receiving in their homes however humble a courteous answer to my somewhat inquisitive questions, I tender my thanks, with a sincere wish for their welfare. Northumberland may justly be proud of her system of farming, which produces a superior class of occupiers of land, and an intelligent and contented peasantry.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. J. HENLEY.

16, Whitehall Place,
17th July 1868.

REPORT.—By the Hon. E. STANHOPE.

To Her Majesty's Commissioners.

C. Gentlemen,

1. In accordance with your instructions I visited, during the last autumn and winter, the counties of Lincoln, Nottingham, and Leicester, and I beg to submit to you the evidence which I have collected in those counties, concerning the employment of women and children in agriculture.

2. Lincolnshire contains almost every variety of soil. "No less than eight of the great stratified "formations occur in this county, besides a wide dispersion of different kinds of drift, and large tracts "of peat and alluvium of almost every description." From the variety of cultivation thus produced (and on this youthful and female labour chiefly depends) I found it necessary for the purposes of the inquiry to divide it into five districts, which include the whole county, with the exception of the strong clay parishes in the west. These appeared to me to present the same features as those of the adjoining counties, and to be more conveniently considered with them. In the same way I divided Nottinghamshire into two districts, while Leicestershire, for reasons which will appear hereafter, I treated as one district only.

3. In each of these districts I chose two or three groups of parishes as types of the rest. These parishes I visited in detail, giving previous notice of my coming, and endeavouring to meet all those who were able to give information on the subject of my inquiry; but this plan did not prevent me from going to any other places to which my attention was especially called. I also took every opportunity of attending market towns on the market days, so as to meet and consult as many employers of labour as possible. In this way I visited 126 parishes in Lincolnshire, 40 in Nottinghamshire, and 30 in Leicestershire; and had detailed conversations with several hundred farmers separately, besides having the opportunity of seeing many others at the various meetings that I attended.

4. The circulars of inquiry which you instructed me to send out, were distributed to clergymen, landowners, and occupiers, and others within these counties, to the number of 111. To many of these detailed answers were received; and in such cases selections from them will be found set out in the evidence appended to this report.

5. The occupations of women, young persons, and children, in the various districts into which I have divided these three counties will be found more particularly detailed in the tables prefixed to each, but I propose in this place to give a general summary of the characteristics of each district.

The Wolds.

6. The Wold district of Lincolnshire extends from Barton-on-the-Humber to Horncastle and Spilsby. The northern half of it is owned, for the most part, by large proprietors, and is remarkable for the very large size of the farms, many of them reaching 800 or 1,000 acres. The villages are numerous and not far apart, but small, and the population sparse. In many cases they are large enough only to afford cottage accommodation for the "confined" labourers, who are hired by the year, and live upon the farms on which they work. Of this part of the wold Mr. F. D. Longe, in his report to the Children's Employment Commission in 1866, says, that, "the proportional population was one person "to 10 acres, the general population of an agricultural parish being about one person to four acres." In the deanery of Grimsby (No. 1), the population is even less. Of one such parish (Wold Newton) Mr. F. Iles gives an account, which well represents many others, especially such as are the property of Lord Yarborough, who owns a very large part of this district. "It has an area of 1,000 acres and is "divided into two farms of nearly equal extent. The number of cottages is 26: two of the larger "are occupied by the foremen, who each board and lodge about five farm servants." (Evid. 17.) This appears to suffice for the ordinary labour of the parish. But at times of pressure other labour is required. Mr. Iles continues, "The greater part of the weeding is done by gangs from Binbrook." The insufficiency of labour in these small close parishes is made up by the supply of the large open villages, such as Caistor, Ludford, Tealby, Market Rasen, and Tetford. From four of these public gangs go out. From the other large private gangs or companies of women and children go to the surrounding parishes.

7. The deficiency of labour is however less on Lord Yarborough's estate than on many others. Let us take an instance. The parish of Withcall, occupied (with the exception of the glebe), in one farm, contains an acreage of 2,700, and a population of 121. For this acreage, on the ordinary calculation, at least 50 cottages are required, especially as no extra labour is to be procured nearer than Louth, which is four or (from some parts of the farm) nearly five miles distant. The actual number is 17, and three of these are taken up as lodging houses for the farm lads. A neighbouring estate at Tathwell, is not much better provided, and some of the cottages existing on it are said to be very bad.

8. The effect of this distribution of labour is that the small close parishes, such as Wold Newton, are well looked after, and may be described as "favoured." Work is plentiful and certain, and the wages high, and the labourers having this are not inclined to leave the place. Their wives are too well off to work. But compare these with what I may call a "neglected" parish, such as Binbrook or Ludford. Here a large part of the population works several miles from home. Almost all the women and girls are employed. Many of the men get irregular and uncertain work. Their employers take little or no interest in them or their families. The men themselves have no feeling for the place

and are ready to leave it any day; they are always in an unsettled state, living from hand to mouth, and their children must work at the earliest age they can. The clergyman of the parish has little chance of getting at them. C.

9. It should, however, be distinctly understood that the bad distribution of cottages in this district, as in most other parts of this county, arises, not from the destruction of cottages by the large landowners to save the rates, but from its being in many respects a new country. Large tracts of land have been brought into cultivation, farm houses and farm buildings have been built for its occupation, and but few cottages. To this, however, there are exceptions. The late Lord Yarborough and the late Mr. Heneage built on their estates many cottages before the passing of the Union Chargeability Act, the more to their credit, as it would naturally be against the wishes and against the pecuniary interests of many of their tenants. Before that Act at any rate the tenant farmers must be held equally responsible with their landlords for the neglect of cottage building.

10. The southern half of the Wold district presents the same features, but in a much less marked way. The cottages are better distributed, and the occupations are smaller. No public gangs are therefore to be found, and the gangs or companies in which children work on the farms are small and easily controlled.

11. The Cliff district, reaching from the north of the county to Lincoln, is composed of smaller occupations. The villages are better distributed, though in many cases the population is very insufficient. The evils of the close parish system round Kirton, and again just north of Lincoln, are not yet remedied. Public gangs are therefore found in one case, and private gangs in almost every parish. With respect to employments, this district presents much the same features as the Wolds. The Cliff.

12. The Heath district, between Lincoln and Sleaford, comprises a large tract of land recently brought into cultivation, and belonging to a few large landowners, such as Mr. Chaplin, Lord Bristol, and Mr. Nisbet Hamilton. Two lines of villages, from four to seven miles apart, form its eastern and western boundaries, and between them there is not only an absence of villages, but almost of cottages also. Brauncewell, for instance, comprises 3,470 acres, divided into three farms, all the property of Lord Bristol. For the supply of labour to this parish there are 13 cottages (five of them with one bedroom only). Ashby-de-la-Lund, Bloxholm, and Temple Bruer are not better supplied, while the tract north of these villages is almost entirely without cottages. The main feature therefore of this district is, that the labourers are all congregated into the larger towns. The Heath.

13. The peculiar characteristic of the three districts which I have thus described is, that the soil is thoroughly suitable for turnips, and one-fourth of the farms are always under this crop. The effect of this is, that a considerable amount of labour is required in winter, to cut up the turnips for the sheep. Every flock requires a man, and two women and boys. For this reason almost all boys of 12, and some of 9 or 10, are employed in the winter; and if they are not sufficient in number, some of the women also.

14. For these and for the younger children also, another description of winter work is common throughout this part of the county. It is that of picking stones, and is commonly done by a lot of them together. But this is not a regular employment. Work for young children (that is boys from 7 to 11, and girls from 7 to 13), consisting of weeding and many other employments, lasts almost through the summer. Yet this varies on almost every farm. In some cases no such labour is wanted for the month just before harvest and on the edge of the clay country the weeds and "twitch" (couch-grass) become less troublesome, and the work is done in a very few weeks.

15. The effect of these employments is to drain the schools during parts of the summer of all children over 8. Many of them do not return when work is suspended, but stay away until all chance of getting it is past. These districts are well supplied with schools, some of the close villages on the Wolds, with a population of 100 or under, being almost the only ones without them; and in almost all such villages the demand for labour is so great that the children can hardly be spared at all in the summer, and are even taken away a good deal in the winter.

16. The Isle of Axholme, with the Carr district around it, in the north-eastern corner of the county, is composed of very rich land, especially suited for garden cultivation. It is mainly owned by small freeholders, cultivating their own land with the help of their families, and employing but little hired labour. On the larger occupations many more women are employed than men. At certain seasons (at potato setting and potato harvest), almost all the female and juvenile population is engaged in field work. Schoolmasters have almost ceased to contend against this state of things, and from July to the end of November, the younger children only attend. The Isle of Axholme.

17. The Marsh district along the eastern coast of Lincolnshire is in its northern half mostly laid down in pasture. Very little labour is therefore required, and the villages, though numerous, are small. As we proceed south, the land becomes adapted for the growth of root crops, and the demand for labour is even greater than in the Isle of Axholme. The production of potatoes is restricted only by the supply of labour. The newly-reclaimed marshes in the south-east, though not sufficiently supplied with labour for potatoes to be grown, afford an instance of a laudable attempt on the part of some landowners (the principal of whom are Mr. Cardwell, M.P., and the Governors of Guy's Hospital), to provide house accommodation for their labourers. The Marshes.

18. The Fen district has obtained a certain notoriety from the existence of public gangs. The effect of this system at Spalding, Deeping St. James, and the other towns where the system has been in full operation is, in my opinion, not at all exaggerated. The population of gang villages is essentially demoralized; the language used by children at Binbrook, in my hearing, surpassed anything of the sort that I could have believed. But it is fair to say that out of these towns, the condition of the agricultural population is by no means so unsatisfactory. The Fens.

19. One of the peculiar features of the Fens is, the rapidity with which the weeds spring up. Children, therefore, in gangs of some sort, are employed almost throughout the summer, but in the

C. winter very few are wanted, except such as are fit to go with horses. Field work, therefore, materially affects the schools much more in summer than in winter. Of the children under 10 at school in England, the number of boys in average attendance in summer compared with winter was as 39 to 72, and of girls as 20 to 36; even of those over 10, the proportions were as 5 to 23, and as 10 to 23. These results too are in a district where the attendance of young children in winter either from bad weather or the distance they have to go, is much impeded.

20. But the most striking feature of many Fen parishes is, the concentration of the population at one end, close to the old high road, although the parish stretches several miles out into the Fen In some parts even the farmers and their foremen live in the town; but in Deeping Fen, the farmer generally lives upon his farm, although all his labour has to come from the neighbouring town. In the parish of Deeping St. Nicholas, which includes more than half of this Fen, "there are over 14,500 acres, of which 700 are pasture land. On this there are only 108 cottages. On Lord Carington's estate of 2,400 there are four occupied ones only." The whole of this enormous tract is therefore supplied with labour from the large towns surrounding it, from a distance, that is, in some cases of five or six miles. One result of this is stated to be irregularity of employment. The winter days are short, and when the distance to be traversed is also to be considered, farmers find it most expedient to dispense with all that can possibly be spared (Evid. 213).

Wages in Lincolnshire.

21. In Lincolnshire the wages are uniformly high. Throughout Lindsey and Kesteven the wages of adult labourers are now 15*s.* a week, and with the exception of "catchwork" labourers the employment is regular. "Confined" labourers, that is, men hired by the year, and living on the farm, are paid partly in kind, and their wages amount to 40*l.* or 45*l.* a year. On the Wolds, men in regular employ average nearer 17*s.* than 15*s.* a week all the year, including the money made at harvest. But in the southern districts of Holland, close to the borders of Lincolnshire, though some employers give 15*s.*, the average wages cannot be said to exceed 13*s.* 6*d.*, and the employment is not always regular in winter.

22. "Catch work" or "running" men, that is, those who work for no fixed employer all the year, are not so well off. When with the threshing machines, they receive as much as 3*s.* a day; but this work is never for six days in a week, involves very long hours, and they are liable to be thrown out of work by a fall in the price of corn. The Irish, who, besides coming in very large numbers at harvest time, stay during a great part of the year in some places where labour is scarce, receive about two-thirds of the wages paid to the English, and are very ill-lodged.

23. Piece work is much encouraged by most farmers, especially on the Wolds. Many weeks work is done in this way. Harvest is almost always got in by piece-work. Mr. T. H. Vessey, of Welton on the Wolds, carries it so far as to contract with his men for the whole of the work from the cutting to the stacking. (Evid. 16.) His harvest is in consequence finished quicker than that of his neighbours. At this work good men will often earn from 7*s.* to 10*s.* a day, if helped by their wives, and a little child to make the bands. Other sorts of work are done under the same system. such as dropping beans, flax pulling, ketlock pulling, &c. Many farmers encourage also "family" work; they will let the family of one of their regular labourers pick up stones at so much an acre, or pick up potatoes, twitch, and pull ketlocks. (Evid. 21.) Peeling osiers is almost always done in this way.

24. The wages of the women vary from 8*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a day. The latter wage is often paid during potato harvest, and from 15*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* to women who go with threshing machines. At other work the average wages would probably be from 10*d.* to 1*s.* I found 8*d.* rarely paid; and at that price it would scarcely seem to be remunerative to women with children. Boys and girls under 12 or 13 receive from 4*d.* to 1*s.* or even a little more in potato harvest. They are often spoken of as "fourpenny" boys, or "sixpenny" boys, according to their ages. In some places nothing less than 6*d.* is paid; after 13 or 14 the girls who go to the fields are generally treated and paid as women; and boys for the most part are hired by the year into farm service, where they are kept and receive about 2*l.* for the first year. The sooner this takes place the better, as the superior food and comfort are of great advantage to the growth and development of the lad.

25. The labour of women and children must always be an assistance to the family unless it be in some way brought into competition with that of men. In the Isle of Axholme, I found that some men were thrown out of regular work by the women being employed. But as a rule they can only get work at times when all the men have found plenty of employment. The first few years of married life, when the children are very young and the wife unable to leave them, is the trying time to the poor; but in Lincolnshire, as soon as the children begin to go out, the comfort of the family appears to be in proportion with its size, because they soon earn more than is required for their individual support.

The position of the "cottagers."

26. The position of the "cottagers" or small freeholders deserves also some notice. They are a class in many cases very little raised above the hired labourer, and more hardly worked and less well fed and housed. They are very numerous in many parts of the Fens. Cowbit is entirely composed of small freeholders, cultivating the land with the help of their children. In the Isle of Axholme there are many hundred, and as a great part of all the land that is sold is being cut up, their number is probably increasing. They are established in these parts owing to the extreme fertility of the soil, which well repays a garden cultivation.

27. Where the amount of land occupied by them is sufficient to employ fully a man's labour throughout the year, or where it is only 4 or 5 acres, and the owners will consent to hire themselves out whenever their own land does not require their labour, the small freeholders appear to be prosperous, in spite of the heavy incubus of debt, under which they often live. At Billinghay, some are paying 3 and 4 per cent. for borrowed money. (Evid. 266). But the ownership of land seems to beget a sort of independence, which is not consistent with hiring themselves out to others. Sometimes they will help each other, either in person or by lending their horse, if they have one. Their children are worked earlier, and have less schooling than those of hired labourers.

28. Cottages owned by the larger landowners are let throughout this county at a rent averaging 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, or from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* a year. This generally includes a very small garden. Small owners, however, charge 2*s.* a week, and in some cases (as at Morton, Pinchbeck, and Metheringham), as much as 6*l.* or 7*l.*, with or without gardens. Allotments are not yet common in the North, where they are to a great extent objected to by the employers, but south of Lincoln most towns have allotments, formed in some cases out of a part of the glebe, given up by the clergymen of the parish for this object. C.

29. Nottinghamshire is naturally divided into two districts by a line drawn from Retford to Nottingham. The western side consists of sandy soils, and presents many features of similarity with the Lincolnshire Wolds. Large tracts of land, especially between Warsop and Retford, have been recently brought into cultivation and are very insufficiently supplied with cottages, the labourers being crowded into the larger towns. The large tract of land, commonly known as "the Dukeries" is mainly occupied by the parks of four large proprietors, and is almost without any cottages at all. Labourers come from the adjoining villages. Notts.

30. In this district some women are employed, but the light work is mostly done by troops of children, who are wanted almost all the summer, and even a part of the winter for stone picking. Boys of 16, and sometimes women, get employed on the turnip land in winter.

31. In the eastern or clay district the villages lie nearer together. The "close parish" system has been very much abolished, and few women and children at at any rate go any distance to work, except for pea-pulling, as I shall mention presently. The proportion of women employed is very small, only three or four going out in most parishes to regular work. Girls go out chiefly for bean-dropping in February. The soils being heavy, many boys are wanted for ploughing, and in some parishes go as early as 8 or 9; in others not till 10 or 11.

32. The wages throughout the county may be said to be 15*s.* for men. In the neighbourhood of the collieries and the large towns they even amount to 16*s.* or 17*s.* for first class labour. Children receive from 6*d.* to 1*s.* Allotments are very common, and are cheaply let. Some are free, but are then not so much sought after. Cottage rents vary from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*

33. Leicestershire, from various causes, occupied a much smaller portion of my time than the other two counties. Throughout a large part of it field work employs a small number of the children compared with other occupations. In the west there are the coal fields; round Leicester, Hinckley, and Lutterworth stocking-making and seaming employ almost all the women and children in the parishes where they exist. In the east, which is free from coal and seaming, almost all the land is laid down in grass. The Vale of Belvoir, which contains more arable land, is an exception. But elsewhere dairy cultivation is universal, and very few hands indeed are needed for the requirements of agriculture. "In some cases the population goes down to near extinction." The cottages are in consequence very few as compared with the acreage. The villages, though close together, are small. On this side of the county there are no less than 18 parishes and chapelries with a population of less than 100, and 34 with less than 200. As we approach the west the pasture and arable land being about equal in extent causes rather more labour to be required. In the neighbourhood of the manufacturing towns much larger villages are found, but the number employed in agriculture is no greater. Leicester.

34. Throughout this county the farms are small and seldom exceed 300 acres. In consequence of this, few require even a private gang, and, as boys cannot be trusted to go alone, weeding and other light work is done by women or men; girls are rarely employed, except for a little bean dibbling in the Vale of Belvoir. But the attraction of home-work in seaming makes the attendance of the girls at school far worse then in either of the other two counties. Young boys are but little wanted, except for tenting birds; but at an age varying from 9 to 12, they are taken permanently on the farm for ploughing.

35. The wages for able-bodied men vary from 11 to 13 shillings a week; if required to work on Sundays, with the addition of 1*s.* more. Near the towns they were even higher. At harvest, men earn from 20*s.* to 30*s.* a week. House rents are in general low (from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week), fuel very cheap, and the position of the labourer cannot be regarded as otherwise than favourable. The chief difference between Lincolnshire and Leicestershire labourers produced by the altered rate of wages is in the diet. In the former county, men often eat meat two or three times a day, and sometimes give it to their families. In Leicestershire meat once a day, and for the father only, is the rule.

36. Women earn from 6*d.* to 10*d.* a day, the former only when at piece work and short time. Boys begin at 4*d.* and at 13 a lad will get from 4*s.* to 5*s.* a week.

37. One change which is gradually taking place in these three counties and involves important consequences to the condition of the agricultural population, deserves notice. In former times a farmer used to be regarded as the head of the family, and the young lads or waggoners from 13 to 18 years of age who lodged in his house, dined at the same table, and were regarded as part of his household. This system involved both advantages and disadvantages. The superior food which the lads obtained in this way tended to make them stout and robust men. They were close to their work, and, besides this, the removal of lads of that age from an already overcrowded cottage was of great benefit to the family. On the other hand, the lodging lads in the same house with a number of servant girls, in some cases under no supervision, and in none under circumstances where complete supervision was possible, led to farm service being the cause of more immorality than any other description of service. (Evid. 38, 62.) Farm servants.

38. Now, however, all this is changed. In modern times farmers have become unwilling to receive lads into their houses, partly for the reason just mentioned, and partly from the ideas of the present day requiring greater comfort and luxury in a farmer's house. In Lincolnshire almost all the larger farmers have abandoned the system, and the lads are now lodged in the house of the foreman. Under

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this system they are less cared for and are under less control. The same may be said of most of Nottinghamshire. (Evid. 291.) But in Leicestershire and on the small farms in the other two counties there is often no foreman, and in consequence the lads are not lodged and boarded at all, but are only day-boys, and are sent home every night. This is certainly not to their benefit, especially in a county where, from the girls being kept at home to work at the stocking frames instead of being sent out to service, the adult inhabitants of the cottages are already unusually numerous. The change is not, however, consistent with any increasing scarcity of such labour, inasmuch as if there be any very great difficulty in obtaining it, the farmer will make sure of it by hiring the lads for the year, and by this means binding them to work for himself alone.

Statutes.

39. With respect to the system of hiring by the year, which throughout these counties is only carried on at the "Statute" fairs, a good deal of evidence will be found in the Appendix. Mr. Rowland Winn, whose experience of the system in Lincolnshire and the East Riding of Yorkshire is very great, states very forcibly the objections to the system. (Evid. 61.) The evils are in fact admitted throughout these counties, but it is alleged that, even were hirings never done there, these fairs are regarded by the labouring population as their only holiday, and are looked forward to by them as an occasion of meeting. Many efforts have been made in all parts to put an end to them, but hitherto without much success. Women, however, do feel it a degrading position to stand in the street to be hired, and at many statutes very few respectable women are to be found. The characters of the men are very little sifted under this system, and in many cases no inquiries are made on the subject. But labour is scarce and must be had, and if a farmer cannot get a man with a character he must have one without, so that in this respect no change can well be anticipated.

40. With these few preliminary remarks I pass on to consider in detail the various points to which my attention was directed by your instructions.

Sorts of Employment of Women and Children.

The work of women.

41. The employment of women is very general throughout these counties, although it is certainly decreasing. There is a growing disinclination on the part of the women themselves to go out to field work, and where all the families are well off, as, for instance, in some of the close parishes on the Wolds, from the men being certain of constant and well paid employment, and the children being also in great demand, the respectable women have almost ceased to go. Sometimes in two parishes of similar cultivation close together I found that in one of them no woman went out to the fields, but allowed the work to be done by those from the other. Generally the condition of the labourers in the latter parish was much the worst, but in some cases it appears to me to depend only upon a sort of local feeling or fashion. It must also be remembered that in very small parishes there will in some years be no big children, so that the women are almost compelled to go out for a time.

42. On the part of the Lincolnshire farmers also, the desire to employ children rather than women is increasing. They are cheaper, their wages are less, and children (even many girls) can be got to begin work at six in the morning, whereas women (with few exceptions) will not go before eight. And for light work they are more handy and generally quicker. Those farmers who still employ women by preference for light work justify it on the ground that they are more manageable, and do not require, as the children always do when working together, the presence of an overlooker. On small occupations, therefore, as in Leicestershire, women are still preferred.

43. In the Isle of Axholme and in some of the other alluvial soils, where the land is very rich, and the cultivation partakes of a garden character, women often find employment throughout the year. A farmer has a gang of 10 or 12 women, who weed, single turnips, plant, pick up, and sort potatoes, and do all the regular work of the farm. This is the only part where I found woman's labour superseding man's to any extent. On some such farms few men find regular employment, while women can, being engaged at half the wages, and after a few years' practice, do as much work. Such women have been described to me as "more than half men," and indeed in strength and physical development quite equal. They dress especially for field work and wear long leather gaiters or "yanks," and tuck in their skirts, so that the dress is very like that of a man. In other places, where their work is less regular, they are often dressed only as usual. An ordinary petticoat is certainly a most unfit dress for such work, especially in the winter work on ploughed fields.

44. There is hardly any work which may be said to be peculiar to women, as distinguished from children. Untying the bands on the stage of a threshing machine is an exception, but this (from causes which I shall fully describe hereafter) is also on the decrease. So too, dragging the turnips out of the ground and cutting them up for the sheep in winter cannot be done by young children, and is done by big boys or by women, according to the fancy of the farmer or the supply of his parish. All the remaining work which is given to women is done by them in common with, or instead of children.

Separate employments.

45. There are, however, two occupations which may be described as "separate" employments, and are common to all parts of these counties. The most universal of these is "tenting," by which I mean not only bird-scaring but looking after cows, sheep, pigs, or horses. The scaring of birds would for the most part employ children only for a few weeks in spring or autumn, but other descriptions of "tenting" often employ a boy almost all the summer. On the sand of Notts I found many children employed in this way in the winter also. This employment involves a long day's work from sunrise to sunset. It is a passive work, for a boy tenting crows has little else to do but "to shout." So little is there to occupy the mind in it that the chief complaint against it is that it encourages vacancy of mind and listless habits, and is of no use in training up a child to work. It involves great exposure to weather and work on Sundays.

46. Boys go to it at seven and eight years old. Some go even at six. Girls go a great deal in some districts, and at the same age as the boys. But with the girls it seldom implies that they have

left school entirely. I found one girl near Retford tenting in January, who had been at it nearly all the year. C.

47. Whether "tenting" be necessary or not is a question on which there is great difference of opinion. Mr. Iles, of Binbrook, a most kind employer, will not allow it on Sundays. Mr. Thos. Willson says of it "I have a small rookery at my place, but I never tent birds. I don't see that the "rooks do any harm to the crops in autumn; they may possibly do a little in the spring. Even the "firing a gun off is far better than tenting." (Evid. 327.) Others speak to the same effect.

48. Boys begin to be sent with horses at about 9 or 10 years of age. At harvest time throughout these counties even much younger boys will hold the first horse in a team. In the clay districts, where "single ploughing" is necessary, a boy is wanted for the same purpose in the winter. Many boys go to this at eight years of age. A few girls, but (except in the case of the small freeholders) very rarely, do this work. (Evid. 211, 219, 237.) When boys are once put to it and begin to learn it, they are hardly ever allowed to go to school again; they are too useful.

49. For this and for the work required when sheep are fed upon turnips, boys of 10 or 11 are undoubtedly more wanted in winter than in summer. Statements to this effect will be found throughout the evidence from the north of Lincolnshire. Mr. Cottam, again, a large occupier on the light land of Notts, says "We employ more boys in winter than in summer." To the same effect speaks Mr. Paget as to the heavier land south of Nottingham. "Here the winter is the season in which their services are most required." (Evid. 276.) It is hardly necessary to add that in almost all parts of these counties some boys of nine or even eight are found to be employed during the whole year under exceptional circumstances, as where a small farmer who requires only one boy prefers to hire the son of one of his own labourers and finds him work all the year, or where the work is of a special character, as in some of the potato districts.

50. I proceed next to notice what I shall call work in "companies," including in that term lots of women and children working together with or without an overlooker. These may be either the "public gang," the "private gang," or the "family." Work in companies.

51. Public gangs exist in about 22 towns in Lincolnshire, and in three or four in Nottinghamshire. These having been already dealt with by the "Agricultural Gangs Act, 1867,"* need not be further mentioned. But the effect of the recent legislation on the subject of agricultural gangs has been that some public gangs have become "private" by the very simple expedient on the part of the farmer of paying the gang himself, and thereby becoming the hirer of the children. The "ganger," however, in such cases is often paid by the time which he takes to do the work; his motive, therefore, for hurrying the work continues; and the gang itself is none the less nomadic, being taken from farm to farm as its services are required.

52. Such, however, is an uncommon case. But companies, or private gangs, are employed in one form or another throughout Lincolnshire and Notts, except in some of the heavy clay districts, where weeds do not grow quickly, or where the occupations are too small to make it worth while to employ a man to superintend the very small gang which would be required. This is for the most part the case in Leicestershire. Sometimes private gangs exist together with public, as at Croyland or Louth. In other cases it appears to depend on local custom, or on the fact of some one being willing to become a professional ganger, whether the gangs are public or private.

53. The simplest form of a gang, if such it can be called, appears to be where a man is employed with three or four children to drop beans or single turnips. The same number is often employed in weeding, or picking twitch, but gangs of this sort will sometimes amount to 30 or 40. This is especially the case in the Fen district. In ordinary cases, when such work is needed, a farmer will employ his own farm lads, if they can be spared, and add to them a few women or children, according as he can get them. Sometimes they consist wholly of small children, sometimes (and especially in the Isle of Axholme) of women only. On one farm boys and girls work separately, on another they are employed together. In describing such gangs, therefore, I must be distinctly understood not to convey the impression that what I say applies to all. But the question is, "Does the system generally work well, or is it liable to abuse?"

54. The opinion of the clergy, who have had experience in this sort of work, is so unanimous as to the effect of large mixed groups upon morality, that I need hardly quote any instances. The Rev. H. T. Fletcher, after speaking of the children being prone to "indecent language and immoral "practices," says "I can certainly trace the origin of some of these cases to the employment of young girls and boys in the fields." (Evid. 251.)

55. In Lincolnshire many of the large employers of labour concur in this opinion. With an exception, which I shall mention presently, the Chamber of Agriculture adopted this view. So have many of the labouring class. "The children hear a great deal that they had better not; nobody can "tell half what goes on unless he's been with them." (Evid. 30.) "If you'd heard their talk and "seen their ways, you'd say it's a bad thing for boys and girls to go together." (Evid. 47.) Again, in a notorious gang near Lincoln, "such bad language, the women fighting, and such like things. "He has boys and girls, Irish, and gipsies, and all sorts." (Evid. 85.) So in Nottinghamshire it was said, "Some of our women seem to take a pride in doing the worst they can with their tongues." (Evid. 321.)

56. The largest companies are, however, the "potato gangs." The old method of taking up potatoes appears to have been for a man to hoe them up, followed by his family, or a few other Potato gangs.

* My attention was particularly called to the absence of any provision in this Act requiring gangmasters to give notice of an intended application for a licence. The application may be made at any time (Act 7.) and any person wishing to oppose it has no means of knowing when to do so.

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children to gather them after him. They are, however, now grown on such a very large scale that the potato plough is introduced, which cuts under the ridge, and turns up the potatoes on either side. Along the furrow is a line of women and children of all ages, placed at a distance from each other, varying according to their size and strength, and the amount of work which each can perform. The space apportioned to each is often called a "stint," and all the potatoes lying in it must be picked up before the plough comes down the next furrow. Behind the line are two or three carts, the men with which empty the baskets of the workers as they are filled. The number of workers is sometimes as many as 60 or 70, who are superintended by a man behind the line. The distance between the "stints" is not too great for conversation to be general, and if one of the workers has cleared the stint in good time, he or she has time to talk freely.

57. Potatoes, when so gathered, are commonly stored in heaps, and the opening of these heaps affords another opportunity for company work. "When the farmer wants to deliver some, he gets a "lot of children, old and young, who kneel down round the 'pie' (heap), quite close together, and "sort them." (Evid. 128.) That is the method pursued in the Isle of Axholme. In the marsh districts heaps are more commonly opened by women and grown up girls.

58. Of these potatoe districts, it is said, "I believe children are corrupted by what they hear in "the fields when very young." (Evid. 121.) "There's nothing good to be learnt there." (Evid. 123.) "The girls are very depraved." (Evid. 127.) "The talk is dreadful there" (at the pies, Evid. 128.) "It's a disagreeable thing to go among a company of women at work." (Evid. 130.) "It's a bad "thing for girls, there is all sorts of language." (Evid. 146.) In two cases witnesses describe the boys as bathing in the presence of the girls. (Evid. 261.) So in the marsh district, one witness was stripped naked in the middle of a gang while asleep. (Evid. 169.) "It's the root of what is bad. "There's men that'll boast to hear their children bravado the most." (Evid. 182.)

Pea-pulling gangs.

59. But, besides this, several other sorts of company work are to be found in these counties. Osier peeling and pea pulling each last a very short time, but occupy an enormous number of girls and women, who work for the most part in separate families, but all close together, in the same field, and without, in this case, the advantage of the control of a superintendent. Both these especially prevail in the neighbourhood of the Trent. One witness sometimes employs no less than 400 or 500 women and children at once in pea pulling. (Evid. 286.) Of this work, as carried on near Worksop, Mr. Hemming quotes a magistrate as saying, "That he was astounded at the language he heard from "the mouths of the children, and their obscene manners unblushingly practised in an open manner in "the fields." (Evid. 291.) Mr. Hett's account (Evid. 294) of what he calls the "most demoralized set" of pea pullers can hardly be quoted.

No cruelty exists.

60. No cruelty, such as is described in the public gangs, exists in the private. Families are far too independent to submit to it, and the least chastisement or ill usage is followed by a summons. Only three or four cases, none of which on investigation I was able to confirm, were brought under my notice. "Last year," says one witness, "there was a report of a boy having been ill used near "Spilsby, and on the market day much indignation was expressed." (Evid. 6.) "It is difficult," says another, "to get men who have sufficient authority over them. They don't like to touch them, because "the parents would complain." (Evid. 74.)

61. Where large gangs are not superintended by a man it is because the mothers or other grown-up women go with the children, and are responsible for their work. But children cannot be put to the work alone. As a rule they are sent with a "*staged man*," an elderly married man; some farmers prefer a younger man, on the ground that he is better able to manage the children. Some few send girls with a woman, but the occupation is so distasteful that hardly any respectable woman can be found to undertake it. The men are not always well chosen. "They often use very bad language and even "excite the boys to talk badly before the girls and women." (Evid. 41 and No. 30 and 82.) In Notts he is sometimes chosen, "not from any regard to his moral character, but because he is an inferior "man at other work," or "can't do a day's work." (Evid. 301.)

Distinction between different sorts of gangs.

62. The true distinction, as it appears to me, to be drawn between different sorts of gangs is between those in which young children only are employed, and those in which old and young are mixed together.

63. With respect to young children working together in lots of a moderate size very little harm is represented as being caused to their morals by the fact of boys and girls working together. The person superintending them is almost always the father or mother of one of the children present, and the only substantial objection urged against them is the fact that the offices of nature cannot be performed with decency where males and females work together; and this of course is an especial evil in the large fields of the Wolds or the hedgeless tracts of the Fens. But the small weeding gangs of Notts, composed almost entirely of small children, are therefore but little objected to.

64. But the gangs in the neighbourhood of large towns, such as Spalding, Louth, or Retford, are in almost all cases the worst, and this is mainly caused by the admixture of women of bad character. They are represented as far worse than the men. To the same effect speak many witnesses. Mr. Leaper, superintendent of police at Spalding, says, "It's no use separating boys from girls, unless you "separate the young girls from prostitutes and the elder women who demoralize them." (Evid. 216.) Again, "Don't let the bigger girls go; it's they that corrupt the little ones and no one else." (Evid. 92.) "One of them (grown up girls) was worse than any of them in learning of them foul discourse." (Evid. 47.) "It's the old men and women that talk bad and corrupt the children." (Evid. 178.) And even of gleaning, another witness says, "young and old are congregated together in one field and "the greatest immorality results." (Evid. 25.)

65. For these reasons it appears to me that the separation of the sexes at field work, if it were practicable, would not much improve the present state of things. But how far could it be carried out at meal times? The children are generally allowed to stray where they like and do what they like

so long as they come back at the right moment. (Some strong evidence from Notts as to this may be seen at Nos. 296, 297, 301.) And at the end of the day's work at any rate all control ceases. In the early morning it is often the custom to assemble at some meeting place, and to start thence all together. This is the case at Spalding, and still more at Croyland, and in consequence the superintendent of the gang will often go out with it. But, in coming home, the children are allowed to hurry or delay, and where they have three or four miles to walk home in the dusk the consequences appear to be most demoralizing. (Evid. 308.) C.

66. It is, moreover, contended that a separation of the sexes would be most inconvenient to the employer, especially in the potato districts, and that it could not be practically carried out there. (Evid. 127, 130, 170.) The difficulties suggested did not seem to me very great, although possibly any interference whatever with labour would reduce the area under root crops; but the real gain to morality from boys working in one field and girls in another, and mixing together at mealtimes, and in returning home, is not likely to be large. A more serious objection is the inconvenience which it would cause to very small farmers. Large farmers generally employ the older children; they secure, as it were, the pick of the market, and small farmers have to put up with what they can get.

67. And secondly, it would interfere with family work. Family work, as I have already said, is generally on the increase. Where cottages are built in outlying districts, the farmer prefers to employ the families of his labourers who live in them, rather than to bring others from a distance. Such work too is open to none of the objections commonly urged against the sexes working together, and if girls are to go to the fields at all, it is probably the most harmless way in which they can be employed. Gleaning for instance could hardly be interfered with, nor the help given by families in harvest time.

68. To meet this difficulty, various definitions of a gang have been suggested. The Lincolnshire Chamber of Agriculture says that six ought to constitute a gang; intending by this expedient to give relief to small farmers, and not to prevent "family work." Others would define a gang by fixing some number which one man can thoroughly look after and control.

69. No other definition of a private gang has in fact been attempted than a limit of numbers, and this is one serious objection to extending to these gangs the section of the Agricultural Gangs Act, 1867, which requires gangmasters to take out a licence. Such a provision is not needed to protect children from cruelty or overwork; as a means of checking immorality, it would have no effect on many, which the evidence shows to be the worst from the very fact of their having no superintendent. These difficulties have prevented any very practical suggestions being made for the regulation of company work, which would be universal in their application. And the Rev. H. T. Fletcher, reflecting the opinion of many persons, says: "it would not be possible to place the labour of girls, so different and scattered as it is, under any effective regulation or superintendence, tantamount to that of girls in public gangs." (Evid. 251.)

The Age at which Boys should be allowed to Work.

70. In the districts where much light labour is required, the common age for boys to begin to work in the field is eight. Many, however, go at seven, some at six years old. They generally begin with "tenting" birds. On the books of most schools in Lincolnshire, I found boys less than eight years old, who went a little to work. This was especially the case in the potato districts, or where the land is occupied by very small farmers, who require at certain seasons the labour of their own children. In the clay districts, where light labour is less in demand, few children go to "tent" birds before nine, or at the youngest eight years of age. But in this and similar cases, I found that the employers seldom know the age of the boys that they employ. They are hired as soon as they are strong enough, or can shout, and the very young ones are often taken only to oblige a constant labourer, who wishes some addition to his weekly earnings.

71. Where the hours are not too long, or the work too hard, few persons think such employment as is given to young boys hurtful to them. The medical testimony is almost unanimous on this point. Several witnesses, on the contrary, speak to the great advantage a boy gains from the better food which his earnings enable his family to give him. (Evid. 260.) But the best evidence on this point is the appearance of the boys themselves. No diseases or deformities appear traceable to this early work; no such cases were pointed out, and very few were mentioned to me. The boys throughout my district appeared to be healthy and well formed; where boys in a school were indicated to me as having just come back from field work, they were almost always strong and healthy looking. And in some cases boys of a rather higher class than agricultural labourers are sent to field work to improve their health.

72. The early employment of a boy, if not extended over the whole year, also gives him a little money to pay for schooling, and gives him a good training for his future career. Agricultural work may not seem to require much learning, but experience has proved that boys cannot get handy at it, unless they begin early in life. Workhouse boys, that is, boys brought up at the unions, without field work, till 12 or 13 years of age, are universally condemned as useless. And the habits of industry acquired by field work, and the becoming early accustomed to exposure to weather, are in themselves no slight advantage to the future labourer.

73. Severe restrictions upon boy labour will also have the effect of driving out into the fields many more women and girls, or of causing the work which they now do to be neglected. And much of the light labour now done by children is of a character which, though essential to first-rate farming, is not absolutely necessary; and the neglect of it, though a loss to the farmer, will be felt far more by the poor families whose earnings are thus impaired.

74. Whatever, therefore, may be the case with reference to the necessity of requiring some better school attendance from boys, there is no reason, on the ground of health, for fixing any limit before which they shall not be allowed to work different from that of the Factory Acts.

C. THE AGE AT WHICH GIRLS SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO WORK.

75. Girls are employed as young as seven years of age, or in potato picking sometimes at six. When they reach nine or ten they are occasionally sent out to tend sheep or pigs, or to scare crows alone. Assuming that the hours of work are reasonable, the objections raised to the employment of girls in field work are shortly these:—

76. First, that it is injurious to their physical health. Upon this point there is much difference of opinion. The cold and exposure inseparable from field work are said to produce rheumatism and consumption. Others say that it is particularly injurious to them just after the age of puberty. In the Fens especially they are exposed to a great deal of wet, by being taken to weed corn or green crops in rainy weather. But Dr. Mackintosh, after 20 years' experience, says, "Girls employed in the fields "enjoy more robust health, and a greater immunity from the complaints incident to the age of puberty, "than girls who are employed in in-door service." (Evid. 25.) They are rarely put to winter work, and the more general opinion as to summer work is, that it is rather favourable to their physical health than otherwise.

77. Secondly, that their morality is affected by field work. To the evil arising from the mixture of sexes I have already alluded. But many persons think that, whether girls are employed alone or not, the general tendency of field work is to promote roughness. "They want breaking in again," says one witness. "It encourages strong passions, rough language, and general 'loudness.'" Evid. 206.)

78. Thirdly, that field work is a very bad preparation for a woman's future home duties as a wife,—that it unsexes her, makes her rough and coarse; too independent of her parents, and interferes seriously with her education,—especially that part of it which may be described as industrial.

79. Fourthly, that it unfits girls for household service. The complaint everywhere was, "Where are we to get a good female servant?" Indeed many employers, who are not prepared to sacrifice girl labour altogether, recommend its prohibition after the age of 13, so that they may go to service (Evid. 1, 92, 284, 316). "I have found," says one witness, "that where a mother keeps a daughter "over 13 at home instead of at service the girl is almost sure to go astray." (Evid. 63.) "It has "a great tendency to promote immorality; and what they earn at that age seldom goes to the parent, "but is spent by themselves." (Evid. 288.) On the other hand, it is urged that the attraction of field work is not sufficient to keep girls away from service, unless their previous training and habits have accustomed them to like it. For this reason many advocate the exclusion of girls from the fields up to the age of 13. This opinion is maintained in a memorandum addressed to the Commission by 17 influential magistrates of Kesteven. "This restriction would tend not a little towards the gradual, if "not entire, abolition of female labour in field work; for if women were not accustomed to it in youth "they would be physically incapacitated for it later in life." (Evid. 2.) "The worst of it is that when "they go out to service they don't care about staying there, because they know they can get field "work." (Evid. 92.) "The girls won't go out to service because they become less independent." (Evid. 127.)

80. Others, and those especially who have seen the effects of female labour in the Fen district, strongly urge the keeping all young unmarried girls away from the fields. (Evid. 28, 150, 211, 213.) Some argue that it is in reality of very little profit to a family, from the wear and tear of clothes, and the greater amount of food consumed. Upon this point, however, the opinion of the poor themselves, in the districts where much girl labour is employed, is almost unanimous. They deprecate such work for their daughters, but admit that the temptation of the earnings is too much for them. In such places they are not sent to field work owing to the low rate of wages, but owing to the high remuneration offered at certain seasons.

81. In other districts, however, poverty is without doubt the main cause of the girls being sent into the fields. I am of course excluding from consideration corn harvest, during which girls always go into the fields throughout these counties, and which no one in them has ever suggested to me the idea of prohibiting. In some cases girls are sent from the pressure put upon the family by the employer of the father. But generally the parents are glad enough to send them if they can get employment. Upon this subject Miss Boucherett, of Willingham House, whose experience among the labouring classes is very great, and to the whole of whose evidence I would call especial attention, says:—

"Field work is often rough for girls, but it is not necessarily at all immoral * * * What has given it a bad name is, that it is the only means girls who have lost their character have of getting an honest living. Field work is very good for health, except when corn and high turnips are weeded in cold weather. But this is still more unpleasant than unwholesome, and they often leave it. * * * * It is bad unprofitable work, but hunger is worse. They don't go unless poverty drives them to it. The amount of field work they do in general does no harm to their morals or their training. Where the husband drinks, or the family is very numerous, they must do more or starve; but even then girls often make good servants who have worked all their childhood in the fields. No restriction should therefore be placed on their employment." (Evid. 53.)

82. In Leicestershire there is not only very little employment in the fields for girls, but there is a strong inducement to keep them at home, and to employ them in seaming and stocking making. All girls therefore who do not go to the fields or who cannot find employment as domestic servants, are saved from absolute idleness. But this does not apply to Lincolnshire. "If," as one witness says,

"The exclusion from field work only narrows the range of female occupation, and a class of idle or starving women is produced, the gain to female morals is doubtful enough." (Evid. 166.)

83. The value of such labour to farmers is much greater than would be supposed. Not to speak of isolated districts where taking any labour away involves bringing other labour from a long distance, the exceptional cultivation of potatoes, peas, or flax, requiring an enormous number of hands at certain seasons, though only for a short time, makes the labour of girls most valuable. In potato districts the certain effect of their exclusion from field work would be a diminution of the area under that crop, and

the loss of wages thereby caused to the poor may be estimated from the very large number now employed. (Evid. 165.) C.

84. Upon the whole, therefore, to interfere by legislation to prevent what is described sometimes as "the only means by which girls who have lost their character have of getting an honest living," and sometimes as "the alternative of starvation," can only be justified by the magnitude of the evils produced by the present system. The evidence certainly appears to show that (putting the question of education on one side) the employment of girls from 8 to 12 or 13 is the most free from objection, if properly regulated. No harm appears to come from such girls following their fathers to dibble beans, as they will often do. Nor again from many sorts of family work, which the better distribution of cottages seems likely to encourage. "Any restriction had better be left to personal feeling to effect," says one witness, whose strong expressions as to the evils of female field work I have already quoted. (Evid. 206.) But let field work for girls be "a last and loathed resource. Let everything, from the gentleman's situation and the shopman's, down to the lowest farm service, come to be preferred to the field." (Evid. 167).

The Hours of Work of Women and Children.

85. Throughout these counties women as a rule work from 8 a.m. to 5 or 5·30 p.m. In some parishes it is the custom to begin work at 7; in the Isle of Axholme, they often do not begin till 8·30 or 9. Women, however, that go with threshing machines work men's hours, that is, from 6 to 6, or from light to dark, and, if finishing a job, sometimes till long after dark. Such women are, however, physically as equal to the labour as the men with whom they work.

86. No complaint is made of these hours. Miss Boucherett, in saying this, adds: "Yet I think a "woman's day's work should be legally two hours' less than a man's, that she may get the meals ready "and do the household work." (Evid. 53.) In practice this is almost always the case.

87. Girls, when working with the women, keep their hours. When working alone at tenting, they go from daylight till dark; and when formed into a private gang with boys, they often begin work at 6 a.m. and go on till 6 p.m. At Croyland, all the children and young persons meet at the Old Bridge at 6 a.m. (Evid. 237.) On the Heath and in the Fens they sometimes have to be at their work, a mile or two distant, by 6 a.m. (Evid. 88, 103, &c.) The chief reason for this is that they work with a man, some of whose labour would be lost if the children did not work the same hours.

88. Boys working alone are generally employed from 6 a.m. till 6 p.m. in summer, and from light to dark in winter. At tenting these hours are exceeded, but this is a "passive work," and the time is only complained of on account of the long exposure to bad weather and vacancy of thought.

89. These hours do not appear excessive for boys; 12 hours (inclusive of meal times) may seem a long time for boys of 8 or 9, but in practice it is found that the work done by such children is so light that it can do them no injury, and employers are very reasonable in adjusting the description of work to the strength of the lad. With respect to girls, the case is different. If the reason that women work short hours is to give them an opportunity of doing the necessary household work, surely the same opportunity ought to be given to girls, in order that they may become acquainted with domestic duties, and fit for their future position in life. But this applies only to the parts of the Wold and Fen, where girls get regular work for some months, and would be a hardship in those districts, where girls work only at harvest or for a week or two in the spring.

90. In one respect, moreover, some interference may be more necessary, viz., where, as I have said, the day's labour is still further lengthened by the distance that the children go to work. This point will be considered under a separate head.

Mealtimes.

91. The rule throughout these counties is to give an hour for dinner between 12 and 1 to all workers. This is sometimes broken through in winter by the farmers, in consequence of the shortness of the day. In such cases they give only half an hour, and allow the workers to leave half-an-hour sooner at night. It is also broken by the workers themselves in consequence of cold or bad weather. It is often very unpleasant to stand still in the exposed fields, and the workers prefer to keep constantly moving. (Evid. 347.)

92. Where work begins at 6, a quarter of an hour is often given in North Lincolnshire, for an "andrew" or lunch, and sometimes also another in the afternoon. In other parts this system is not generally recognized, but a man in charge of a lot of boys and girls will let them rest for a few minutes every now and then, and thus give them an opportunity of having something to eat. Women, who most commonly work without an overlooker, can of course stop at any time for such a purpose. In most cases, however, food is brought for one meal only.

The Distances to which Women and Children go to Work.

93. Children rarely go long distances except in a gang of some sort. They cannot be trusted to go alone, but require superintendence. As we might expect, therefore, the longest distances are traversed by the public gangs; but small companies of women and children are found throughout these counties to work at a considerable distance from home.

94. The want of cottages is of course mainly responsible for this, either in districts recently brought under cultivation, or in those where the close parish system is still in operation. It should, however, be borne in mind that the distances traversed by children does not only depend upon this, but also upon the character of the cultivation. In some special cases the crop has to be gathered up at once or it will be spoilt, and for this purpose the whole population of several surrounding parishes is collected into one or two fields; but the work only lasts a short time, and to prohibit absolutely these distances being traversed would prevent in some cases the growth of these crops, and would in consequence be as great a hardship to the family as to the employer. The potato harvest is an instance of this; also "osier-

C. peeling" and "pea-pulling." This latter occupation, which is especially found in the neighbourhood of the Trent, draws hands from parishes many miles distant.

95. On the Wolds we find children going from Louth, five miles to Withcall (Evid. 40); and to several other places three and four miles. In public gangs they go much farther. From the other large centres of population the distances are not much less. "At Caistor," one witness says, "I see "hundreds of labouring people pass down this hill at night; some of them go four, five, or even six "miles." (Evid. 37.) "At Tealby the average distance to their daily work is two miles." (Evid 52.) "From Ludford the extreme distance is two miles." (Evid. 46.) So again at Kirton, "most of the "parishes round are close parishes, such as Grayingham, Northorpe, and Redbourn, and many of the "labourers employed in those parishes live here." (Evid. 66.) So at North Carlton and other parishes north of Lincoln.

96. On the Heath the case is far worse. From all the towns bordering on this great newly reclaimed tract large numbers of women and children go long distances. From Waddington some of them go three miles. (Evid. 103.) From Wellingore boys and girls of nine and 10 "go two, three, and four miles. (Evid. 88–90.) From Navenby "three and four miles." (Evid. 93.) From Rauceby "two and a half miles." (Evid. 100.) From Ruskington "four or even five miles." (Evid. 106.) Of Dorrington, it is said, "Some of the labourers here go four miles or more. Some of the "boys go to Ashby; part of the parish is two miles off in the fen. There is one cottage on it." (Evid. 109.) From Metheringham and Nocton "two miles is not an uncommon distance."

97. In the neighbourhood of the Trent and in the marsh district of South-east Lincolnshire the gathering of potatoes in October brings hands from villages many miles distant. Carts are, however, employed to take the workers to the greater distances. But at Scotter, Mr. Eminson says, "Part of "this parish touches the Trent; children go there at nine or ten years, with or without their parents. "Women go also. It is 3½ miles off." (Evid. 144.) The same is occasionally the case from Long Sutton or Holbeach.

98. But the worst case of all is that of Deeping Fen. From Spalding young girls and children are employed on farms four, five, and six miles distant, but the largest distances from this town are traversed by the public gangs. At Deeping St. James similar instances are to be found. One witness, 11 years old, went six miles, and occasionally nine miles, to work. (Evid. 244.) Others, girls as well as boys, went six miles. (Evid. 245, 249.) The same may be said of the other villages along the line of the fens from Deeping northwards, though the distances in these cases are less.

99. In Nottinghamshire, as might be expected from the better distribution of cottages, the distances are not so great. In the sand district, however, children "go as far as three miles from between Retford and Worksop, where there are too few cottages." (Evid. 284.) At Worksop "they sometimes "go four or five miles. I don't think the exercise hurts them." (Evid. 285.) So from Cuckney, three miles (Evid. 293), and Warsop. On the clay a few close parishes still remain; but speaking generally, although some men have to walk two or three miles to work, the number of children that are found to traverse such a distance, except at "pea-pulling" time, is very small indeed.

100. In Leicestershire still fewer are required to go a long distance. There the cottages are better distributed, less light labour is needed, and, excepting pea-pulling and the requirements of a few special districts (such as the neighbourhood of Bottesford and the southern boundary of the county), where "close" parishes still exist, few children go any considerable distance to work.

101. Cases of injury to the children from going these long distances to work appear to be rare. The main sufferer is the farmer himself. Children, unless absolutely forced, will only do a certain amount of labour in the day, and the fatigue produced by going a long distance to work diminishes, if not their actual working hours, at any rate the amount of energy that they put into their employment. "I have "never observed," says one witness, "any signs of over-fatigue in children, though many of them walk "two miles, or rather more, to work." (Evid. 281.) The case is very different from that of men, who are called upon to exert their utmost strength at work. Young children are rarely put to any employment requiring the exertion of strength. Nimbleness and quickness of hand are the especial qualities required. With women it is rather different. Dragging turnips out of the ground and some similar employments do involve the use of force, but grown up women with their shorter hours of work are pretty nearly as well able to go long distances as men.

102. But as to this and many other practices, the best test after all is that of experience. These children do not grow up to be unhealthy or deformed, or unfit for work; but on the contrary they become labourers who can compare in strength and working ability with any in England. And if this is the case, can it be expected that any absolute prohibitions as to distance would be rigidly enforced? If any regulation should be thought advisable, some simple rule forbidding all children from being taken to work *on foot* beyond a distance of two miles would appear to be the readiest mode of effecting the object with least interference with the labour of the children.

103. Other persons, however, describe these distances as the cause of great over fatigue and consequent injury to children, and strongly urge the absolute prohibition of children being taken to work on foot beyond two miles, or even one mile. Some prefer a scale of distances graduated according to ages. Some, on the contrary, think that the only time when it is a real hardship to children is when their hours of work are not diminished in consequence of the distance they have to go. Such extra labour ought to be done in their master's time, and not in their own. They would therefore fix a legal limit to a day's labour, and include in it the going to and from work.

Unhealthy and unsuitable Employments for Women and Children.

Women with threshing machines.

104. Work upon threshing machines is condemned on all sides for women. Many farmers have given it up from a sense of its unfitness. Many labourers will not allow their wives to go. Miss Boucherett, in other respects a great advocate for freedom of labour, condemns it from her experience

on the Wolds. The women or woman (for in some parishes it is the custom to have one only), stands upon the stage of the machine, cuts the bands, and hands the sheaf to the man who is feeding the machine, and who is sitting close to the revolving drum. "There is danger," says one witness, "of their dresses being caught in the machinery, as I can bear sad testimony, having had fatal "accidents on my farm." (Evid. 6.) Moreover there is the possibility of the sheaf striking her as it is put on the machine, and throwing her off her balance. The stage on which she has to stand is often very narrow, sometimes "not more that 2½ feet." (Evid. 55.)

105. Now it is not pretended that a man would be free from danger in the same position, but the dress of the woman and its liability to be caught by the drum when raised by a puff of wind render it especially dangerous for her. A great many accidents do happen from this cause. Three fatal cases occurred while I was visiting Lincolnshire. It is true that these accidents commonly arise from carelessness; in one case it was from a woman stepping on the drum as she came back to work (Evid. 65), but some at any rate are undoubtedly caused by the dress. The poor themselves speak of this work with great dislike, although it is the most profitable work that a woman can do.

106. But there is another reason, besides the danger, for the preference of almost any sort of work to this. "In prohibiting," says Mr. Higgins, of Claxby, "the employment of women whose loose "dresses are liable to be caught, much good will be done indirectly, because when they go to work "as described, they are placed in company with 8 or 10 men, and their moral condition is not one "calculated to be improved under the system. Very few women will do this now." (Evid. 6.) Others say, "it is only a peculiar class that go." Respectable women never go to them, except under the pressure of real want.

107. Where men are scarce the number of women so employed is very large. The proper complement of a threshing machine is 14, of which two are women; but five or six are often taken with it and go round to the various farms in the neighbourhood. In such a case the additional number would not be employed on the stage, but on the corn or straw stack. This represented as far too laborious for women, a woman on the straw stack sinking into it almost up to her middle.

108. It has been suggested by some persons that some sort of guard could be devised to protect the workers from coming into contact with the revolving drum. Others say that this would be impossible, that it would interfere with putting the sheaves into the machine, and would after all be of little value as a protection against carelessness, which is the principal cause of these accidents. (Evid. 16.) One difficulty in the way of guarding the machine is, the necessity of its being frequently removed, even in the same stackyard.

Young boys with horses.

109. An occupation very common for young boys is that of leading horses in carts. Many boys of even 8 or less will do this in harvest time, but they would then be under the eye of the men, and would not be alone with a horse. At other times of the year boys of 9 and upwards lead the first horse in ploughing, or drive a cart. This is especially the case in the clay districts. In Leicestershire, I found many boys of 10 regularly driving horses, and employed all the year in this way.

110. This is alleged to be a most dangerous employment, and no doubt a considerable number of accidents have occurred to boys with carts. But the inquiries which I have made lead me to believe that such accidents are not more common to boys of nine or 10 than to boys of 14 and 15, and that, when they do occur, it is more frequently from riding on the shafts, or from carelessness, than from any other cause. The fact is that when a boy begins to work at all regularly on a farm, he is accustomed to go amongst horses, gets used to their ways, and when under the eye of any one who can prevent careless habits, he is exposed to little danger.

111. That there would be very great difficulty in enforcing any such restrictions, unless they fall in to a certain extent with the public opinion of the country, may be shown by a very strong instance. By the Act 3 Geo. IV. c. 126. sect. 131, no boy under 13 is allowed to drive a cart on a turnpike road. This provision is not only evaded throughout my district, but is absolutely ignored. Very few of the magistrates to whom I spoke of it had ever heard of it, much less had ever enforced it, and it is practically a dead letter.

Girls with horses.

112. On several farms in the Fen district, I found girls employed also to drive carts. (Evid. 219, 237.) In a few cases they were the children of small freeholders cultivating their own land. This appears open to much greater objection on the score of danger, from the unsuitable dress of the girls. But this employment is so uncommon as to be scarcely worthy of notice.

Weeding high wet corn.

113. Another occupation, which was condemned in the case of public gangs in the Report of 1867, is that of weeding high corn in wet weather. This is peculiar to the Fen districts, where alone the weeds grow so quickly as to necessitate this work being done. In other parts farmers laugh at the idea of sending any one, and especially women and girls, who with their dresses would do much damage, into growing corn. The evidence however, shows that even in the Fens this is felt as an objection by farmers, and the practice, though not absolutely confined to the public, is rarely found in private gangs, and does not appear to me to call for any legislative interference.

EDUCATION.

114. In my remarks upon this subject I propose to consider first, the number and distribution of schools; secondly, the work done in them, and the causes of its insufficiency; and, thirdly, the remedies proposed.

I. Number and distribution of schools

115. The number of schools in Lincolnshire has increased enormously within the last few years. It is not very long since a prejudice which existed as to parts of the country being unhealthy and unsuitable to live in, caused many parishes in the Marsh and Fen districts to be without a resident clergyman;

C. and even at the present time there is hardly a single squire resident in the former, and very few in the latter district. Moreover, in the northern part of the Marsh, which consists mainly of grazing land, a large proportion is let to Wold farmers, so that many, if not most of the occupiers of land, are non-resident. Even in other parts of Lincolnshire the number of resident owners is very small; the same may be said of Leicestershire, the country houses being to a large extent filled by persons who hire them only for the purpose of hunting in winter. In Nottinghamshire both landowners and farmers are for the most part resident.

116. But in the greater part of those counties, the main support of the school naturally falls upon the clergyman. Squires, when resident, have almost without exception contributed liberally to the support of the school in the parish in which they reside, but they do not always feel the same obligation towards other parishes belonging to them in whole or in part. In the case of one nobleman, his only answer to applications for assistance to the school of a parish where he is sole owner was, that he preferred to leave it to local effort. But it is hardly necessary to say that the self-sacrifice of the clergy, both in providing for the maintenance of the school, and in assisting those who have scanty means of paying the cost of education for themselves, is beyond all praise.

117. It is a common charge, brought against farmers as a class, that they care little for education and are rather disposed to discourage it. Now in many cases it cannot be denied that education is materially interfering with labour, because the object of the labouring class in seeking it is not to make their children better agricultural labourers, but to enable them to rise to a higher sphere in life. "If "I could only get him to be a scholar," said one woman, "he should never be a farm labourer." "If I were a scholar I shouldn't be here,' said a labourer, "and that's the reason why the farmers "hold against this 'ere scholarship." (Evid. 187.) One cannot therefore be surprised that farmers should wish so to direct education as to prevent its having this effect as far as possible. "Their view "is that more than a little is very much too much; they are afraid that labourers will be spoiled "for field work." (Evid. 273). Their object is to keep the school down and not to let it rise beyond a certain level. In consequence of this, their contributions to the school funds often amount to a small sum. It is, however, fair towards them to add that in some cases, at any rate, this is caused by the unwillingness of the clergyman or other manager of the school to receive contributions. He would rather pay all out of his own pocket than give up one particle of his authority over the school. The farmers, on the other hand, feel a great unwillingness to contribute without having some voice in the management, and the almost total alienation of employers from active co-operation or interest in the school attended by those whom they employ, has in these cases destroyed what might have been a most valuable means of promoting good attendance through the medium of the employers.

118. In Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire the number of parishes in which there is no school available within a reasonable distance is certainly small. The demand for education among the labouring class is exceedingly active, and if from any cause a school is closed, a dame's school springs up almost immediately. "They wanted a school here, and thought I was the only person who can do "it," said one poor illiterate woman in a very small parish.

119. The wages throughout the diocese of Lincoln being high, and the condition of the peasantry good, the difficulties in the way of maintaining schools are said to be "less than ordinary." In the north of Lincolnshire the prevalence of dissent has had the useful effect of creating a competition for the children, and in the larger towns hardly any escape being connected with some school or another. On parts of the Wolds, the population being very scattered, some children have long distances to go, but the schools are in general good. On the Heath the population is almost altogether collected into large villages, and is therefore easily within reach of schools. In the Marsh there has been, from the absence of residents, more difficulty in raising and maintaining schools, but the energy of the clergy, and of some tenant farmers, has succeeded in surmounting it, and the district is now well supplied. In the deaneries of Holland, including both Fen and Marsh, the population is collected for the most part into large villages, but the number of outlying hamlets also makes it difficult to bring a school within reach of all children. This district is unfortunately rich in endowments (Evid. 273), which has had a tendency in many cases to deaden local energy. Very few of these endowed schools are good. One curious result has followed from the fact that school endowments have often been limited to boys. The necessity of providing a good education for girls has in some cases caused an excellent separate girls' school to be opened, which has far outstripped its more favoured rival.

120. Moreover, throughout the diocese of Lincoln (in no small degree owing to the exertions of its Bishop) really good schools are in most cases within reach of the mass of the population. Of the Fen and Marsh, described by H. M. inspector of schools, as "not an encouraging field of educational work," the Rev. W. S. Thomason, after a careful survey, writes "There is hardly a house in the whole district "which is not within three miles as the crow flies of one of the Government schools, the deaneries of "Holland being an exception, as they are very richly endowed." (Evid. 273.)

121. Few large parishes indeed in this diocese are without a good school. Of the three very large and purely agricultural parishes unsupplied with one, which came under my notice, two were mainly owned by small freeholders and contained no large resident proprietor. Billinghay, with a population of 1,642, is shortly about to acquire a school, solely through the activity of its vicar; Billingborough, with 1,149, has the misfortune of an endowment. Belton, in the Isle of Axholme, with 1,871, is a large straggling parish divided into small properties. Moreover, in very large towns it is not enough to have one good school, even though within easy reach of the whole population. Take, for instance, Spalding. Here the mass of the very poor live in the suburbs of Little London, &c., within a mile of two good schools, yet practically very few do make their way to them, and the lowest class of the population is not touched by the present system.

122. But even in parishes where a good parish school exists, one or two dame schools will often flourish also. As a rule parents know and value a good school; yet the dame school has the advantage that the parent can get exactly what he pleases for his money. The very hard rule, too, which exists in some parishes of striking off the register of the parish school any children who go at all to work, causes the parents to prefer the greater independence of the private school. C.

123. Private schools are in two respects especially serving a very useful purpose. First, in the scattered parishes of the Fens. The growing tendency to place the labourer nearer to his work has increased every day the difficulty of providing schools within a reasonable distance of his home. Combination between such outlying groups of cottages, which are often situated in different parishes, is difficult to organize, and a private adventure school affords the only means of meeting the difficulty. For instance, at the enclosure of the East, West, and Wildmore Fens, allotments were made to parishes situate at considerable distances; on one side a combination has taken place and a good school, though temporarily closed at the time of my visit, has been established at New York. On the other, a private school at Mount Pleasant supplies the only education available to a considerable district.

124. Secondly, they are serving a very useful purpose in providing an education for the younger children in a village, where no separate infant school has been organized, or where some houses are too far distant for the children to be able to attend the principal school while young. Several schoolmasters spoke to me very highly of the close personal supervision which the children received in them, causing them to be better grounded in elementary knowledge than they would have been in the large parish school, where the younger ones would of necessity be mainly left to monitors. Many, however, of these private schools are very bad, and cannot provide anything like sufficient education. But where supplemented by a good school in an adjoining parish for the older children, they deserve every encouragement.

125. The clay districts of these counties present one common feature, that the villages vary in population from 100 to 400 or 500, and hardly ever exceed that number. This population unfortunately is that which finds most difficulty in affording a good school; and no one parish is large enough or rich enough to take upon itself the task of providing a good central school for the older children of adjoining parishes. In Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire this difficulty has been partly got over by the support of resident landowners, but throughout agricultural Leicestershire the number of good schools is far less, although schools of some sort are seldom wanting.

126. But as we approach the neighbourhood of Nottingham and Leicester, a far more disturbing element is introduced. Seaming and framework knitting absorb almost the whole population, while the large overgrown villages in the suburbs of these towns, for the welfare of which the owners of the land do not consider themselves responsible, as the inhabitants are not employed by them, are most ill-supplied with schools. The girls especially can begin such work as young as 6 or 7 years old, and many of them never attend school at all. The instances of ignorance in these districts which came under my notice far surpass anything that I met with even in ganging villages. And what tells worse still for the future of this portion of the population is, that the ignorance is greatest among the girls. But any detailed inquiry into these districts appeared to me to be beyond the scope of my instructions. It should nevertheless be added, that this state of things affects many rural parishes in Leicestershire, even a long way from the manufacturing towns.

127. In very few schools is any sort of industrial training given to girls; it is generally confined to sewing. "In Lincolnshire," says Mr. Sewell, in his report to the Privy Council in 1866, "special "attention has been paid to this subject, which has been fostered by the local prize scheme, and great "success is attained" (p. 200). This is the case at Louth and Long Sutton. The only other industrial training at all common is when the girls are required to help the schoolmistress in cleaning out the rooms. Industrial schools.

128. A few benevolent ladies have established privately the means of teaching girls to cook and do household work. An excellent education of this sort is given by Mrs. Hutton of Gate Burton. Similar schools are carried on by the Duchess of Newcastle and Lady Manvers in Notts. Miss Boucherett of Willingham has established a system, which has done much good, of taking out girls from the workhouse and putting them in small places to learn domestic duties. But the only case which came under my notice of a really self-supporting school, where cooking, &c. is taught, is that described by Mr. Parker at Well. (Evid. 9.)

129. The question of night schools occupied my attention throughout my district. In Lincolnshire not one quarter of the parishes which I visited had one. About the same proportion existed in Nottinghamshire. Almost all of them had tried it. The usual story was, "We began very well, but they "soon began to drop off, and so we haven't one this year." In Leicestershire, where the day schools are inferior to those in the other two counties, many more night schools are in existence. Throughout the clay districts the population lies more in the village, and the scholars have a comparatively short distance to go. Hence something like one half the parishes were provided with a night school, more or less systematically conducted. In Leicestershire there were even more, and, the farmers having for the most part given up the plan of hiring lads into their houses, the latter are more their own masters and better able to attend a night school. Night schools.

130. One difficulty in the way of night schools is the want of teachers. "Amateurs soon tire of this "work" (Evid. 6), nor are they in general fit for it. The short time available for instruction, and the greater age of the pupils, requires a more experienced teacher. But in many agricultural villages where is he to be found? Sometimes there is no master; if there is one, he has been teaching in the day school for five hours, and very probably is overtired already. Many farmers come forward to help the clergyman in teaching; but sometimes there are none to do so. Night schools will not answer where "there is not a single person of easy circumstances to assist the lighting and warming of the "room, or of leisure and qualifications to help in the teaching." (Evid. 200.)

131. This, however, which might perhaps be got over by some such plan as that suggested by several witnesses (Evid. 6, 9), of a perambulating teacher for such schools, is not the only difficulty. Night

C.

work, for lads often have their horses to attend to till 8 p.m., keeps away the very class to whom they would be most valuable. Even if the work ends earlier, few have the energy or the constitutional ability to change their clothes, swallow a hasty meal, and go off to a night school after 12 hours' work. Then the hours of sleep and rest, which "it is not desirable to abridge" (Evid. 9), must be sacrificed.

132. Many employers are opposed to such schools, from a dislike to the farm lads being off the premises, and the hiring of such lads takes place now at an earlier age than formerly. This is especially the case if the distance to the school is long, and in many parishes it must be so. In a great parish like Holbeach (till recently divided, 17 miles long), with a scattered population, one school, or even half a dozen, would not suffice. "An 8 ft. ditch on each side of the road which is unlighted," (Evid. 206) is a formidable obstacle; and under the present system of putting the labourer nearer to his place of labour, this is likely to be an increasing difficulty.

133. Then, too, old and young must be separated. Grown up men, who are naturally unwilling to be taught like children, dislike still more to be taught in the presence of children. In some parishes this difficulty is met by having two classes on different nights. If girls are allowed to come, a new perplexity arises, but very few permit this. In some cases both girls and boys come, and the school bell is tolled when the girls start home, a quarter of an hour before the boys.

134. It is no wonder that one witness, writing from the Marsh district in Lincolnshire, says, "I "know of no good night school in rural parishes?" Night schools may certainly fill a very useful part where they are practicable, but they cannot be reckoned upon as an essential part of a national system of education.

II. School Results.

135. What the work now being done in these schools is, must be judged of by the proportion of the juvenile population receiving instruction and by the amount of their attendance. In Lincolnshire I selected the wapentake of Aveland, as containing a fair proportion of favoured and also of neglected parishes, and visited almost every school in person. From the returns thus obtained it appears that 15½ per cent. of the population are on the books of some school. (Evid. 274.) This average was affected by the existence of two very good schools, which drew to themselves scholars from the adjoining parishes. On the other hand (and this shows the fallacy of such returns), in the largest parish, Billinghay, the number of children of school age amounted to 25 per cent. of the population, but only 15 per cent. were at school. Here the parish school was very bad, but the willingness of the people to send their children to school is proved by the attendance at the night school, which was taught by a competent master, and where children of all ages were allowed to come. (Evid. 263.) Throughout Lincolnshire the proportion appeared to me to be about the same, exceeding it a little in the north, and falling short of it in the south. In the villages in Nottinghamshire which I visited, the proportion on the books of schools varied from 11 to 13½ per cent. of the population.

136. It was often said, "There are several families here attending no day school at all," but the instances were not numerous, where the fact actually proved to be that none of the children were or had been at any school, although in almost every parish of any size there were some such cases. In the small and purely agricultural villages the proportion of children absolutely untouched by schooling is very small, but in the case of the larger villages, which I might almost describe as towns, I invariably found some families which absolutely neglected any means of education for their children. This seemed to me to be partly due to the greater difference of classes in such places, and to the poorest class being unwilling to send their children to a school which they looked upon as intended for those in a superior position in life, and where, as they thought, too high a description of education was given.

137. The average attendance, however, at these schools shows a very different state of things. In the wapentake of Aveland, to which I have alluded, the proportion of children in average attendance to those on the books was about one-half in summer, and less than three-fourths in winter, and this I found to be the general proportion throughout Lincolnshire. In the clay parishes both in this and the other counties the proportion in average attendance was much higher (Evid. 360), but the families are poorer and cannot keep their children at school to so late an age.

138. Nor is the amount of attendance which is expressed by the term 'average' always very high. One schoolmaster says of his school: "Eighty-three are sons of agricultural labourers, who attend on an "average less than this" (viz., one-third of the school year, which may be taken to be 70 days). (Evid. 185.) But this is a point difficult to ascertain with accuracy, because the average is much raised by the very regular attendance of the youngest children.

Effect of field work.

139. It is hardly necessary to say that the main cause of this irregularity is field work. The greater cultivation of root crops and the large amount of land recently brought into cultivation, the very slight increase of population to meet those demands, and the increasing unwillingness of married women to go out to field labour has given rise to a much larger employment of children than formerly in Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire. They are employed at occasional jobs and are taken into regular service at a younger age.

140. The first result which follows from this is that their attendance also becomes irregular at an earlier age. "Even infant schools are affected by the demand for field work." In one parish the children going to such work included 12 boys and 5 girls of eight and under,—one girl was 6 only. (Evid. 83.) In one village on the Wolds "some few have gone as early as 6, but 8 is above the "usual age." At Croyland, "in the summer only infants attend." (Evid. 233.) At Dorrington, on the day of my visit, six boys and two girls under 7 were taken from school to work. (Evid. 110.)

141. The second result is that the age at which children finally leave school for work is gradually dropping. This is the case with girls as well as boys. "Twenty years ago," said one witness, "we kept "them till 12 or 13, but now it is rare to keep them till 10." (Evid. 189.) "The girls used to be "older and bigger than the boys; now they are about as young, and fewer in number." (Evid. 231.) Out of the 17 last children mentioned in the Kirton register as having finally left school, 8 were 9 years of age. (Evid. 66.) At Morton, "we cannot depend upon their staying at school at all after 9." (Evid. 254.) At Warsop (Notts) "a great many boys leave altogether at eight years old. At that age

they will have got to read a chapter in the Testament, they can write a little on a slate, and some of them on paper." (Evid. 299.) C.

142. The number of boys on the books of any school at 10 years of age being small, the proportion of those who attend with any regularity falls in many cases to nothing. Taking all the inspected schools in his district (which includes most of Lincolnshire and Notts) the Rev. Capel Sewell says that out of 100 children on the books over six, only 37 per cent. have attended over 200 times, of which eight per cent. only were over 10 years of age. And remembering that in such schools especially, a great many farmers' children attend, probably very few indeed of these, if any, are the children of agricultural labourers. Even in Mr. Parker's excellent school on the Wolds (Evid. 9) no boys over 10 make an average attendance in summer. At Cranwell no boys over 10 are even on the books of any school; and in summer no girls of that age attend. So at Dorrington. At Deeping St. James, with a population of 1,763, there are only two boys in summer and 12 in winter. At Deeping St. Nicholas (1,180) only one and four respectively. At Billingboro' (1,149) 0 and 3.

143. In Leicestershire, however, the demands of field work do not draw off very young children from school, except for a limited period. But the schools are inferior; Government schools are not so much within reach, and in consequence even fewer children remain at school after 10. Girls, too, from the work of seaming which they can do at home, attend far worse than the boys. In all the clay district the demand for plough-driving lads is so great, that most boys leave school at 9. In two parishes only was there apparently very much difference in respect of attendance in summer or winter. (Evid. 360.)

144. But the little knowledge they have thus gained appears to be very quickly lost. In one village (Stubton), in which the demands for field-work are not very great, the Rev. W. S. Hampson says:—

"A boy leaves school from 9 to 11 years of age, with a fair amount of knowledge for his age, and abilities. He then goes to farm work, is generally within a few years hired by the year, and lives in a farmer's house, most commonly in a strange parish. There is no opportunity of keeping up what he knows, and by the time he is 16 he has forgotten nearly all he has learnt. Many of the farm servants might, to judge from what they know, have come from Central Africa."

To the same effect speaks Mr. Stockdale, of Bole, Nottinghamshire:—

"In this parish all learn to read and write and do a little arithmetic; but they leave school generally so very early that they soon forget almost all." (Evid. 309.)

145. With respect to the larger villages, the evidence is almost unanimous as to the state of education among the young agricultural population. The Rev. Prebendary Perry, of Waddington, says:—

"Taking the lowest standard of a sufficient education for an agricultural labourer, I believe that more than one-half of the population is growing up without it. There are probably very few who grow up without some knowledge of the above subjects." (Evid. 86.)

At Langtoft, the Rev. J. S. Warren says of the candidates for confirmation,—

"This year, out of 20 boys that came to me averaging 16 years old, seven could not read at all, and 10 could not write at all. With others the power was too small to be of any practical use. The girls were better. Out of 14, three could not read, and eight could not write." (Evid. 250.)

At Long Sutton,—

"Out of a night school averaging 40, only 15 can read thoroughly, write fairly, and work the compound rules." (Evid. 166.)

146. The result of my own inquiries leads me to the same conclusion. Out of 180 children in Lincolnshire over 10, and actually engaged in field work on the day on which I examined them, 42 could not read or write, 36 could read only, 60 could read and write a little, while only 42 had received a really satisfactory education in these respects; but no less than 31 out of the 42 who were uneducated, came from towns or large open villages. On one farm between Retford and Worksop, out of 15 lads between 12 and 16, four could neither read nor write (three of them coming from large towns), and two could read only; five were well educated. One employer at Deeping St. James, says:—

"I have 10 boys only; of these four cannot read or write. I asked them to-day, and I was much surprised, because I knew two of those who could not read to have been at school a great deal." (Evid. 242.)

147. In Leicestershire the state of education is difficult to estimate, from the large admixture of a non-agricultural population. I may, however, safely say that the instances of the gross and utter ignorance of whole families which were brought under my notice in the manufacturing villages far exceed any in agricultural parishes. From the very early age at which both boys and girls leave school, and the deficiency of good schools, the state of education cannot but be placed considerably lower than that in the adjoining counties.

Effect of school payments.

148. The effect of the pecuniary resources of families upon school attendance involves not only the question of the loss of earnings, but also that of school payments. The payments in my district vary from 1*d.* to 3*d.*, 4*d.*, and even 6*d.* in private schools; 2*d.* may be said to be the ordinary charge; and is found in most places to secure a better attendance than free schools or a lower charge. Some indeed maintain that the charge may be raised higher, provided that a reasonable deduction be made in case of several children of one family with a proportionate advantage to the regularity of attendance. An instance of a good working school where a higher charge is made, and received whether the child attends or not, may be found at Welton. (Evid. 81.) "One penny a week for schooling can be "paid by the very poorest, even for five children at once; the charge here is usually 2*d.* Most people "can pay that." (Evid. 53.) This small payment, however, does affect attendance in this way, that "the parents like to get a week's schooling for a week's wage. They won't pay if there is any "chance of their children getting any employment in the fields even for a day." (Evid. 148.)

C.

149. Few practical teachers have mentioned this to me as the real difficulty. In the case of children too young for work, not only does no question of losing their earnings arise, but the parents are willing enough to send them to get them out of the way. Instances of this may be found throughout the evidence. Some families certainly maintain that they cannot send their children because of boots or clothes; but many cases have been mentioned to me where such children were provided with boots or sent free, and yet have failed to take advantage of it.

Indifference of parents.

150. Nor does indifference on the part of the parents appear to be as common as might be supposed, although on this point there is very great difference of opinion. Few poor families do not profess at any rate to see the advantage of education, and the promotion of private adventure schools in the poorest districts, and the eagerness of the poor to avail themselves of any opportunities afforded prove that in many districts they do set a value upon it. They have known cases where some in their own station of life have raised themselves by means of it, and this in itself is a strong inducement to them to seek it for their children.

151. But the standard of education which they set before themselves as sufficient for their children is in most cases very low. The moral duty of providing them with a good education is not much regarded. While they cannot be self-supporting, they are sent to school as the cheapest way of getting rid of them; but the moment that their services become valuable they are withdrawn. And so not only field-work, but nursing at home, seaming, or taking out their father's dinner, are all admitted as excuses to justify it. At Gedney Drove End I found many girls kept at home to look after lodgers. Such an employment, as giving them some knowledge of home duties, was probably the best of all.

152. In places where there is very much employment for children there is another cause, besides the desire of parents to make their children self-supporting, which operates very strongly in keeping children from school. This is the independence which it is in the nature of field work to engender, and which renders the children very unwilling to submit to dictation from their parents. "The father "is at work all day, and seldom sees them, and perhaps he does not care. The mother does care "much more, but the boy is her master." (Evid. 224.) When a boy begins to earn tenpence a day he becomes practically independent.

Effect of distance.

153. Distance from school appears to be one of the least difficulties with which schoolmasters have to contend, except in the depth of winter. Even in the Fen districts children go two or three miles to school, and such pupils are among the most regular attendants, and almost always the most punctual. In one case a little boy of six came over three miles every day to school. (Evid. 243.) Two miles at any rate, is not looked upon as too far, even for young children, and the number of children in these counties who are at that distance from a school is very small.

III. Suggestions for improvement.

154. Under your instructions I made inquiries among all classes as to the best means of improving education, and especially as to the practicability of devoting part of the children's time to school, leaving the rest for work.

155. The system of requiring children to attend school part of every day on which they work, has not been suggested to me as practicable in agricultural districts by any person with whom I have conversed, or who has made any return to the Commission. In one or two cases it has been attempted by the clergy on their own glebes, but not with any idea that it was generally possible. If every boy worked close to the school it might be feasible, but where some of them work, as must be the case in every parish, a mile away from it, or, as in many parishes, two or three miles, the amount of time absolutely lost is a serious obstacle to its adoption. Besides this the necessity for changing dress, the weariness and sleepiness which must inevitably follow field labour for five or six hours in the morning, and the great inconvenience which it would occasion to farm-work and to adult labour, appears to render its general adoption impossible.

156. The alternate day system has been recommended by two or three persons in my district, but on this point the experience of Mr. Paget at Ruddington is so important that I shall first give a short account of his system, as to which further information will be found in the evidence. (Evid. 275–281.)

System at Ruddington.

157. The village of Ruddington has a population of 2,283. It is partly occupied by stockingers. It is five miles from Nottingham, and the neighbourhood of the large towns raises the price of agricultural labour above that of the country districts. Mr. Paget's farm is one mile nearer.

158. The boys employed on it are divided into two sets; each set is required to attend school on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday in one week, and on Tuesday and Thursday in the next. On the other days, and on every Saturday, they work on the farm. By this means the school-work is less interrupted, as the boys go through the regular weekly school course once a fortnight. This rule is suspended in harvest during the school holidays, and at other times whenever there is a press of work to be done, as for instance when mangolds are taken up in October. Mr. Paget has therefore this advantage, that he can at any time double his force without any extra expense beyond the payment for the actual work done. This irregularity has taken place on an average for 19 days in each year, thus reducing the number of days on which the children attend school to an average of 91.

159. Boys begin to work upon the farm at 9 years old, and continue sometimes to work upon it till their 14th year. Before entering upon the farm they are required to be able to read tolerably.

160. This system has now been tried for 14 years. The children are said "never to be weary of "school or work;" to work with more pleasure and spirit for the occasional rest, and when at the age of 13 entirely emancipated from school attendance, to have "acquired a knowledge of the business of "life," and to plough and do farm-work as well as any other boys of the same age, as indeed they should do after 210 days farm-work in each year. I have received letters from several of the employers of these boys at a later age, who speak highly of their "habits of industry" and good conduct.

161. Besides this, "their progress at school is nearly equal to that of those whose sole business is "attending school." "Their education is far better on an average," says Mr. Paget, "than that of "boys who have attended school without work up to 12 years" (Evid. 276). Mr. Spencer, the excellent

master, says "the half-timers take as good a position in our school as those who come whole time, and "do not have any great difficulty in keeping up with them. In the case of some boys the change is "almost necessary." (Evid. 277.) One of the half-timers says, "We took our places in our classes with "the other boys as if we had never been away. We were obliged to do work in the evenings to keep "up." (Evid. 282.) C.

162. Letters have been handed to me from no less than 20 half-timers (some of whom left school 10 years ago), written in January last. With hardly an exception, they were as good as could be desired, and were expressed better than the letters of most persons in that position of life. I had also the opportunity of seeing personally no less than 10, all of whom read well, wrote a good hand, and could do the simple and compound rules of arithmetic fairly well. Six who had just left school, (of whom two only were employed on Mr. Paget's farm, the others being the children of stockingers putting themselves voluntarily under the system,) also answered simple questions in history and geography. On the whole I was thoroughly satisfied that the education they received was even better than would be required of every poor man's child.

163. The main fact proved by this experiment (and this is unaffected by the advantages under which it has been tried, to which I shall presently allude) appears to me to be, that a sufficiently good education can be given by a system of mixed work and schooling, involving an attendance at school of only 90 days in the year, while at the same time the training of the boy for his future occupation in life is not impaired; and this education is of such a character that its effect is not lost when the boy leaves school. But one condition is necessary, and that is the foundation of Mr. Paget's system, viz., that a boy entering upon it must have received a sound elementary education.

164. This education is easily obtainable in Ruddington. The feeling of the whole place was strongly in favour of it, and no better proof can be afforded of this than the willingness of almost all the children to submit themselves to a voluntary examination at 9 years of age, an account of which will be found in the Appendix.* Secondly, the educational machinery is excellent. There is a free school for boys, and Mr. Spencer, the excellent and indefatigable master, has an energy which has leavened the whole population in favour of education. Then there is a very good national school under Government inspection. More than one-seventh of the population of Ruddington are on the books of this school alone, and its excellence is shown by the fact that the proportion who have qualified for the Government inspector's examination by an attendance of 200 times is, when compared with the ordinary average, as 60 to 37.

165. To these advantages we may add the personal support and assistance given by Mr. Paget, constantly and without intermission, to the cause of education; the system of prizes instituted by him, but above all the neighbourhood of a thriving town, which not only quickens up and brightens the population, but shows them practically that an educated boy or girl can get on in the world, and that their own boys and girls are no exception to the rule.

166. The second lesson to be deduced from this experiment appears to me to be, that the alternate day system in its strictness, tried under favourable circumstances, has broken down. On this subject Mr. Paget says:—

"Farming employment differs from that in factories, inasmuch as it depends much more on weather and seasons; if, therefore, any legislation is proposed respecting farm children, it should be marked by considerable elasticity, at the same time securing that the intervals between school attendance should be short."

And having found that it is difficult or impossible to carry it out even on his own farm, Mr. Paget recommends for general adoption a modified system.

167. "Farm-work depends on weather and the seasons." But this does not state the whole case against the adoption of a rigid half-time system. At certain times the whole juvenile population of a village is employed. At corn-harvest this is generally the case; so at potato-harvest, flax harvest, or hop-picking in the districts where these occur; and besides this, much of the work is executed by contract, the father engaging to do it with the help of a child. To take away that child is to stop his work. Again, the circumstances of the supply of labour and the demands of cultivation vary not only from county to county, but from village to village, and almost from farm to farm; and this appears to me to be a fatal objection to the adoption of one system in one district and another in the next. It would be found in practice, however small the districts, that some unexpected peculiarity necessitated the adoption of the least rigid system, and this would become the only one in use.

168. The plan suggested by Mr. Paget as calculated to meet the requirements of agriculture in his neighbourhood is, to hold a test examination in reading at 9 years of age, and from that till 13, to require 90 days school attendance in each year. Eight of these days are to be in each of nine months, and the remainder at any time that suits the convenience of the farmer. (Evid. 276.)

169. A somewhat more elastic scheme is suggested by the Rev. J. M. Lakin as applicable to Leicestershire, namely, that the attendance should be all completed during three summer months and three winter months, leaving the other half-year free. (Evid. 326.) That the attendance should be permitted to be made at any time during the year is proposed by several witnesses. Thus the Rev. J. S. Warren says:—

"I do not see that any inconvenience would arise from a child being obliged, before employment in labour, to produce a certificate that he has made a certain number of attendances at some school during the 12 months last past. This would enable employers to avail themselves of child labour when most required, and would

* The good effects of this competition were everywhere apparent. Nothing struck me more than the way in which the boys themselves could tell me about each other, in what class, or of what age they were, and what their mental attainments were as compared with themselves.

C. allow parents to select the times of year and the kinds of employment best suited to their children's health and power." (Evid. 250.)

170. A scheme proposed by the Rev. E. Willes is somewhat similar, but provides for the emancipation of children from any restrictions if they pass an inspector's examination in each year, and allows attendance at night-school to be counted. (Evid. 329, and see 2, 136, 251.)

171. That some such system would be sufficiently elastic many employers of labour agree in thinking, although the age at which it should terminate is more disputed. "All under 12 can get their winter at school." (Evid. 15.) "Children might go to school all the year till they are 10. "From 10 to 12 they might go all the winter; after that they might go a quarter of a year." (Evid. 18.) These two witnesses speak of the Wold district, where boys are much wanted in winter. In the Isle of Axholme, "the children ought to be educated in the winter. Up to 12 or 14 they "could well be spared." (Evid, 133, 151.) In the potato districts many speak to the same effect. (Evid. 168, 170, 188.)

172. So, in Nottinghamshire, one employer says:—

"I should approve of the children being half their time at school from 8 to 10 years of age, and from 10 to 12 at the rate of one day a week, or even two days, if the times of year when there is a great press of work, are excluded." (Evid. 284, 287, 288.)

In Leicestershire, owing to the especial requirement of plough-driving lads from 10 to 12 years of age, many fewer employers hold this view. This difficulty, to which I shall refer again presently, is made light of in some cases. (Evid. 335, 340.)

173. Such, however, is not the general opinion of farmers, partly (as I believe) from a mistaken idea as to the amount of interference which would be caused to the employment of children by an attendance of (say) 100 days in the year. Farmers are almost universally anxious that boys at any rate should be free for field work at 10, if not at 9 years of age. One witness expresses their feeling clearly. "After 10 it would not desirable to compel attendance, for when once a boy has commenced farm work "the employment is pretty constant, and unless his whole time were given to it the feeling would be "strong that he can never become a good farm servant." (Evid. 9.) When pressed with the objection that this does not meet one of the principal defects in the present system, namely, that boys are leaving school too early, a variety of expedients are suggested. Some propose compulsory attendance at a night school. The Lincolnshire Chamber of Agriculture proposes that a certificate of attendance from 7 to 9 years of age should be required, and that no restrictions should be put upon children after that age. (Evid. 1.) More commonly the simple prohibition from field labour up to 9 or 10 is thought sufficient. (Evid. 325.) "They would then have time to obtain sufficient instruction to suit their "circumstances in life." (Evid. 63, 81.) But one of these witnesses adds, "Before 10, with nothing "but memory to rub at, and no reason," a boy forgets all he learns in a few weeks. (Evid. 81.)

174. In all clay districts, however, as I have already pointed out, some boys of 10 and upwards, and all boys of 12 at any rate, are constantly sent with horses all the year, while the employment for younger boys is very occasional. In this case, therefore, if the result of requiring a certain attendance in every year up to 12 or 13 were to prevent such boys from being employed at all in this kind of regular work, no doubt considerable loss would result to the families. As regards the farmers, however, I do not see that they would have much cause for complaint. At the worst they could return to the old hiring system, and take lads rather older than this into their houses. And of such lads for regular work there is no complaint of any real deficiency.

175. The district in which exclusion from field work up to 10 or 11 years of age would be the greatest hardship is that in which potatoes are grown on a large scale. Potato harvest affords light, easy, and well paid work for very young children, lasting only a few weeks, which often include their school holiday. Any such exclusion would probably have the effect of diminishing the area under this crop.

176. But wherever, as in Lincolnshire and great parts of Notts, young children are much in request for agricultural labour, there can be no question whether the total exclusion of such children from field work to the age of 10 or 11, or a requirement of attendance at school during half the school year, would have the greater effect in diminishing their earnings on the whole. Speaking generally, young children do not get more than three months, or in the Fens, probably six or seven months' work in the year. And it is only at 11 years of age, as a rule, or more often at 12, that they are required for winter work. Take, for instance, one farm that I visited on the Wolds, one quarter of which is under turnips. Here I found that no boy between 11 and 13 was employed actually more than 33 weeks in the year, leaving 19 weeks or 95 school days when they were absolutely unemployed. On the other hand though none of the boys between 9 and 11 worked for any longer, and most of them for a less period, their average yearly earnings amounted to 4*l.* 7*s.* So that to require 100 days school attendance in each year from 8 to 13 would have been to deprive the families of very little money, and hardly to interfere for a single day with the requirements of the farmer. The best proof of this is, that many parents in Lincolnshire voluntarily adopt this system, and the acquirements of their children, so far as I could test them by personal examination, appeared to me little inferior to those of the more regular attendants of the labouring class. Some boys under 13 are, no doubt, employed all the year in these districts, but, in order that a farmer may be sure of such labour at certain seasons, he will often employ it at other times when not absolutely necessary to him.

177. As regards the early training of boys to habits of industry and obedience, and the accustoming them to open air work, it is most important that they should not be kept from field work to too late an age. I is even doubtful whether it is not actually an advantage to their education also. Some schoolmasters go so far as to advocate irregular schooling. (Evid. 29.) From very continuous attendance at school, "they get tired of it, and fall into careless habits." (Evid. 317.) On the other hand, most of them prefer regularity, as interfering less with the general work of the school. But supposing 100 days' attendance to be required, this would be almost always completed in the winter alone (though for

certain special cases it would be hard to make this compulsory) and would produce far greater regularity than the present system. C.

178. The effect of such restrictions upon the resources of poor families in these counties appears to me to have been over estimated. If carried so far as to exclude the children from labour altogether, it would be very widely felt, but if half a year's work at any rate is still left open, it would not be a very serious loss. It is not low but high wages that send boys out early to work. The amount of work done by them is no test of the necessity of their earnings to their families.

179. A very serious question, however, to both employers and employed is the age at which any restrictions should cease. The age of 12 recommended itself on many gronnds. Throughout these counties boys can get employment almost all the year at that age, and in most cases, not before that age; and in the event of restrictions upon the labour of young boys, would be sure of getting it. It is the age at which boys usually begin to learn how to drive a plough, and other more skilled work. In Leicestershire some begin this sooner, but in a table, which will be found in the evidence (Evid. 328), two-thirds of all the boys under 14 employed were over 12 years of age.

180. The age at which any half-time system should begin would naturally be fixed at the same as that under the Factory Acts, and there is one strong ground for this. The manufacturing and agricultural populations are so intermingled in some counties that to fix a later age for the one would be only to open to the other a means of evading the rule which applied to it.

181. Before, however, any half-time system can be successful, it appears to me that there are two points requiring special attention. Better support must be given to infant schools. "All children "should read at 7 years old," says one witness. The creation of many such schools in scattered hamlets should be encouraged. They might be occasionally visited and inspected by a certificated teacher. The parents have every disposition to send their children to such schools, because it is to their advantage to be rid of them.

182. Secondly, boards of guardians should be required to do what by law they are now empowered to do with the consent of parents, viz., to send the children of the poor receiving out-door relief to school. The young children of such families are often forced out to work on every day that they can get it, and no provision whatever is made for their education.

Cottages.

183. Although in my introductory remarks I have already touched upon the distribution of cottages throughout these counties, the importance attached to this subject (and especially in Lincolnshire,) induces me to return to it. There is no point more keenly discussed by the farmers than the increasing scarcity of labour. In Lincolnshire not only has the amount of work to be done been increased by better cultivation, and by the reclamation of untilled tracts, while the population has remained almost stationary, but, in addition to this, the younger portion of the labourers are being attracted into the towns, leaving only the old or the ignorant behind.

184. It is from this cause that the question of how to keep their labour at home has become a vital one to employers. Wages have already risen and seem likely to rise, but all seem agreed that the one great means of doing so is to provide decent homes at a reasonable distance from work, in which the young men may be induced to settle. "Once put a man into a really good house," it was often said to me, "and his wife won't let him leave it."

185. This question, important as it was before the passing of the Union Chargeability Act, has vastly increased in interest since that time. With the passing of that Act almost all motive for preventing the proper distribution of labour was removed. It became a gain, instead of a loss, to a farmer to have his labour in his own parish, and, therefore, indirectly a benefit also to the landlord. Hence the great cry in Lincolnshire has been, and is, for more cottages and better ones.

186. Many landlords have at once admitted the necessity of the case. The late Lord Yarborough and the late Mr. Heneage were almost the only two who anticipated it by building cottages on their estates. But within the last few years the number of cottages built on many estates has been very large. On some few of the large properties which I visited hardly any improvement has taken place.

187. The effect of the change, so far as it has at present gone, has been for the most part to replace bad cottages by good ones. The old style of cots in this county was built of "mud and stud." They were mostly in two stories, the upper one open to the roof, and sometimes without any window. Two, or more generally one bedroom sufficed. Some instances of this may still be seen in most open villages; in the parishes belonging to large landowners they have generally disappeared. The following table, will, however, show the state of one or two such parishes:—

Name of Parish.	No. of Cottages with 3 Bedrooms.	No. of Cottages with 2 Bedrooms.	No. of Cottages with 1 Bedroom.	Average Inhabitants to each One-bedroomed Cottage.
Gayton-le-Marsh - -	1	7	22	$4\frac{1}{3}$
Alvingham - - -	2	19	26	$3\frac{1}{6}$ } A large proportion of the second bedrooms are only apologies for rooms.
Cockerington - - -	0	22	11	3 }
Willoughton - - -	2 or 3	38	60	—
Silk Willoughby - -	4	24	11	—
Scredington - - -	5	40	10	—
North Rauceby - -	2	20	11	3
South Rauceby - -	8	23	27	$4\frac{1}{4}$ { 1 contains 10, 1 contains 9, 1 contains 8, 2 contain 7, 3 contain 6, &c.

These villages are the worst that came under my notice. A few others, and especially such as are on the property of Lord Dysart, were described to me as almost as bad.

C. 188. Some few of the villages in the east of Notts are still full of bad cots, but "mud and stud" has for the most part disappeared, and been replaced by brick houses of a more or less substantial description. Most of these have two bedrooms only, although the more modern ones, such as those built by the Speaker of the House of Commons, have three, and contain every accommodation.

189. In Leicestershire the cottages must be described as generally bad. Their average state is far below those of Lincolnshire. In the villages occupied by stockingers they are almost universally wretched and overcrowded. Perhaps the main cause of this in this county has been the building upon the waste, which has taken place to a very large extent; and great additional crowding is produced in the hunting season by the number of grooms and helpers who have to be lodged in the villages. One peculiarity of these villages is the absence of gardens, so that the cottages are built close up to the side of the road, and a much less pleasant appearance is produced. Allotments, however, are almost universal. In spite of this general inferiority some landowners have very much improved their cots. All Lord Howe's villages are most agreeable to the eye, contain excellent cottages, and (what is far more rare) almost enough of them. So with Lord Berners' estate.

190. Another cause which has tended very much to crowding in these and the adjoining counties is the existence of the old "parish" cottages, built for the accommodation of the poor of each parish, and commonly very badly constructed, small, and with one bedroom only. The object for which they were erected having determined, they are now let, at a low rent certainly, but in many cases without any regard to the number of persons who are to occupy them. At Gayton, for instance, there are nine such one-bedroom cottages, containing 36 persons. (Evid. 194.)

191. But after all much of the overcrowding is due to the families themselves. "Families often "occupy one bedroom in a crowded state, and leave the other unoccupied, except by a chance lodger." Instances of this will be found throughout the evidence. It must undoubtedly be admitted that the poor have no great horror of crowding. One very remarkable case in Leicestershire was mentioned to me where a grandfather and grandmother, with several growing grandchildren, lived in one bedroom. But they also took in a young married couple, in the same bed with whom one of the children was put to sleep. Unless they are carefully watched they will often fill the house with lodgers. Sometimes a newly married couple are put into a small cottage, and though their family may grow too large for it, they have by that time become so attached to it as to be unwilling to quit it for a better. This is the case under large proprietors.

192. One conclusion, to which the instances of overcrowding which are detailed in the evidence, and which are selected from among many such cases, appears to lead, is that some better system of inspection is necessary. The usual plan now adopted by Boards of Guardians is, to appoint their relieving officers to be also inspectors of nuisances in their respective districts, with a small additional stipend. But these officers have established the idea that it is not for them to move unless called upon, and the inadequacy of the remuneration for any substantial services has uniformly produced the result that no cases are reported to the Board by their inspectors, unless actual complaint is made to them. Hence the very worst and most notorious cases remain unaltered, and it seems to be nobody's business to look after them.

193. There is a strong feeling in Lincolnshire that Government should give assistance in providing cottages for the labouring class, and especially on entailed estates. No doubt under the 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114. the Enclosure Commissioners are authorized to charge upon the inheritance any sum to be borrowed for this purpose of landowners, but they have nothing to do with lending the money, By the companies which have been formed for this purpose, the rate of interest charged is so high, and the time within which the sum borrowed is to be repaid is so short, that all those whom I found to have tried the system spoke to me unfavourably of it. It is urged that Government should become themselves the lenders as they have already done under other Acts for similar purposes, and so save the labourer the expense of having to communicate with two separate bodies before he can get an advance.

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194. In concluding this Report, I am anxious to express my gratitude to the many persons in these counties, from whom I have received the greatest kindness and hospitality, and who devoted much time and attention to the furtherance of the objects of the Commission.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

EDWARD STANHOPE.

10, King's Bench Walk, Temple, E.C.,
July 7, 1868.

REPORT.—By the Hon. E. B. PORTMAN.

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To Her Majesty's Commissioners.

Gentlemen,

1. I have now the honour to lay before you the evidence which I have obtained in the county of Cambridge, and in the three Ridings of Yorkshire, but in consequence of the inquiry in the latter portion of my district being unavoidably prolonged to within a few weeks of the end of the session, it is not in my power to do more in my Report of this year than call your attention to the leading facts as set forth in the evidence, and sketch out as far as I can the present condition of the agricultural labourer in these counties. D.

2. I have received from all classes connected with the agricultural interests such assistance as might be in their power in forwarding the objects of the inquiry with which I have been entrusted by you under this Commission. And in laying this report before you I wish to express my acknowledgments of their kindness and willingness to aid me. The numerous questions involved in the inquiry have necessitated considerable closeness of investigation, and it has been difficult to obtain accurate and reliable information on some of the points.

3. I have usually placed myself in communication by letter with the landowners and the clergy of the various localities, and have distributed 212 copies of your circular of inquiries, of which 116 have been returned to me.

4. I have attended meetings of Boards of Guardians and Chambers of Agriculture, and have at many places, by the aid of some resident, been able to organise meetings of the influential persons of the neighbourhood, for the purpose of discussing the subject. I have also endeavoured, by personal inquiry, to ascertain the views of the labourers themselves, and have at the schools obtained from the children much information as to their actual employment, the rate of wages, and the age at which they commence work. I have found that the mere issuing of the circular of inquiries was not sufficient to obtain the desired information. Whereas in certain parts of the counties the private gang system was Mode of proceeding.

D.

not found to exist at all, many people on receiving the circular were disposed to say, "We have no "system of this kind in our parts," and consequently they did not go into the other questions contained in the circular, unless it was pointed out to them that the object of the Commission was to obtain as far as possible the opinions of practical men, and of those best acquainted with the condition of the agricultural labourer, on the general question of the welfare and education of that class. I therefore found it necessary personally to visit a large number of individuals.

5. Another difficulty, and more particularly in Yorkshire, was, that the subject was an entirely new one to most persons, that the farmers had never turned their attention to the subject, or had even imagined that an inquiry would be set on foot as to the condition of their labourers. The two counties over which my inquiries have been extended differ so materially in the condition of the agricultural labourer that, without desiring to contrast unfavourably to either the state of things existing in them, it will be necessary at times to set forth the distinguishing features of each.

6. I have endeavoured to obtain in each county evidence from districts which may fairly be considered representative of the county or riding in which they are situated.

Number of children employed not to be accurately obtained.

7. I have not been able to obtain anything like accurate evidence of the number of children employed. In many parishes the employment is so very occasional that the farmers or the schoolmasters were unable to afford any information as to the number so employed. Again, the same boys will probably work for more than one farmer in the parish, and if each farmer had made an accurate return of the number of boys which he has employed, we should then have had a total exceeding the number of children in the parish that go to field work at all. I have therefore refrained from drawing up any tabular statement on this head, as I feel sure that no reliance could be placed on such a return.

Divisions of Cambridgeshire.

8. The county of Cambridge may be divided into Cambridgeshire proper, and the Isle of Ely. The latter is almost entirely a fen district; in the former the soil differs. The district extending from Royston to Newmarket is for the most part light land, there is a district of heavy clay, and there is also a district of fen and skirt land running from St. Ives by Swavesey, Cottenham, and Burwell, nearly to the borders of Suffolk. Throughout the fen districts public gangs are mostly used. In the southern part of the county, and on the light lands, private gangs exist in the spring of the year and at the time of turnip-hoeing.

Portions of Yorkshire visited.

9. The East Riding of Yorkshire is a purely agricultural district, and may be divided into: (1) Holderness, (2) the Wolds, (3) the Vale of York and Howdenshire. The portion of the West Riding adjoining the East Riding to which I have confined my inquiries excludes all the large manufacturing districts. I have visited a large portion of the North Riding, including a part of the plain of York, the dales in the neighbourhood of Whitby and Pickering, Cleveland, and the more northern central portions of the Riding, comprising the neighbourhood of Richmond, Bedale, and Thirsk.

Size of farms.

10. The system of farming operations in those districts varies considerably. In the East Riding, on the Wolds the farms are in many cases very large, and the villages far distant from the farmhouses. On the stiffer lands, the farms are smaller and the labourers' dwellings in closer proximity to their work. In the North Riding and in part of the West near the moors, there is a class of small farmer, who by himself and his children does the whole work of the farm, and rarely, if ever, employs a labourer or hires a lad by the year? These farms vary in size from 10 to 50 acres.

11. The statutes or hiring fairs exist throughout Yorkshire for the hiring of farm servants, both male and female; in Cambridgeshire domestic servants only are hired at them. Every farmer, with the exception of the above-mentioned class, will have, according to the size of his occupation, a number of lads living in his house for the purpose of looking after the horses, ploughing, and doing all work connected with the cattle; these lads are hired at Martinmas for the year, they are lodged and boarded either in the house of the farmer or in that of a "hind" or foreman on the premises; the greater part of the work of the farm is done by these lads, but an occasional labourer will be employed throughout the year from the neighbouring villages.

Wages. Cambridgeshire.

12. The rate of wages for an ordinary day labourer in the Isle of Ely, and the northern part of Cambridgeshire, is 12*s.* and 13*s.* a week; in one instance, at Parsondrove, it was said to be 15*s.* per week. In that portion of the county adjoining Essex, and in the neighbourhood of the "Camps," they are 10*s.* a week; in the light lands south of Cambridge the average is 11*s.* a week. Women's wages throughout the country average 10*d.* a day. Children have from 4*d.* to 6*d.* a day.

Wages. Yorkshire.

13. In Yorkshire the average rate of wages is 14*s.* a week, or more frequently 2*s.* 6*d.* a day for a man, 1*s.* a day for a woman, and 10*d.* or 1*s.* for a child. 6*d.* a day extra is paid for machine work. In considering this point, it should be borne in mind that the earnings of a labouring man during the year are far in excess of the weekly average wage. The harvest pay must be taken into account, and much work, such as draining, banking, singling turnips, &c., is taken by the piece, under which system a man is able to earn more than he would at the ordinary weekly wage. There is "piece-work" for women and children, such as line-pulling,* and pea-picking, children being also much employed in singling turnips.

Piecework.

Wages for farm servants.

14. The payment for farm-servants in Yorkshire hired by the year and living on the premises is, on an average:—Foreman, 30*l.* a year and board; waggoner, 16*l.*, 20*l.*, a year and board; plough-lads, 10*l.*, to 14*l.*, a year and board. In cases where the lads are boarded in the house of the "hind," or foreman, the farmer allows 8*s.* a week per lad.

15. According to the evidence of Mr. Deacon, of Ormesby, the calculated cost per annum of a man is 40*l.*; of a lad of 16 to 18 years of age, 35*l.* to 37*l.*

Meating.

16. There is a custom in some parts of Yorkshire of paying so much money per week, say 7*s.* or 8*s.* and "meating" the man (as it is called). This is a bad system for the labourer's family, as there is little to take home at the end of the week for the support of the children. I find in Sir F. Doyle's report on Yorkshire in 1843, that the practice was then in vogue, and that the women complained as they do now. Several farmers expressed to me their dislike of the system, and it is not, I think, so common as in 1843.

* "Line-pulling" is pulling the flax crop; it is generally considered too hard work for children, and is for the most part done by women.

17. I propose to present to you the evidence under the following heads:— D.

(1.) Private gangs and the necessity for extending to them the provisions of the Agricultural Gangs Act.

(2.) The general employment of women and children in agriculture, the hours of work, and the wages.

(3.) The age at which boys should be prohibited from work and the means of improving their education (setting forth under this head the general state of education).

(4.) Cottages.

The evidence will be arranged in the order in which I visited the counties and ridings.

I.—Private Gangs and the Necessity for extending the Provisions of the Agricultural Gangs Act.

18. A private gang may be defined to be a company of not less than 10 children or young persons working for the farmer in his own fields under the superintendence of one of his own labourers. The largest number which I found existing in any private gang in Cambridgeshire was 25. On the Wolds of Yorkshire, at certain seasons of the year, and more especially in spring at the "ketlocking" or "brassacking" time, large numbers of children are employed, even sometimes as many as 80 or 100 may be taken from a neighbouring town to one farm; but these children are under the superintendence of the farmer's labourers, and are paid by the employer. There is no approach to the public gang system in Yorkshire, excepting in three isolated cases, to which I will call your attention in the evidence. This system, however, is rather declining as farming operations tend to improve the land. The private gangs in Cambridgeshire may be said to be universally employed on the light lands; their work usually commences in March, and during that month, April, and May they are employed in weeding the crops, in the autumn they are employed in gathering root crops, and in twitching, often till the middle of November. In the interval between May and harvest the children who compose these gangs are much employed in singling turnips, when a child usually goes with its father or some relative, and, though many may be at work at the same time and in the same field, they work singly, and are more under supervision during the hours of rest than when the ganger only is with them. The ganger usually is a trustworthy labourer, in the constant employ of the occupier; the wages of the children are paid by the farm bailiff or by a person in charge of the gangs at a fixed rate per child, and no profit is allowed to the ganger by a deduction of so much per head from the weekly earnings of the children as in the case of public gangs. In Cambridgeshire the children go out to work as young as 6 years old; many at 7 and 8, but it is admitted that at so tender an age they are not of much use to the farmer. The reason for their going out so young appears to be in many cases this, that the parents compel the ganger to take the little one as a condition of getting regularly the labour of the bigger child in the same family.

Definition of "private gang."

Largest numbers employed in private gangs.

Private gangs.

19. There does not appear to be much, if any, ill-usage of the children employed in these private gangs; neither do I find that their health has suffered from overwork in bad weather, or in wet crops. The private gang is constantly employed by one and the same farmer, and is always at hand for the work. Half a day's cessation from any particular job on account of bad weather would not be of much consequence to the employer, because he can with certainty put on the same number of hands on the following day, whereas in the case of a public gang they are taken from farm to farm, and are compelled by the ganger to complete the work at each place on a specified day, in order that he may proceed to fulfil his contract on another farm.

Ill-usage.

Health.

20. With regard to the application of the provisions of the Agricultural Gangs Act to private gangs, I will refer to a few extracts from the evidence. Mr. Rowbottom, No. 70, gives it as his opinion, that no licensed person is required in private gangs, neither that it is necessary to register the names of the children employed in such gangs. Mr. Carter, No. 83, thinks it desirable that the age of children employed in a private gang should be restricted, that the sexes should be separated, and above all that care should be taken by the employers to select respectable men as gangmasters, but he does not think that it would be practicable for those placed over private gangs to be licensed.

Agricultural Gangs Act applied to private gangs.

21. I may add, generally, that it was not considered desirable to place a restrictive licence on the private gangmaster, as care is usually taken by the farmer that a respectable man should be so employed. I had conversation with some public gangers on the subject of the operation of the Agricultural Gangs Act, and it appeared to be their impression that their trade would suffer considerably. Thomas Norman, No. 5, says, that when the gangmasters' trade comes to an end, the farmer will find it very expensive to send out a man in charge of five or six children, and that a small farmer would have a difficulty in getting the work done one or two days in the week if there were no public gangs; he adds, "If the farmer paid me to take charge of a private gang, it would not be so good for me "in money as the public gangs." It is pretty generally considered that a limit of age should be fixed, below which no child should be employed in one of these private gangs. Mr. Thurnall, No. 62, thinks that it would be well to restrict private gangs to a maximum of 20, and that the sexes shall not be allowed to work together.

Licences for private gangmaster.

22. There can be no doubt as to the moral effects of field work on the girls. From an early age they become accustomed to the use of foul language, such sense of decency as they may have when they first go out is entirely broken down, and a roughness of manner and a dislike of restraint are engendered which entirely unfit them for domestic service or for their duties in the future as wives and mothers. This remark applies generally to field work, and not solely to the case of gangs, and is fully borne out by the evidence of schoolmasters and mistresses. If the necessity for children's labour at certain seasons in the year is to be admitted, I do not think that the private gang system, when carefully attended to by the employer, is in itself any great evil. I would here call your attention to the opinion of Rev. Mr. Hopkins of Littleport, No. 22.

Effects on morals of young females

23. Mr. Whitting, No. 4, says, in reference to private gangs, the farmer rarely finds any great difficulty in procuring hands for the work; his difficulty is to determine the best method of employing them consistently with their moral and physical interests. For this object I know no more effective or more

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convenient arrangement that can be suggested, than that of placing them under the care and direction of a superintendent, who is himself under the direction and in the private employment of the farmer,—in other words, the system of private gangs. I have no doubt that many farmers could give a favourable report as I have done of children who are working in their private gangs. I know of no supervision by licences, or otherwise, that can much improve the system.

Appreciation of Gang Act.

24. In the Isle of Ely, where the public gang system is in thorough operation, I found on discussing at various meetings the provisions of the new act, that it was as a rule most favourably received; that the farmers themselves are anxious to get rid of the evils now existing under that system, and that they believe if proper attention is paid by those in whom the authority is vested much of the evil would be done away with. At a meeting of the Wisbeach Board of Guardians, No. 33, it was stated that the gang-system would vanish when there is a sufficiency of good cottages on each farm for the number of hands required for the working of the land.

25. In the East Riding of Yorkshire the children do not go out to work in gangs at so early an age as in Cambridgeshire, which I think may be attributed to the higher rate of wages existing in Yorkshire; still they do go out as young as 8 and 9 years. Looking generally at the system of private gangs as at present in operation, I do not think that, if the employment of children under 10 years of age is forbidden by law, there is much need for applying to it any such restrictions as are now placed on public gangs by the Act of last session.

26. I may mention here that in two instances at Driffield, one at Market Weighton, and one at Frodingham I found a system very closely approaching to the public gang system. I thought it my duty to bring it under the notice of the chairman of the quarter sessions for the East Riding, who was good enough to refer to it at the quarter sessions in April in his charge to the grand jury.

II.—The General Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture.

27. It may be stated generally that, whenever work is to be done on the farm which women and children are capable of performing, they are employed. The children are but little employed during the winter months, but from the commencement of weeding time in spring the attendance at the school becomes smaller and more irregular. The children are taken away at an early age; they remain away from school till within a month of harvest, and are then absent again in the autumn till the beginning of November. In Yorkshire the women are more employed during the potato times, that is in the spring, in planting, and in the autumn in picking.

28. Throughout the districts of Selby, part of Howdenshire, Goole, and in Marshland women are employed in very large numbers; they are for the most part married, but in some instances the elder girls will also go out to work. Children's labour is there not so much used, except in picking over the potato heaps in the spring, and for bird tenting. There is in the neighbourhood of Humbledon, Shirburn, and that part of the West Riding, considerable employment of children for pea pulling. The obvious reason for the employment of this class of labour is that the farmer can obtain it at a considerably reduced price as compared with the labour of men. The wages ordinarily given to a woman are 1*s.* per day. A child will earn 6*d.* to 9*d.* The hours of work upon the land vary considerably in different districts,—*e.g.*, in Cambridgeshire, in the parish of Fulbourn, I find girls employed from 8 in the morning till 6 in the evening; boys of 14, from 6 in the morning till 6 in the evening. In Caxton all children from 7 in the morning till 6 in the evening: girls, from 8 in the morning till 6 in evening; boys, from 6 in morning till 6 in evening. In the fen country all from 7 or 7.30 to 5 p.m.

This class of labour cheaper than men's.

Hours of work.

29. The hours in Yorkshire are shorter, they ordinarily do not begin work till 8 or 8.30 in the morning and continue at work till 5 or 6, except on special emergencies, when there is frequently some extra pay. In all cases one hour is allowed for dinner, and when they go out early there is also half an hour allowed for breakfast. I may say that generally throughout Yorkshire a farmer will not employ a boy under 10 years of age, except for *"tenting," or scaring birds.

Distance.

30. In answer to the question of the advisability of placing some restriction on the distance to which children should go to work according to their age it is said that the question of distance resolves itself into a question of time, that the women and children travel to and from their work in the employer's time, and that inasmuch as the interests of the employer would lead him to seek his labour in the nearest place and the interests of the head of the labourer's family would prevent the children being sent a long distance to work at the same rate of wages as if the work were close to the door, legislation on this point is not necessary.

31. When the work for which the children are required is at some distance from the village they will often be taken by the farmer in a waggon, though I have met with instances of boys walking as far as five miles to their work. There is a class of work in which the children are much employed, namely, in "singling" turnips; this work is usually taken by the piece. The man who takes the work will then take his own boy or the child of a neighbour with him to assist in pulling out the turnips. The wages on this occasion are paid to the said child by the man who takes the work. There is also occasionally in draining a similar system, and in this instance I think that the health of the children is injuriously affected (instance, the case in Holderness of a boy who was crippled and cramped by early work at draining).

Effect of field work on the homes of the labourers.

32. Where women are employed, as in the case of potatoing, they usually go in large numbers together. The effect of this constant field labour is that their cottages are in an untidy state,† that the families are neglected, and where there are small children they are left in charge of an old woman on the payment of so much a day, and this system has often led to a serious evil, as it is a common habit to give the infants an opiate for the purpose of keeping them quiet during the day. It has been alleged by persons whom I have met that the cottage of the field woman is not more untidy than the cottage of the woman who remains at home all day; but from personal inspection I have formed the opinion, which is borne out by many clergymen and others, that field labour does lead to a want of care at home,

* "Tenting" includes looking after pigs on the stubbles and cows in the lanes.
† Mr. Thomas, No. 332, and others.

and consequently to the bad bringing-up of the children and the driving of the husband to the public house when he comes home from work in consequence of the untidiness of his home. As to the physical effect that such field labour may have on the women it has not been easy to obtain any decided opinion. It has been stated that the constant stooping at work has a pernicious effect, and that the high rate of infant mortality which has been ascertained in the district of Howden and Goole is to be attributed in a great measure to this field labour.

33. The letters of those medical men with whom I have communicated on the question of injury done to the health of the young by field work, go to show that such work is by no means injurious, (they are in the evidence, Nos. 45, 46 and 265); but in the case of young married women there is more reason to fear that evil effects do result.

34. The employment of young girls in the fields is almost universally condemned, but there is often the cry that their labour is necessary at certain seasons of the year. The opinions as to the restriction of age at which females should be employed are numerous; some say that they should not be permitted to go to the field before 13 years of age; others that they should not be allowed to remain in the field after 13; others that they should not be thus employed at all; and again, that no women over 16 years of age, unless married, should be allowed to work in a gang.

Employment of girls.

Restriction of age for females.

35. Mr. Hailstone (No. 100, p. 19) says—If we could get our girls to school constantly till 12, 13, or 14 years of age, we do not fear for them; with a strict eye to their moral education, and a constant deprecating of out-door work for young girls, we can get nearly all to go to service and feel the degradation of out-door work and half-male sort of occupation.

36. Under this head of the general employment of children the question of the necessity of the children's earnings for the maintenance of the family must be considered. Where wages are low it is no doubt of very great importance to the mother that every sixpence that can be earned should be obtained. During the past winter, when flour was at a high price and where the wages had not risen in proportion, I found that out of 12*s.* a-week (the husband's earnings), the outgoing for flour alone for the support of the said family of six children was 10*s.* 6*d.* per week (see No. 28). The woman said she could not live without the children's earnings. There may be some truth in that statement where wages are low, but in Yorkshire, where the average rate of wages may be said to be above 14*s.* a week, it is hardly possible to believe that there is this necessity for sending the children into the fields at a tender age.

37. At present parents solicit employers to take children into service when so young as to be worthless; and until wages are raised it appears probable that they will continue to do so. "The "competition for farms causes an advance in rents, the competition for employment keeps down the "price of unskilled labour; landlord and tenant have benefited by improvement in agriculture, but "the labourer has benefited very little."—(Letter from Mr. Barugh to Miss Simpson.)

38. The better class of labourers, as a general rule, are now beginning to see the evils resulting to their children from the loss of schooling consequent on field work at so early an age, and will gladly forego, if possible, the weekly earnings derived from their labour, though at the same time there is a very large class of people who are entirely indifferent to the advantages of education, and would sooner receive the money and totally disregard the future prospects of their children.

Better class of labourers anxious for education.

III.—Age at which Boys should be employed and the State of Education.

39. It is pretty generally conceded that 10 years would be a fair age to fix as a limit, below which boys should not be employed in the fields for hire. It appears that you would thereby secure at any rate three years' schooling, during which time they should acquire a fair proficiency in reading, writing, and arithmetic. I say "for hire," because not only in Cambridgeshire, but also in the dales and other parts of the North and West Ridings of Yorkshire there exists a class of small occupiers, holding four and five or 10 acres of land which they cultivate by themselves and their children, and rarely if ever employ a labourer. To these men the loss of their children's aid would be fatal, they are too poor to hire labour, and the assistance rendered by a child of eight or nine years of age is of great value. I think that as a rule these men are desirous of giving their children as much education as they can, and I may instance the case of "Chop Gate" school, in Bilsdale, North Riding, to which children come two miles and a half and three miles up and down the dale over a bad road, and where the master said, "He had had from 40 to 50 children at the school in winter when the snow was lying deep on the "ground."

40. I have no reason to suppose that the health is often injuriously affected by the light work of a child under 10 years; but it is on the ground of securing a better and more regular attendance at school that it appears desirable that a limit of age should be fixed by law. Many parts of Yorkshire would not be affected at all by a restriction to 10 years.

41. If legislation on this point is brought about, I think it would be advisable that a discretionary power should be vested in the magistrates to give leave for the employment of the children in any special season. Mr. Grimston, of Neswick, has for some years had a rule in his school forbidding boys leaving school under the age of 10 years for field work; but he told me he had been at certain seasons obliged to withdraw that restriction when the demand for such labour was very pressing. The demand for juvenile labour would probably be reduced in proportion to the advance in machinery.

Mr. Clare's, No. 225.

42. Having thus far secured that the child shall not go to work before a certain age, it then becomes necessary to consider how far you will obtain the desired attendance at school. There is a class among the poor, and that a very large one, that cares nothing about education, and will take no pains to send their children to school even if the fees are paid for them. On this class I fear that the mere debarring of profit from the child's work would have but little effect. It is, therefore, necessary to look at a means of meeting this difficulty.

Limit for work.

School attendance.

43. I have frequently submitted for the consideration of private individuals, as well as for discussion at public meetings, the question of the desirability of requiring the production of a certificate of a given amount of school attendance during the years previous to hiring, and on many, I may say most, occasions the scheme appeared to be acceptable, but the details appear more difficult of arrangement: on whom, whether employer or parent, should the penalty for non-compliance be placed? what would be the best

Certificates.

Penalty for non-compliance.

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means of enforcing such a system. Something similar has been tried, but with very limited success at present, in requiring certificates of character previously to hiring; but the utter disregard, by the employer, of character, as compared with physical strength, has rendered the scheme generally nugatory.

44. It is often said, "If one man won't employ them another will," and so bad and good are alike hired. Mr. Wells, of Booth Ferry, (No. 329) a man of great experience, says he has tried for years to induce the farmers to require a written character from the lads, and the signing of an agreement at hiring, and has endeavoured to introduce various reforms, and with what result? "They won't stick to it." He has himself stuck to his point and carried it with his farm-servants. And so it might be with the school certificate, though I fear it would be somewhat difficult to enforce the school certificate without a very well organised system of registering and local inspectors.

Effect of certificate on labourer.

45. What would be the effect of the requirement of such a certificate on the labourer himself? It is thought by some that it would be a spur and an inducement to the parents to take more heed of the education of their children, but by many others that nothing short of compulsion will secure the desired amount of school attendance for the young.

Education.

Cambridgeshire.

46. On the general state of education as existing in the counties of Cambridgeshire and Yorkshire it is necessary to make separate statements. In Cambridgeshire the state of education among the labouring class is in many instances lamentably deficient; the old and middle-aged cannot, with rare exceptions, either read or write, and consequently they place no value on learning, but think it far more important that a child should go out, as soon as it is able, to earn its daily bread. In many parishes it is stated that it is very rare that a couple when they come to be married can sign the register. The practical working of the system of field labour with regard to education is that now as a rule boys leave day school entirely at 9 years of age, never to return. Those who leave school at 7 or 8 years of age generally go to field labour for weeding in the months of March, April, and May, and return for a short time previous to the harvest holidays, they are then absent from school till November when field work for children ceases. The Sunday school is usually well attended, but the benefit of religious instruction on that day is much decreased by the inability of the children who only attend once a week to follow the reading of the teacher, and that is the only education which often, from the age of 8 years, children are able to get.

47. The schoolmasters and schoolmistresses throughout the county agree in their testimony that all the children that go to field work are much deteriorated in manner, and unfit for the class in which they were when they went out; and I can from my own personal knowledge and inspection confirm this statement as to the roughness of manner and ignorance of those things which I was assured they fully comprehended when last in school.

48. I do not find that there is any want of accessible day schools. In the fens, where there are many out-lying homesteads and cottages at a considerable distance from the villages, there is frequently no doubt a difficulty in bringing the children to the school, owing to the nature of the country in bad weather, more especially in winter when some of the droves are almost impassable; but in these districts schools and mission houses are being taken to the population (see No. 33). In Yorkshire, on the other hand, whether in consequence of the higher rate of wages or of the absence of the gang system and the consequent non-employment of children at a tender age, the state of education may be said to be considerably better.

Yorkshire.

49. Mr. Jackson, of Waghen, in the East Riding, says:—

"I have great pleasure in stating that the feeling of parents generally is that parental duty is not fulfilled if their children have no education; this feeling appears to grow with those parents who have not had that advantage, and in this part of the East Riding of Yorkshire the children generally attend a day school about nine months in the year."

50. Mr. Angas, on behalf of the agriculturists of Holderness, says:—

"With a view to guard against the possible contingency of such evils arising in this district as exist in the gang counties, they would be quite willing to agree to a minimum standard of age in respect to children as field hands, but at the same time would feel strongly opposed to any coercive measure being put in operation, believing not only that the feelings of parents would revolt from what they would certainly consider as an arbitrary law, but that, left to the dictates of their own consciences and free will, with the example of those a little higher in the social scale, the education of our young rural population would certainly and steadily progress."

51. He also thinks that the fixing of a limit of age for field work would produce in parents a natural desire to send the children to school.

No dearth of schools.

52. Throughout the portions of the West and North Riding which I visited there appeared to be no dearth of available schools, and the state of education is probably better than in many parts of England.

Want in small rural parishes.

Grant for uncertificated master.

53. There is, however, one want which was equally expressed in Cambridgeshire and in Yorkshire, namely, that in small rural parishes further Government aid should be given to the support of schools. The necessary amount of attendances during the year cannot be obtained, the grant therefore is not given, and the good certificated schoolmaster, being unable to obtain a living, leaves the parish. It was often suggested that if the number of attendances (necessary for the grant) in small schools were reduced, or if the grant were given for the full number to an uncertificated master, much benefit would be done to education in these parishes.

Eskdale. Need of a good master.

54. More especially in the district of Egton in the North Riding my attention was called to this state of things. It was reported that throughout the whole of Eskdale there were only two schools where there was a good master, and it was stated that the parents would not pay the pence to send their children to school where they find the master teaches the children little or nothing. I may refer to the parishes of Bubwith and Millington, in the East Riding, as two flagrant instances of the want of increased facilities for obtaining a good master. In the first case the master said that he was unable to make a living, and in the second the school was actually shut up for want of funds to pay the master.

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55. There is, I think, generally a feeling of dislike to a scheme of compulsory education on two grounds, viz.:—1. That compulsion would lessen the amount of voluntary aid now given to schools; and 2. From an aversion to any increase in the rates. It is said that the voluntary system is working well, that there is an increased desire for education, and a willingness to subscribe for the support of schools, and that, if the law compels attendance at school, voluntary aid will be withdrawn on the ground that the State is bound to provide a sufficient number of schools and teachers, and then it is feared that the money will be raised either by an increase in the local rate, or by a general rate on the land. This prospect is not agreeable to the farming class. I found, however, an instance of a rate being paid for the support of a certificated master at a school in Farndale on Lord Feversham's property in Yorkshire. The farmers' children attend the school, and I was told there was not much opposition to levying it. It must be borne in mind, however, that, as to a compulsory attendance at school in connexion with employment, since the passing of the Workshops Regulation Act the only persons exempted from the application of the principles of the Factory Acts are the children employed in agricultural labour, and children unemployed, or employed for less time than a fortnight continuously.

Compulsory education.

Schoo rate.

56. To obtain anything like an accurate idea of the state of education throughout any one district, I think it would be necessary that a complete educational census should be taken. The mere fact of obtaining from a limited number of schools the numbers in average attendance, and the numbers on the books between certain ages, is not sufficient to give any fair notion of the relative proportion of the educated to the uneducated portions of the population.

Educational census.

57. In the Education Report for 1861 on agricultural districts in Yorkshire, Rev. T. Hedley arrives at the following conclusion:—"Children usually commence to attend school at about 5 years of "age; they begin to leave about 9, and few are found above 13. The average period of school life "is about six years."

Education Report, 1861, Mr. Hedley.

58. Mr. Watkins, who has been Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools in Yorkshire for 25 years, states in his evidence, volume 2, page 149, that the average age at which they leave school is 10½ years, that of children at school 39 per cent. are under 7 years of age, 74 per cent. under 10, and only 26 per cent. over 10 years of age. Mr. Surtees says further:—

Mr. Watkins report.

"Let there be an educational census to see that a school is provided within reasonable reach; encourage by every means in our power infant and dame schools; up to 12 years of age require a boy to be at school a certain number of days per year, and by that time he will be able to read, write, and cast accounts. More than that you would not accomplish if you aim at it. Well for us if this is done, and done well."

59. Referring to that part of our instructions which sets forth the various causes to which the defective state of education may be attributed, I may say that in various parts of my district each of those causes may be found to exist, though poverty can hardly be pleaded in any part of Yorkshire. (I was told on all sides that "we have no poor in our parish.") There is a decided indisposition on the part of some of the parents to forego the weekly sum that is added to the family earnings by the child's labour. In too many instances a low moral tone among the parents leads them to neglect their children's education; and in a few instances there is, I fear, a tacit understanding between the employer and the labourer that in consideration of yearly and permanent employment for the father of the family, the labour of the wife and children shall be placed at the employer's disposal if required at any particular season. It is, of course, somewhat difficult to establish clearly the fact of the existence of any understanding, but I can refer to evidence, No. 353, in support of my belief that such an understanding does frequently exist, and is not considered extraordinary.

Understanding between employer and labourer as to children and women's work.

60. The great desideratum seems to be a system of continuous education. What is the best means of securing it? In the first place a limit of age for work may be fixed.

Continuous education.

61. Miss Simpson, of Boynton, whose experience among farm lads and the children of the agricultural class is as extensive as that of any one in Yorkshire, says:—

Miss Simpson.

"Something of continuous teaching is the more necessary, because when a child was little he could not exercise his mind much on what he learnt, and having no real grasp of it, it is the sooner lost before he is of an age to know the real meaning of anything. Any knowledge, whether religious or secular, acquired in early childhood, if it is not kept up, fares, in most cases, 'like the seed that fell by the wayside.' If then we cannot hope to add greatly to the small stock of knowledge gained before the age for working begins, let us at least aim at keeping it together till the mind is capable of retaining and valuing it."

62. The modes which have been suggested for securing this end, are that after the age fixed by law a child should be compelled to attend school for a certain number of days during the year, till he arrives at the age at which he is permanently hired, and that a certificate of such school attendance should be required to be produced before hiring. The lads in Yorkshire are hired out to permanent service at the age of 13 or 14. When they live entirely in the farmer's house (or in that of the foreman) they are too often removed from all moral restraint, and never take any pains to keep up their education, or to attend church or school.

Modes suggested.

63. Miss Simpson, Rev. F. D. Legard, and others have published papers on the subject of the farm lads, and the best means of securing for them some education. The whole system of their employment from the beginning seems to be a vicious one; in the first place, the hiring fairs or statutes have for many years past led to scenes of dissipation and immorality in the market towns where they are held; but, I am happy to say, that of late greater care has been taken, and rooms have been provided where the girls and the lads are hired separately, instead of being as formerly paraded in two lines in the open market-place. The statutes are almost universally held at Martinmas in the short and dark days of November; the week of statutes is a general holiday for the farm servants, even if they are going to remain at the same place for another year they consider that they have a right to come down to the statutes; many of them go home at this time to see their relations, and consequently cottages, which are not sufficiently large to hold those of the family who are at home, are at this time crowded up with lads and girls of ages varying from 14 to 20, sleeping together in one room. On most occasions, when I have discussed at meetings and otherwise the question of altering the system of hirings, I have found a great disinclination to make any change. At Doncaster and in its neighbourhood, great efforts have been made by the Rev. Dr. Vaughan, and by others of the clergy, to establish a system of register offices for the farm servants. I believe that this system is to a certain extent on the increase, but it is objected to by the

Farm servants.

Statutes.

Register offices.

D. to be kept by schoolmaster.

farmers, really because it is too much trouble to go to an office. There appears to be no reason why a system of register offices should not be universally established; a suggestion made to me by Mr. Hargreaves, the schoolmaster at Monkfryston, appears to be a reasonable one, he says that the schoolmaster in every parish might keep a register office for farm servants, and that under such supervision it may be easily worked; he had himself kept one for a short time. The probability is that the schoolmaster would know the greater part of the younger portion of the population who are employed in farm service, and that even if a servant is engaged at some distant parish he or she would, on coming home for the statute holiday, apply at the register office of his or her own parish for another situation.

Rev. C. Thomas.

64. Rev. C. E. Thomas, of Warmsworth, says:—

"For 20 years I have made it my business to discourage as far as possible parents taking their children to be hired at statutes. I have a list of those males and females who want places. At different tradespeople's shops in Doncaster I have left lists of boys and girls wanting situations, in this way it has become known that I interest myself in getting servants places, and I am applied to by many farmers and tradespeople for servants; I believe if this were done in each parish we should have an end of statute hiring. The farmers like it, and I have been successful in most cases in finding good servants and comfortable places for them. Even if this were carried out with regard to young women only, the great evil of the statutes would be removed, for the young men when left to themselves behave tolerably steadily."

65. The whole system of statute hiring is generally condemned as being the cause of much immorality, but it is so deep rooted that it will take many years and much trouble to establish anything in its place. After the servants are hired little or no trouble is taken to keep them in the right way; I regret to say that the farmers as a rule pay little attention to the education of those engaged in their service, there is more thought for the physical than the moral. There are, of course, bright exceptions, such as Mr. Wells, (No. 329), Mr. Wheatley (No. 223), and others, who have taken great pains with those living on their premises. The masters, taken as a whole, seem unaware that they are in duty bound to take some interest in the moral condition of their servants. The separation of the sleeping rooms of the two sexes is very often most incomplete. Mr. Broadley, of Welton, told me that in building some new farmhouses he had made a living-room and a bedroom for the boys entirely separated from the kitchen and sleeping-room of the women, but that the farmer objected to have two separate living-rooms, but preferred having them sitting all together in one kitchen.

66. Some farmers have endeavoured to insist on the lads attending a place of worship on Sunday, but with little success. They say they cannot force them. Miss Simpson, in a paper on the life and training of a farm boy read at the Social Science Association, at York, in 1864, says, in respect of this point,—

"In private conference not long ago with a Wesleyan farmer, I was surprised to learn from him that about 25 years ago the Wold farmers generally were in the habit of hiring their lads on an understanding that they were to go to church. How came such a good custom to fall into disuse? My informant assured me that it was entirely because the young servants so much resisted it. The farmers, this man told me, had now universally given it up as a lost case, and do not attempt to interfere with the Sunday arrangements, and the lads have it all their own way; he said there was not the least necessity for what had to be done on Sunday interfering with church time or with boys attending Sunday-school, that is going once to school and once to church; he even demonstrated this, and said that all farmers would be glad of such an arrangement. When I told him how often foremen said they would be glad of it, but that they could not interfere with established custom, it must be the masters' doing, he could not deny that there was truth in this, but maintained that if a foreman could not alter what was an established custom neither could an individual farmer do so. * * * * * If magistrates could do nothing to back the authority of masters, can the landlord do nothing? Is he not, if he rightly recognizes his position and its responsibilities, the natural protector of both farmers and labourers on his property, and especially the guardian of the young."

Night schools.

67. To meet the loss of knowledge which is certain to result in the case of lads earning wages, many attempts have been made to establish night schools for their benefit, but great difficulty has been found in securing any attendance, inasmuch as the farmers, where their homesteads are at any distance from the village, object to the lads going down to school in the evening, on the ground that it interferes with the hours for doing up the horses and foddering the cattle, and that when they once go off to school, it is quite uncertain at what hour they come back. The almost universal answer throughout the Yorkshire evidence on the subject of night schools is, "that we have had one, but it has failed." There are a few exceptions where the farms are either actually in the village or within a mile of it.

68. In Cambridgeshire, night schools exist in many parishes during the winter for boys, and in one instance, for girls, this girls' school being attended by girls from the ages of 14 to 17 and 18, who have been at field work during the day. It is, however, not considered very desirable to have night schools for girls. There is great difficulty in keeping up these schools, and in finding persons competent to undertake the teaching. Mr. T. Webb (No. 129), gives it as his opinion that it would be very desirable that a system of night schools during the winter should be established, with Government aid, to provide a requisite number of uncertificated extra teachers. That a certain amount of attendance at these schools during the winter months should be made compulsory on all lads earning wages up to 16 years of age, and that all children not earning wages should be made to go to a day school. In the night school now at work in his parish the average age of lads attending is 16 years. I submitted this proposal, in many instances, in Cambridgeshire, for the consideration of the clergy and employers of labour, and it met with the approbation of a large number of these persons, inasmuch as it was thought to be acceptable to the farmer, as furthering a system of continuous education without depriving him of the necessary labour of the lads on the farm; but, as I have already stated, it was not received in the same way in Yorkshire. A clergyman of 11 years experience in night-school teaching wrote:—

"One thing I hope Government will do, discourage boys going to the night school at so early an age; if we do not take care, the night school may be easily made an instrument for making our boys greater slaves to work than they are now."

When asked for an explanation he replied:—

"What I mean is this. Lord Shaftesbury, in a bill he proposed last year, would not allow boys to be

employed in gangs till 8 years of age.* Now, supposing this Bill made law, and also Government grants to be made for boys in our night schools as young as 8, I fear the result will be that in many districts it would come to be taken as a matter of course that a boy should leave the day school at 8 to work in the field, and carry on his education in a night school. What his education would be worth under such a system I think we can pretty well guess! I have no wish to run down night schools; but these are yet in their infancy, and they have a greater work to do, I believe, than most men think; I have worked hard at ours for 11 years, but there is great danger, now, of making them supplant, instead of supplement the day schools. Speaking from what I know, I should say that it would most probably prove against the children's interests for Government to make grants to our night schools for boys under 10 years of age." D.

69. There is a most successful night school at Walton, near Tadcaster, under the management of the national schoolmaster. On first commencing this school, he endeavoured to make it "as little like a school as possible," he allowed the lads to take up such subjects as they chose, without any fixed routine of instruction, and he found that they soon fell into a regular course. It is enough to say that "the "farmers have expressed themselves as being most thankful for the benefit done to the lads," and that the village is in a more quiet and orderly state than it was previous to the establishment of this school. Walton night school.

70. The Rev. W. B. Hopkins, of Littleport (No. 22), states it as his conviction that—

"The only way in which education can be combined with agricultural labour is by means of an evening school." "That between the ages of 10 and 14 all children employed in the fields should be required to attend evening school four days in every week while so employed, and that when they attend evening school they shall leave work two hours earlier than usual." "Exceptions to be made where there is no such school within two miles of the child's home."

71. One of the great difficulties in getting lads to attend night school seems to be a feeling of shame at "beginning again" when the lad is older than some he will meet at the school who are more advanced than himself, because they have not been entirely without instruction for so long a time. Difficulties in maintaining night schools.

72. I would here call your attention to the suggestion made by Mr. Hopkins for the management of the hours in schools where there is a night school held four times a week (No. 22, para. 13).

73. The want of funds, the want of good teachers, even volunteers, and the gradual falling off in the attendance "when the novelty has worn off" are all given in evidence as difficulties in the way of maintaining an efficient evening school. The two first of these might easily be obviated by an increased grant from the Committee of Council for uncertificated masters in these schools, but even this would only reach those who are within a certain distance of the village. You will still leave the large class of "outlying" cottagers unbenefited.

As to the latter it is said—

"That a night school can never supply the deficiencies of the day school while there is neither *compulsory rule* nor any inducement beyond love of learning. Love of the teacher is almost the only real inducement that tells now. Few boys naturally love learning; the most untaught have almost invariably the least love for it, consequently the greater the prevailing ignorance *the greater the difficulties while there is no sort of compulsion.*" (See Evidence, No. 241.)

On the other hand if compulsion should be found on inquiry to operate harshly on the farmer, by interfering with the necessary work of the farm, how will you secure continuous education? The following suggestion made by the Rev. Mr. Foxley, of Market Weighton, is, I think, worthy of the consideration of landowners in districts where the population is scattered, such as the fens of Cambridgeshire and the Wolds of Yorkshire. He says,— Suggestions *vice* "compulsion."

"It would be very beneficial if the owners of isolated farms would provide a room for service and teaching, where the clergyman could occasionally visit."

It was also suggested that an itinerant schoolmaster might, with the co-operation of the employers, be established in districts such as the Wolds, who would make his visit once or twice in the week to each house within a certain circle where the farms are so far situated from the village as to make it impossible for lads to go to night school. There is no doubt that on the Wolds the distance from the farmstead to the village is a very great drawback to any educational movement. Many of the more influential farmers of that district are extremely anxious that an increased number of cottages should be built on the farms. There can be no question that for the benefit of the farmer and of the labourer this is most desirable, inasmuch as the labourer has now to walk frequently a very long distance every day to his work and therefore is less capable of performing a fair day's work. Whether it would be equally advantageous for the children of the labourer in regard to attendance at school or church admits of some doubt. Itinerant schoolmasters. Cottages on farms. Benefit to children doubtful.

74. The Rev. J. W. Cockshott, of Burwell, in Cambridgeshire (No. 46), laments that the Committee of Council do not remove some of the restrictions for conferring grants for evening schools. In conducting his own he requires the assistance of a paid teacher, but can get no aid from Government because the man is not certified. Grants to night schools.

75. Mr. Surtees has expressed strong opinions adverse to night schools. I am sorry to differ with one of so much experience, but it does appear to me that, looking at the early age at which lads go out to regular work, a system of night schools holds out the most reasonable prospect of preventing that lapse into ignorance which is too often the fate of lads who have up to 12 years of age received a fair education at the village school.

76. The proposal to extend to the agricultural labouring class a system of half day at school and half day at work is almost universally rejected as impracticable. The necessity at certain seasons, such as the weeding time, for *all* hands to be employed continuously is the principal objection that is urged, the distance to and from work, the want of a sufficient supply of hands for either half days or alternate days at work, the desire on the part of the schoolmaster and of the employer to have the first part of the day, when both body and mind are freshest, are all put forward as obstacles to carrying out any such system. Half time.

* The "Agricultural Gangs Act," with this restriction, is now in force.

D.

Plan for obtaining continuous education.

Certificates.

77. The most feasible plan for obtaining continuous education appears to be to fix an age below which no child shall go to work for hire, with or without compulsory attendance at school, to require a certain amount of school attendance from that age to 13 or 14 years of age, and perhaps, in addition, the production of a certificate of such school attendance before hiring. Very few objections will be found to this plan, with the exception of the certificate, but I think that when a good system of registering, which might be combined with a register for farm servants, is once established, the supposed difficulties and inconveniences will soon vanish.

Printworks Act modified the best scheme.

78. The evidence I think fairly justifies me in saying that of the three modes of securing school attendance proposed in your circular one founded on the model of the Printworks Act, modified and made "elastic" enough to meet the necessities and vicissitudes of agricultural operations, would be found most practicable and most acceptable to the employer and the employed.

79. That the present state of education among the agricultural labouring class requires improvement by some means there is no doubt. From the time of commencing regular service in Yorkshire the lads rarely get any instruction at all. No books are supplied to them, and but little is done to encourage them to spend their evening profitably. The masters take no heed about it, as was evidenced by the tone of the meeting at Howden, when it was suggested that they might help to stimulate a desire for improvement by reading aloud, &c. Again the lads who live at home in the villages too often spend their evenings in the pothouse or idling about the street, except where you find a considerate landlord, an energetic clergyman, or some kind and benevolent people resident in the village, by whose aid a reading-room or a club-room is kept up, where the labourer can spend his evening by a good fire with books and papers, and free from the temptations of the beerhouse.

Reading rooms.

Ignorance of employer.

80. The employer is too often worse educated than his labourer, and is utterly unaware of the responsibility of looking after those in his employ further than to see that they do their work.

81. The question has on many occasions been raised whether an increased number of cottages on the farms would do away with the necessity for having so many lads living in the farmhouses. Several persons with whom I have conversed on the subject are of opinion that it is much better to employ the married labourer from the village, if near enough to the scene of his work, than to have so large a number of these lads on the premises. The objection that is usually raised to the drawing the supply of labour from the village, is that attention is necessary to the stock and the horses at late hours of the night, and that the day labourer who comes from his own cottage would return home after 6 o'clock.

General state of school attendance.

82. The school returns show that the average attendance of children above 10 years of age is larger in winter than in summer; and it is generally admitted that, as far as the employer's interests are concerned, no injury would be caused by the requirement of such an amount of school attendance from children over 10 years as could be secured during the winter months. The amount of work that can be done in the winter by children is so small that except in very rare instances the loss of earnings to the parent would be so trifling as not to inflict any real hardship when compared with the ultimate benefit accruing to the child from the education he would receive, and which would fit him for places of trust, and consequently of higher pay than he would otherwise be able to obtain.

Educated and uneducated labour.

83. It has often been said that an uneducated labourer is quite as useful as, or more so, than one that is educated; but on referring to the evidence given by the occupiers on Lord Wenlock's estate in Yorkshire, you will see that out of 63 farmers, 23 prefer educated men, and only six uneducated, though 21 say that they perceive no difference in the value of the labour.

Agricultural training.

84. I am far from thinking that it is not necessary to begin early to teach a boy the work on which he has to depend in after life for his subsistence, on the contrary it is most desirable, but at the same time it seems perfectly possible to combine the two classes of education from the age of 10 years, and as the use of machinery for agriculture is daily becoming more common it must surely be an advantage to the farmer to have in his employ men who at any rate are able to read those instructions which are necessary for the management of the various implements with the care of which they may be entrusted. Mr. Joseph Barugh, a large farmer near Bridlington, spoke strongly on the subject at a meeting of the East Riding Chamber of Agriculture held at Bridlington, and gave his testimony to the value of educated servants.

Industrial schools.

85. I visited the Industrial Schools at Saffron Walden, Escrick, and Doncaster. No. 1, that at Saffron Walden, though in the county of Essex, so far affected a portion of Cambridgeshire that I was glad of an opportunity of visiting it. It is under the management of the Rev. R. Clutton; the girls are instructed in the ordinary domestic duties of washing, cooking, needlework, &c. They are allowed on occasions to go out to place for a few weeks and to return to the school; the places are carefully selected, and I believe this supply of occasional servants who know their work is much appreciated in the neighbourhood. Many good servants are sent out from here.

(2.) The school at Escrick, East Riding of Yorkshire, is under the management of Lady Wenlock. It contains eight girls, who are lodged and boarded and taught washing, cooking, and other domestic duties, and in the afternoon they learn sewing, &c. in the school. The arrangements here are very complete, and I was told that there is always a demand for servants who have been brought up at this school. This school is, I believe, entirely supported by Lady Wenlock, subject to certain payments for each girl and the amount of money received for work.

The girls do not go out for occasional work.

(3.) *Doncaster.*—This school is on a larger scale, situated in a town, and more, if I may use the expression, in the nature of a "working" school than that at Escrick. The difficulties of maintenance are greater, the class of children taken into it is very different from that of a small village, more rough and uncouth, motherless, or friendless and distressed, probably often without any knowledge at all except such as they have picked up in the streets; these poor children have not only to be trained for domestic service but to receive elementary education. Doncaster girls alone are admitted free, others pay 3*s.* a week and an entrance fee of 2*l.* There are now 20 girls in the school, lodged and boarded. It is under the care and superintendence of Mrs. Vaughan, of the Vicarage.

Schools of this class, and more especially when in large towns, must undoubtedly have a beneficial effect. It is of great value to girls to be trained in domestic duties, with patience and care, before they go out "to place," and more than that, it is a means towards making them good wives and

mothers in the future, and so will lead on to a better state of things in the next generation, which education alone, without decency and cleanliness in the homes, can never achieve. D.

86. The school at Harewood, though not purely an industrial one, partakes much of its nature. Attached to the national school is a building containing a kitchen and laundry, and a certain number of girls from the first class are week by week taken from the school on fixed days to be taught washing and cooking, all having their turn. The money earned by washing goes far towards paying the expenses of this branch of the school; the outlay necessary for board and lodging is avoided, and I have great pleasure in calling your attention to this school as being at the same time an inexpensive and a most useful method of securing for girls a certain amount of industrial training. It is the only instance of the kind that I met with, and it is quite worthy of imitation by those who have the opportunity, with the view of drawing the tastes of girls away from the licence of field labour and fitting them for domestic service and their future duties in life. Harewood school.

87. The Provisions of the Industrial Schools Act (24 & 25 Vict. c. 113.) might be so moulded as to apply to the case of those children who, in towns more especially, are growing up entirely without education, in consequence of the neglect and indifference of their parents. By sec. 10 of that Act, any person may bring before justices any child of the descriptions set forth in s. 9, and the justices are empowered, after full inquiry, to send such child to the industrial school up to the age of 15. By s. 18 they have power to make an order on the parents for a weekly payment of the expenses of the child's maintenance, not exceeding *5s.* If a similar power could be placed in the hands of competent authorities for sending these neglected children to the day school up to a given age, a class would be brought within the benefits of education, which cannot now be reached by any measure short of actual compulsion. The small weekly payment usually demanded at the national schools might without difficulty be obtained from the parents. I have been frequently requested to bring this point under the consideration of the Commissioners, and I have stated it shortly in order that you may, if you think it desirable, cause further opinions to be taken on the subject during the ensuing year. Industrial Schools Act, its application to day schools

IV. Cottages.

88. The feeling expressed at meetings of Boards of Guardians and others, both in Cambridgeshire and Yorkshire, on the subject of cottage accommodation, shows that there is great need for improvement, and that it is a question to which landlords should without delay turn their attention.

The following extracts from the evidence are good examples of the opinions of competent persons:—

89. Mr. Whitting, No. 4, speaking of the necessity for building cottages on estates remotely situated from a village, says:— Cambridgeshire.

"A relative of mine some few years ago built several cottages for his servants on an estate of this nature, only one of which has found an occupant. If families had to walk three or four miles to places of worship on Sundays, and their children to go daily the same distance to school throughout the winter, they would assuredly lose the advantages of religious, moral, and secular instruction."

90. At a meeting of the Board of Guardians of Whittlesay (No. 12), it was said that the bad state of the cottages was considered to be the root of demoralization of both sexes, and to demand the attention of the landlords.

91. At the Board of Guardians for North Witchford, the feeling was general that the state of the cottages and the over-crowding of the sleeping rooms was the root of the immorality. The sleeping rooms were not sufficient for decency. It was felt and urged that the attention of the Commissioners should be turned to the cottage question; and the hope was expressed that some scheme for their improvement might be devised.

92. At a meeting of the Guardians of Wisbeach, the Board was unanimous in its opinion that the over-crowding of the cottages was the root of the evil; it was said that the gang system would vanish when there is a sufficiency of good cottages on the farms and for the working of each farm, that the tenants would gladly pay four per cent. to have cottages and get labour on the land.

93. Captain Catlin, of Fridaybridge (No. 38), says:—

"There is a miserable deficiency in cottage accommodation; the whole evil has its origin in overcrowded cottages, labourers as a rule are worse lodged than cattle, and worse cared for. Morals are first corrupted in overcrowded cottages, the tenants would be benefited by better cottage accommodation on their occupations, and could well afford to pay interest on the cost of the same."

The instances given by him as to the number of persons living in one cottage, within his own knowledge, and of the prices at which he has been able to buy some of these wretched hovels are worthy of note, (see No. 39).

94. Mr. Bidwell, land agent, Ely, says:—

"Occupiers of land are very anxious to have good cottages built on the farms, inasmuch as the good labourers will not go any great distance to work, and the outlying farms get the worst men."

95. Mr. Clear, of Cambridge, suggests that Government should build here and there in parishes a set of cottages for the poor, which scheme would operate beneficially by causing landlords to improve the bad houses or lose their tenants.

96. Mr. H. Thurnall, solicitor (No. 62), says:—

"I think in cases where the advance was required merely for the building or improvement of cottages within certain limits, the notices required by the 17th Section of the 27th & 28th Vic. Chapter 114, and some of the preliminary inquiries might be safely dispensed with, but until the owners and occupiers of landed property begin to see that although the erection of comfortable cottages for their labourers would not pay directly, it would do so indirectly, by promoting the moral and physical improvement of the labourer, I fear that no increased facility in borrowing money would have much effect. If any alteration in the Act referred to should be contemplated, I would draw your attention to the 25th Section and ask how this would affect buildings which might not directly increase the yearly value of an estate more than the annual sum to be charged thereon. I have taken some pains in drawing plans for labourers' cottages and have superintended the building of many on Lord Dacre's property. In groups of three, each cottage containing two rooms below and three above with out-buildings, the cost of each cottage has been 80*l.* I believe that if any philanthropic body of men were to

D. form a cottage building society, they might get three per cent. for their money, and do more good than they could in almost any other way."

97. The Rev. H. Carter, (No. 82), says:—

"I should say, from an experience of 12 years in different parishes in the county of Cambridge, that much of the evil, physical and moral, amongst the poor arises from insufficient cottage accommodation. I have not unfrequently seen 10 or 12 in a family living in a house with only two small bedrooms, the elder children at the time being over 14 years of age. The question of cottages has always appeared to me to be a landlord's question; the rent received from the labourer for a good cottage might not be remunerative, but most tenants would be willing to ensure five per cent. interest on any reasonable sum expended for making homes for their labourers near their work; there is very little progress being made towards increasing the cottage accommodation in any part of the cottages with which I am acquainted."

98. Mr. Samuel Jonas (No. 93):—

"In regard to cottage accommodation, great an advocate as I am for the advantages arising from proper cottages, I do not see how Government can interfere. I have lately had several blocks of cottages of three in a block erected by my landlord, and which I let to my men at 1*s.* a week rent, or rent free, deducting 1*s.* a week from their wages; they have one-eighth of an acre of land attached for gardens to each cottage, and three bed-rooms in each. I lose five per cent. by the interest, I pay the landlords on cost of erection."—(N. B. these are the cottages spoken of by Mr. Thurnall as being built for 80*l.* a piece.)

99. Mr. Samuel Webb, a farmer, the age of 73, says:—

"That there are not sufficient cottages in the parish of Babraham; in years past many cottages were pulled down, and the poor driven out, but the present owner of the property talks of building new houses on the different farms. This parish was formerly a close parish in the fullest sense of the word."

100. Mr. Mayd (No. 119) thinks the want of good cottage accommodation more conducive to immorality among the lower classes than any other cause; many of the cottages in his parish are built of clay, with a thatched roof, they seem to have been built on the waste ground lying by the side of the road, so that there is not room for the necessary conveniences. He suggested as a point for consideration, that it would be beneficial to obtain legal power for the lord of the manor to buy out cottages built on land originally cribbed from the waste.

Yorkshire—East Riding.

101. Mr. Stephenson (No. 153).

"I have two cottages with my farm for labourers; there is with each cottage one and a half acre of land, and one of 20 acres and an allotment field; in the low land 10 cottagers have two acres a piece."

102. The Rev. R. Machell (No. 155).

"For providing good cottage accommodation, I would suggest that three quarters of the cost should be defrayed by public money, to be repaid in 40 years; one quarter to be paid by the landlord, and no interest paid on it, in consideration of the cottages becoming his property ultimately."

103. J. Dickenson, Esq. (No. 168).

"The system of attaching cottages to the farm ought to be extended, it is not often the case in these parts that there are any attached; the labourers live in the villages; there are plots of ground of one acre with the cottages, most of which have two bedrooms. Cottages on an estate should not all be the same size, you should build some with two, some with three bedrooms, to meet the wants of large and small families; in many cases, the third room would not be used, and when people have cottages larger than they want, they are apt to become uncleanly and slovenly. If money could be borrowed on easy terms from the Government for cottage building, people with small sums to invest might take up enough to make up the requisite amount on repayment in 40 years; at present the machinery for borrowing money for this purpose is cumbrous and expensive."

104. Mr. Francis Jackson (No. 172).

"I think no cottage is proper or comfortable without two low rooms, and two bedrooms well ventilated. Cottages contiguous to the farms would be an advantage, but they should be in the hands of the landlord, and not of the tenant."

105. George Angas (No. 173) suggested that the tenant, when willing, should be allowed to build cottages at his own expense, the cost to be spread over 12 years, and compensation to be given for the unexpired term, if the tenant quits the farm. If the tenants complete the term of 12 years, the cottage to belong to the landlord. In many instances, landlords cannot afford to build or to borrow money for the purpose, and the above arrangement might obviate the difficulty. At the Chamber of Agriculture meeting, at Beverley (Nos. 189 and 190), the desire for increased cottage accommodation was strongly expressed.

106. Mr. Simmons (No. 194) thinks it desirable that cottages should continue to be massed near the church and school. As regards education, morality, advantages in sickness, etc. labourers living in villages, and not on the farms, are less likely to be hardly used, or to have a pressure put upon them in respect of wages and the labour of their wives and children.

107. The Rev. J. Foxley (No. 220) suggests as a means of improving the cottage accommodation the commutation of manorial fines for known or fixed annual payments redeemable on a plan like that of the tithe commutation.

108. Mr. John Wheatley (No. 223):—

"There is nothing calling for greater inquiry than the present cottage accommodation generally. A farm of 600 acres should have four double cottages. This parish is well provided. Each farm should have sufficient cottages upon it to meet its requirements, and the rent in no instance should exceed 1*s.* per week, *charged to the labourer*, whatever the tenant may have to pay. The tenant would have, notwithstanding, received his portion by the interest supplied in the extra labour given by the labourer. Money might be borrowed under Government for the erection of cottages, and charged to the tenant at seven per cent. to be paid in 22 years. I built some cottages on a former farm; a double cottage with four sleeping rooms cost 128*l.*"

109. Mr. Tiffin (No. 229) speaking of the Sledmere district in the centre of the Wolds, says, "that "there is a want of cottages in the district."

110. At a meeting of farmers at Driffield (No. 232), it was considered that in the matter of cottages there is great room for improvement. A good labourer will not come to a farm unless he can have a

cottage, and some will not walk a distance to their work. If the cottages were placed near to the farm the farmers would pay more attention to their labourers than they do now. It was considered that a garden of one rood attached to the cottage would be more advantageous to the family than an allotment. D.

111. (No. 241.) The cottages at Boynton have four good-sized rooms and generally a small scullery. This accommodation is amply sufficient in this part of the country, as children are removed from home, being hired into farmhouses at from 12 to 14 years of age. Rent, including garden, about 5*l.* a year.

112. Mr. Darley (No. 253) says:

"A good cottage cannot be built to pay above three per cent., and unless repairs are done by the landlord it soon becomes dilapidated."

113. Mr. Coleman (No. 255), agent to Lord Wenlock:—

"Every cottage intended for a family should have three bedrooms, with a separate approach from the landing. One cottage per 100 acres is considered sufficient for the requirements of the land. The best mode of providing an increase of cottage accommodation would be by requiring a fair payment for the landlord's outlay from the farmer, who requires the labour and derives a benefit from it."

114. Mr. Tireman (No. 265), testifies that the state of the cottages in Howden union, generally speaking, is satisfactory, and that overcrowding only occasionally prevails, great improvements having been effected in cottage dwellings during the last twenty years.

Cottages. Yorkshire.

115. There is in most parts of Yorkshire much comfort in the cottages, and although there may be reason to wish for improvement in some, an increase in their number, or a change of the situation of others, they are vastly superior to the average of dwellings in the southern counties. Gardens are almost universally attached to them, or in default of those there are fields close to the village divided into allotments for the labourers; many, also, have a "cow-gate," or a run for a cow in the lanes.

Gardens and allotments.

116. It is said that the garden attached is most advantageous to the labourer; he can spend a half hour in the morning, or in the evening on his return from work, in his garden, where he can, without inconvenience, have the assistance of his wife or children, whereas the allotment field being frequently half a mile or a mile from his home, it becomes an effort to him after a hard day's work for his employer to walk that distance to commence work for himself. They are, however, admitted to be of great use and are usually sought after eagerly. These allotments should not be too large; one rood is fully enough, but half a rood is more generally considered as much as a regularly employed man can do justice to. Throughout my district the labourers are not in this respect badly off. It is in the dwellings themselves where the improvement is required.

Cause of bad cottages. Absenteeism.

117. What are the causes of the bad state of the cottages?—One of the principal ones is "absenteeism," under which I include not merely non-residence of the owner in the county where his estate is situated, but that which is equally bad, viz., non-attention to the outlying portions of that estate. On many occasions when being struck by the poor state of the dwellings I have inquired who is the owner, I have been told he is some one living perhaps in the county, but rarely, if ever, visiting the village, or taking any heed as to the condition of the people. On the estate of Mr. Montague, in Yorkshire, less care is taken of the cottages than on any other large estate that I visited. The contrast between the cottages at Marston belonging to him and those in the adjacent village belonging to Lord Wenlock, was too marked to pass by without notice. In Marston (Evidence, No. 355), it is true, the actual rent paid is very small, but the tenements are wretched, the whole repair has to be done by the cottager, and so the rent becomes, in fact, very high; and as one of them told me, "he" (the landlord) "does not care if they all tumble down." On other portions of his estate there was a great want of cottages, many having been pulled down and scarcely a new one built.

Encumbered estates.

118. Again, there are of course cases where the landowner's income is either not sufficient or is so encumbered that it is not in his power to make even the smallest necessary improvement in the cottages, the property being so entailed that he is unable to sell any small portion for the benefit of the rest.

Close parishes.

119. The evils of the old "close parishes" are not yet removed, though all must, I believe, admit now how mistaken were those who formerly for the sake of keeping down the rates or making a so-called model village, pulled down cottages and drove the poor to distant villages; and the cry is now universal for more cottages on the farms or near the place where the labour is required. The Union Chargeability Act is doubtless working beneficially, but till you can get rid of some of the other causes that operate against the interests of the cottagers very little good will be done.

120. If my colleagues have found the same strong feeling on this matter existing in their districts as I have in mine, it must surely show that the evil is a great one and much in want of a cure, and that it behoves owners of cottage property to bestir themselves. Even on the borders of a large park in Cambridgeshire, in two sets of cottages which I visited, the people dismissed me with the words, "I "hope you'll be able to do something for us about the cottages." They were certainly far too crowded, though good enough to look at outside. If such is the case under the eye of a large owner, how can you expect the outlying districts to be cared for?

Landlords' question.

121. At various meetings where the cottage question has been discussed I have repeatedly said that it is a landlords' question, and I feel it to be so, but it is no less my duty, in giving the result of an inquiry into the general condition of the agricultural labourer, to set forth plainly that which I find to be in want of improvement, and to call your attention to that which is on all sides said to be the principal cause of immorality and degradation among the working class, viz., the crowded and neglected state of the dwellings of the poor.

122. I refrain from suggesting any remedy or discussing the need or the form of legislation on the subject till I have completed my share in the inquiry in other parts of England and had opportunities of obtaining further evidence from localities that may differ materially from those which I have already visited.

Small owners of cottages.

123. But it is not only under the landowner that the cottages are bad, there is also a vast number owned by small tradesmen and others to whom they are a property that is expected to pay, and here it

D. is found that often a rent is demanded in excess of that which a field-labourer can pay; the consequence is that he takes in lodgers, and crowds into as small a space as possible his perhaps numerous family.

124. The construction of the cottages varies as much as the cost. The cheapest good cottages are those mentioned above on Mr. Jonas' farm, but I think those are quite exceptional. In the evidence there are many returns setting forth dimensions, &c. which may be of much use in further considering the question, and I would particularly call your attention to the opinion of Mr. Dickenson as to the expediency of varying the size of cottages, instead of building all with three bedrooms.

Owner's care necessary.

125. Yet it all comes to this in the end, that let the cottage be as good as can be, if the owner will not take some pains to prevent overcrowding the evils arising from want of decency will surely grow.

126. Rent of Cottages.—The following examples are taken from Cambridgeshire and Yorkshire, and represent districts differing in soil.

Cambridge.—Isle of Ely.

Whittlesey	3*l.* to 8*l.* per annum; average, 73*s.*
Littleport—1 room, ground 1 do. above	2*l.* 10*s.*
2 rooms, ground 2 do up	4*l.* 10*s.* to 6*l.* 10*s.*, according to size of garden.
Parson Drove	6*l.*, with land.
Swavesey (part fenland), 2 bedrooms	3*l.* 10*s.*
Willingham—inadequate accommodation	4*l.* to 5*l*, few with gardens.
Royston (light lands)—4 rooms and garden	1*s.* 3*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week.
Stapleford—many with only 1 room below and 1 above	3*l.* to 5*l.* per annum.
Duxford—2 rooms down 1 or 2 up	Average, 4*l.*
Fulbourn—2 rooms down 2 bedrooms	4*l.*, with garden.
Cottenham (part fen)—Cottages good; 3 and 4 or more rooms of 12 to 14 ft. square.	5*l.*, with garden or allotment.
Dry Drayton—2 rooms down 2 do. above Substantial property of Mr. Warren, grocer, Cambridge.	4*l.* to 6*l.*, no garden.
Earl of Hardwicke's, Arrington—	
1. Pump Hall Row, let by floors—	
Ground floor—1 sitting room 1 bedroom and back place	2*l.* 12*s.* a year, with garden.
Upper floor—same size	2*l.* 9*s.*
Whole cottage (smaller)	3*l.* 3*s.*
2. New Wimpole, also let by floors—	
Ground floor—2 rooms	2*l.* a year and 7*s.* for garden.
Upper floor—2 rooms	2*l.* 8*s.*, with garden.
Shudy Camps—Old and bad, and owned by non-residents.	2*l.* to 3*l.* 10*s.*, mostly with a garden.
Steeple Morden—2 bedrooms lower rooms, 6 ft. high or less	2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*, often without garden.

Yorkshire, East Riding.

Holderness:	
Burstwick—good	3*l.* to 5*l.* per annum.
Roos—2 rooms down 2 do. upstairs	5*l.* with garden, 3*l.* 10*s.* without garden.
Elsternwick	4*l.*, with rood of land.
Waghen:	
1. 1 room, dairy, &c., ground floor 2 bedrooms	8*l.*, with garden and cow-paddock.
2. 1 room ground floor and back premises 2 bedrooms	4*l.*, with garden.
3. 1 room ground floor 1 do. upstairs A widow's cottage.	2*l.* 10*s.* a year, with garden.
Humberside:	
Brantingham	4*l.* and 5*l.*, with garden or allotment of half a rood.
Welton—2 rooms down 2 do. upstairs	5*l.* and 6*l.* a year.
Wolds:	
Bishop Burton (Mr. F. Watt), Ground floor, 15 ft. by 13 ft., 10 ft. high. 2 bedrooms	2*l.* to 3*l.* 10*s.*, with garden or allotment.
Dalton (Lord Hotham), Ground floor, 2 rooms and dairy. 2 or 3 bedrooms	New, 6*l.*; old, 2*l.* to 4*l.*
Millington—1 sitting room 14 ft. square, and scullery and 1 bedroom	3*l.* to 7*l.* a year.
Wetwang—Ground, 1 room and lean-to 2 rooms upstairs	3*l.* to 6*l.*, some with garden.

D.

YORKSHIRE, EAST RIDING—*cont.*

Vale of York and Howdenshire:	
Everingham (Lord Herries)—	
1. 2 ground floor rooms and dairy, 3 bedrooms, outhouses and cowhouse, and a rood of garden. Cost 140*l.* a piece.	
2. Row of 7— 2 ground floor rooms, 3 bedrooms, outhouses, &c. Cost under 100*l.* a piece.	2*l.* a year, with garden; 1*l.* or 2*l.* additional if with land for cow.
Stamford Bridge—2 ground floor - 2 bedrooms - - -	4*l.* a year.
Escrick (Lord Wenlock)—Ground floor, 1 or 2 living rooms and washhouse. 2 and sometimes 3 bedrooms - -	1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, with garden or allotment.
Elvington—2 ground floor rooms - - - 2 bedrooms - - - -	3*l.* 3*s.* to 5*l.* 9*s.*, including rates.
Barmby Marsh—Ground floor rooms 12 ft. by 9 ft. 2 bedrooms - - -	1*s.* 6*d.* a week, with garden.
Howden - - - - - -	3*l.* a year, without land; 5*l.* a year, with 1 rood.

YORKSHIRE, WEST RIDING.

Selby:	
1 living room, 12 ft. by 12 ft. - - Back kitchen, and 2 bedrooms above -	4*l.* to 5*l.*, with garden and outhouses.
Monk Frystone:	
1 room downstairs, 14 ft. by 14 ft. - - 1 room and a piece upstairs - - -	3*l.* to 5*l.*
Airmin:	
Some 2, some 3, some 4 rooms. 1 low room, 12 ft. by 14 ft. - - - Smaller one behind, 10 ft. by 12 ft., or 10 ft. by 14 ft. A smaller room above - - - -	1*s.* and 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, with good garden.
Warmsworth:	
1 downstairs room - - - - 1 or 2 upstairs, 14 ft. by 15 ft., 7 ft. 6 in. high -	3*l.* to 4*l.* a year, gardens, &c.
Ulley:	
1. 1 low room - - - - - 2 bedrooms - - - - - Pitman.	2*s.* 6*d.* a week. Small garden.
2. 1 low room - - - 2 upstairs rooms - - - - Agricultural labourer.	1*s.* 6*d.* a week. No garden.

YORKSHIRE, NORTH RIDING.

Alne:	
A kitchen 10 ft. square - - - A back kitchen - - - 2 bedrooms - - - -	About 4*l.* a year.
Burniston:	
Cottages belonging to Duchy of Lancaster, small -	3*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* a year, with garden.
Pickering:	
Rooms, 15 ft. by 12 ft. - - - -	2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* a year.
Helmsley:	
2 bedrooms - - -	3*l.* to 3*l.* 10*s.*, with garden.
Egton:	
Kitchen - - - - 1 or 2 bedrooms - - - - -	2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* No garden.
Marten-in-Cleveland:	
Living room and pantry - - - - 2 bedrooms upstairs - - -	4*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* a year.
Gilling:	
1 sitting room 12 ft. by 15 ft. - - - Small scullery - - - - 2 bedrooms above - - Sometimes 3 - - - - -	3*l.* to 4*l.*, with small garden.
Barton, near Darlington:	
Some with 1 bedroom and 1 sitting room, the latter being also sometimes used as a bedroom. Some with 3 rooms - - In rare instances 4 rooms - - -	3*l.* to 5*l.*, with garden, &c.
Catterick:	
Good accommodation - - - -	1*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.*
Hutton Conyers:	
1. Old and low, without chambers - - 2. With 3 bedrooms - - - -	10*s.* to 3*l.* a year.

127. In your circular of inquiries you have invited opinions as to the best mode of providing good cottage accommodation, and on the necessity of amending the Lands Improvement Act, in order to gain additional facilities for raising money for that purpose. I have called the attention of several land agents and managers of landed properties to this point, and subjoined are a few of the opinions which I have been able to obtain. Most of them agree in condemning the present system of raising money as

Lands Improvement Acts.

D.

cumbrous and expensive. Great objection is taken to the necessity under s. 17. for advertising in the county papers the maximum amount proposed to be charged. I submitted the question to a landowner of great experience in the management of estates, who says,—

"I think the advertising a great hindrance to loans; it is a perfectly useless exposure of private affairs. The true course is to require notice to the heirs and trustees of the settlement, and to require their assent after examination of plans and estimates, making such estimate the maximum charge."

Labouring Classes Dwelling Houses Act.

128. With regard to the question of extending to rural districts the provisions contained in s. 4. of the Labouring Classes Dwelling Houses Act (29 Vict. c. 28.), he says,—

"Loans to be charged on a settled estate ought to be really guarded against extravagance, and under the present system of careless inspection the heir is not duly protected. I advise you to suggest, that if it is applied to rural districts great additional precautions should be taken."

The Act last referred to is for facilitating and encouraging the erection of dwellings for the labouring classes in populous places. And by ss. 5 & 6 40 years are allowed for the repayment of advances, with interest not less than 4 per cent. per annum. The provisions of this Act were not familiar to the agents of country estates, Mr. Bidwell, land agent at Ely, read the Act, and writes,—

"I think it a very good measure, and if you could get landowners in the rural districts to adopt the Act I think it might be very advantageously applied. * * * Cottages cannot be built with sufficient accommodation for a family, with three bedrooms, besides keeping-room and pantry, to pay 5 per cent. on the rents now paid for cottages in the rural districts which do not exceed 4*l.* a year; so that, if money could be borrowed inexpensively at 4 per cent., it might answer the purpose of many landowners to take up a loan."

Barrack for young men.

129. The Rev. A. Mildmay (No. 357) refers to the plan of setting apart a building with dormitories for young men under the superintendence of a master and matron as one likely to meet the evil of overcrowding in any village where cottages are scarce, or too small for the requirements of a growing family. It is said to have been tried with success on Mr. Sotheron Estcourt's estate.

No. of cottages per 100 acres.

130. The number of cottages per hundred acres that is necessary for the requirements of the land depends on the nature of the farm. A farm entirely arable requires more than one partly pasture, partly arable, while a pasture farm requires the minimum quantity. I think, as a rule, two cottages may be taken to be sufficient in any case.

Miscellaneous.

Coprolite diggings.

131. There is in Cambridgeshire much employment for the young of both sexes of the agricultural labouring class at the coprolite works. These works are increasing in number, the price paid for the right of digging is from 80*l.* to 100*l.* an acre, it being agreed that the land shall be restored to the owner levelled and in a state fit for cultivation. The digging work is done by men and grown lads; boys are employed in wheeling barrows, and children of both sexes in sorting the fossils in the mills. Wages are high, boys can earn 8*s.* and 9*s.* a week, and a girl of 10 years of age 7*s.* a week by day work, but more by the piece, the payment for picking over the fossils being usually so much per ton (see evidence Nos. 49 and 50). The state of education among these children is very low, and testimony is given as to the existence of gross immorality and indecency, no care being taken to separate the sexes at the mills. On inquiring in the neighbourhood of Sandy and Potton, and elsewhere, I could not learn that any steps had been taken by the Inspectors of factories to bring the provisions of the Workshops Act to bear on this industry, but it is probable that ere this the subject has occupied their attention.

Mr. Peel's school.

132. Mr. Arthur Peel, M.P., of Sandy, has built a shed conveniently situated for a certain number of these works, which is used for dinner, when hot coffee, &c. are provided at a low price, and for evening school. It is under the superintendence of Mr. Coulson, who reads to them at mealtimes, and gives religious and secular instruction. I attended an evening meeting of these children, when upwards of 80 of both sexes were present, who had been regular attendants at the school and regularly employed at the works, and as far as I could judge from that single opportunity, I feel sure that Mr. Peel and his coadjutor have every reason to be satisfied with the success of their missionary labours among this otherwise neglected population.

Haverhill.

133. At Haverhill, on the borders of Cambridgeshire and Essex, there is a manufacture of corduroy and "white work" (No. 121). Besides employing a considerable number of hands in the town itself, this manufacture gives work to the women and girls in the neighbouring villages at their own homes, the stuff being sent out to be made up for the ready-made clothes dealers. This gives a weekly earning of 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.*, or about the same as could be earned by field work. The clergy in this neighbourhood, as in the straw-plaiting districts on the borders of Bedfordshire, complain of the demoralising effect of this slop work.

Slop-work.

Market gardens.

134. In many parts of my district, such as Gamlingay and Potton in Cambridgeshire, and the districts of Yorkshire about Aberford, Cottingham, and the neighbourhood of the large manufacturing towns, there are tracts of market gardens. These gardens are very highly rented; women and children are much employed in them, and the earnings by day for the latter vary from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.*, and even 2*s.*; women and young persons can earn 3*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* a day (No. 283). In pea-picking they are paid 1*d.* per peck; a boy can pull 12 pecks a day, a girl seven pecks, giving an earning of 1*s.* and 7*d.* a day respectively.

Potato feasts.

135. There is occasionally, in the market garden and potato districts, a feast given by the employer at the close of the season to all those who have worked for him; it is said that these feasts are bad things, but I see no reason why, under proper supervision, any harm should come out of them, and it is quite certain that any effort made by an employer for the harmless amusement of his labourers is always appreciated and tends much to cement the two classes together with a bond of good and kindly feeling one towards the other.

Savings banks and benefit societies.

136. I have endeavoured to obtain opinions as to the relative merits of savings banks and benefit societies, and the respective working of each system. Mr. Dickinson, of Elsternwick, in Holderness, says there are many benefit societies in his neighbourhood and that they are better managed than formerly, there is less revelling and waste in the management at their public meetings, as well as a better notion of calculating and auditing the accounts, which he attributes to the progress of education.

He does not know of any savings bank nearer than Hull, and does not think "much money is put away, "as the people are fond of good living." D.

Mr. G. Angas (No. 173) thinks savings banks better than benefit societies.

Mr. Tiffin, of Sledmere (No. 229), says that the labouring classes gladly avail themselves of benefit societies and clothing clubs in that district. The order of Odd Fellows appears to be the popular one there; by their rules the payment to the sick and funeral fund is not less than 4*d.* a week for 10*s.* per week in sickness for the first six months, 7*s.* 6*d.* a week for the next six months, and 3*s.* 6*d.* a week so long as the sickness may continue after that time.

Mr. Awburn, of Hunmanby, was good enough to submit the question for discussion and investigation, and gives as the result that the opinion of the majority of those whom he consulted is in favour of savings banks, he says (No. 246), "Benefit societies are compulsory inducements, and if not carried "out according to the certified rules, members are at once debarred, and all monies paid are forfeited." "The savings bank at Hunmanby was established on December 1, 1862, and up to December 31, 1863, "there were 168 depositors; in March 1868 there were 257 depositors whose names have been on the "books, and there are 30 belonging to the labouring class."

The savings bank at Howden was stated to be in a most flourishing condition, and to be largely patronised by the poor of the town and neighbourhood, including many agricultural labourers. At this bank 3 per cent. is paid to depositors, which is a higher rate than that paid at the Post Office Savings Bank.

At Selby there is a benefit society called the "Free Gifts," which is working well. There is no fund for sickness, but money is collected, at the rate of 3*d.* per member, in each case on the doctor's certificate. The meetings of this society are never held at public-houses, but in a school-room.

At Harewood, the savings bank is freely used by agricultural labourers.

It is difficult to arrive at the amount of money annually deposited or subscribed. Even in a village where a savings bank exists persons will frequently go to a distance to deposit their money, that their neighbours may not know how much they are worth.

Savings of agricultural labourers.

137. Rev. S. Surtees, of Sprotburgh, near Doncaster, says (No. 328), that it is the rule and not the exception for a labourer to leave, at his death, 50*l.* to 150*l.*, and he quotes a case of one man, who commenced life as a farm servant, and had brought up and started in life a family, who left 350*l.* Another who died at 35 years of age, an ordinary agricultural labourer, leaving 170*l.* These are, no doubt, special instances, but considering the high rate of wages in Yorkshire, the almost universal possession by the labourer of a garden or allotment, and in many cases of a cow-gate or other advantages, I see no reason to doubt that a man, commencing life as a farm servant and exercising ordinary prudence, can by the assistance of a savings bank lay up a fair provision for his old age. It has been often stated in defence of a low rate of wages that the labourer in receipt of them has many allowances which give him advantages equivalent to those enjoyed by his brother in the high-waged districts. I feel that one fair test of the truth of this assertion will be to compare the savings of the two classes of labourer, wherever it is possible to obtain reliable information on the point. I have grave doubts as to the possibility of a man in receipt of 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week being able to avail himself to any extent of the benefits either of savings' banks or clubs, but it *may* be that either from low cottage rents, cheapness of fuel or provisions, or from some *real* advantage in the allowances made by the employer, the prudent man in a low-waged district is able to show as good results as those quoted by Mr. Surtees; at any rate the inquiry during the present year should throw some light on the subject.

138. Having thus, as far as the time at my disposal will permit, gone through the various subjects on which you directed me to make inquiries, and having laid before you shortly the heads of evidence, I will reserve further comment till my final Report.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,
Your most obedient Servant,
EDWIN B. PORTMAN,
Assistant Commissioner.

September 13, 1868.

REPORT.—By Mr. F. H. NORMAN.

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REPORT.

To Her Majesty's Commissioners.

E. Gentlemen,

1. I now have the honour of submitting to you the evidence which, under your authority and in obedience to your instructions, I collected during my recent visit to Northamptonshire.

2. Before submitting to you a summary of the evidence, it is necessary that I should make one or two observations, in explanation of the general features of the county and of the course I pursued in examining it.

3. The character of the various districts of Northamptonshire, considered as affecting the employment of women and children in agriculture, is generally uniform. There are no such peculiarities existing in different portions of the county as to make it necessary for me to enter into an explanation of the mode of cultivation and of the employment of labour in these portions, as distinguished from the mode of cultivation and the employment of labour generally adopted throughout the county. It may therefore be assumed that the observations which I shall have the honour of making are intended to apply to the county in general, unless it is stated specifically that they are applicable to particular portions only.

E.

4. I was occupied in making enquiries in the county during portions of the months of February, March, April, and May of this year, and the plan of investigation which I adopted was as follows:— On my first arrival I made myself well acquainted with the general system of cultivation and the employment of labour in the centre of the county; and having thus obtained a general impression on these points, I visited in succession all the other portions of the county for the purpose of ascertaining to what extent, and in what particulars, the system pursued in them differed from the system pursued in the district I had first investigated. On going into a new district I collected and have recorded a sufficient amount of evidence to explain what, if any, were the peculiar features of that district. I also communicated with all persons, of all classes, who I was advised were able to give me useful suggestions upon any of the points connected with the enquiry; and I hope and believe that all the opinions held by persons best qualified to form opinions on any of the subjects connected with this enquiry will be found recorded in some portion of the evidence.

Mode of investigation.

5. I am desirous of expressing my thanks for the uniform courtesy and readiness to give assistance which I experienced from all persons with whom I felt it my duty to communicate. I will now proceed to lay before you a synopsis of the evidence I have collected, and in so doing I shall endeavour to compress it into as short a compass as I can consistently with clearness.

I.—Labour.

6. The system of working by private gangs is almost unknown in the county. In some cases, chiefly in the northern part of the county, a few women, young persons, or children are employed in weeding, picking twitch, or some similar employment; and if the workers are children, one adult labourer is engaged to superintend the work (Evid. 86). The number of persons so employed rarely exceeds six or eight; in one case I heard of 15 being employed (Evid. 71). The system does not appear to be objected to, either by those who are so employed (Evid. 79, 98, 99) or their parents (Evid. 80); the sexes do not generally work together, except in the case of young children (Evid. 80b), and as practised in this county the system is not considered open to any objections other than those which may be urged against the employment of women, young persons, and children individually (Evid. 19, 80b). Public gangs are objectionable on two grounds; when they work by the piece it is for the interest of the gang-master to overwork those under him, he being paid by the piece and they by the day; and when they work by the day it is for his interest to engage children as young as the farmer can be persuaded to take, the gang-master being paid by the farmer for the number of hands employed, and making his profit by the difference between what he receives from the farmer and what he pays those he employs. Private differ from public gangs on both these points. The remuneration of superintending labourer does not depend upon the amount of work performed by the gang, therefore it is not for his interest to overwork them; and the profit of the farmer does not depend upon his engaging very young children; therefore he has no inducement to engage them before they are strong enough to perform the labour allotted to them.

Private gangs.

Objections to public, not applicable to private, gangs.

7. Judging therefore from my experience in Northamptonshire, I do not think that it is necessary that private gangs should be subjected to legislative regulation.

8. Although the employment of females in private gangs is rare, some few females are to be found in every village who are in the habit of going out to work in the fields. Those who do so are not so numerous in the southern portion of the county, where the lace trade is carried on, as in the northern. But in no part of the county are females generally employed in field labour. From the figures supplied me in answer to the printed circulars of questions which I distributed, it appeared that in 19 parishes,* with a total population of 8,975, only 190 are employed in field work (Evid. 5).

Employment of females individually.

Numbers employed.

9. On the whole it is quite clear that it is the exception rather than the rule for a woman to go to work in the field. Thus one farmer who had occupied a farm of 350 acres for 10 years says, "I have not "employed above three women since I have been here" (Evid. 24); another who farms largely says that he employs one or two old women in summer "out of charity" (Evid. 76); and a third says, "I employ "one woman pretty constantly; she is an old friend, and comes for her own sake, not for mine. I employ "a few women and girls (aged about 10) in haymaking, and sometimes one or two more in spudding "thistles" (Evid. 155). This is about the usual extent to which females are employed, although occasionally those employed are more numerous (Evid. 51, 71).

10. It may be said generally that all the boys in the agricultural villages are employed in the fields. They begin to work about the age of 8, a few as young as 7; and almost all of them have been to work before they are 10. The work performed by them up to the age of 10 does not generally occupy them all the year round, although it does so occasionally (Evid. 28); but after the age of 10 or 11 they are usually employed continuously throughout the whole year. The number employed, according to the return sent in to me, was as follows: in 19 parishes† with a population of 8,975, 621 males below the age of 18 were employed in field work (Evid. 5).

Employment of boys.

Numbers employed.

11. These boys are usually employed by the farmer who employs their fathers, and when they want work they, or their fathers, usually apply to the farmer for it (Evid. 123, 126). Occasionally the farmers send for them (Evid. 151). I was told by some witnesses that undue pressure is used by farmers in order to compel the labourers to let their children come to work (Evid. 92), but I was unable to find a single instance where such pressure had actually been exercised, although I made numerous enquiries among the labourers themselves to ascertain what the truth was. The most important evidence I received on the point was that of Mr. Barton who, speaking of his school-farm at Wicken, says, that although the boys "get 4*d.* a day with me for four hours work, many go to the farmers for 3*d.* a day "for 10 hours; which means that the parents dare not refuse the farmers when their children are "required" (Evid. 179).

How hired.

Statute fairs are still held annually in the large towns, but are gradually falling into disuse.

* These parishes are Boughton, Chapel Brampton, Church Brampton, Cotterstock, Cottingham, Cranford, Deene, Eydon, Fotheringhay, Lamport, Overstone, Marholm, Middleton-Cheney, Ravensthorpe, Sywell, Thorpe-Malsor, Thornby, Watford, Welford.

† These parishes are enumerated in the note to paragraph 8.

E.

Work performed by women and children.

12. The work performed by women, young persons, and children in the fields is as follows:—

In Spring. Picking weeds, gathering stones, and hoeing.

In Summer. Spudding thistles, haymaking; in harvest they rake, make bands, and help to tie the corn up, when their husbands or fathers are engaged in reaping; besides gleaning on their own account.

In Autumn. After harvest women and young children (under 10) are very little employed; they are occasionally employed in storing root crops.

In Winter. Women are sometimes employed in picking stones and cleaning turnips for the stock. Children very seldom employed.

13. In addition to this work the small boys, and occasionally girls, are employed in scaring birds. This occupies them from about the 20th February to the 1st week in May; again for about three weeks in in summer before the corn is ripe, and for about three weeks in Autumn after the wheat is sown. They are also employed in "dibbling" beans and occasionally wheat in the spring, and in singling turnips in summer. At the age of 10 or 11 boys begin to go with the team, although few farmers think they are useful for this purpose until the age of 12. When old enough to drive horses, one boy is usually employed with the team all the year round, principally in ploughing. When engaged in ploughing the team goes out at about 7 a.m.: they stop work for about half an hour at 9.30 or 10, and then go on working until 2 p.m. or 2.30 p.m., when they return home; the men and boys then have their dinners, and after that are engaged in cleaning the stable, cutting chaff, or doing some similar jobs in the yard. With some farmers it is the practice for teams to come in to be fed at dinner time, and then go out again and remain out until 4 p.m. (Evid. 163), but the former is the more general practice.

Wages.

14. The usual wages for a common day labourer are 12*s.* a week; in the south, around Towcester and Brackley, they are only 11*s.* (Evid. 178); and in the north they are 13*s.* or 14*s.* (Evid. 23). A great deal of work is done by the piece; and Mr. Pell calculates that where wages are at 12*s.*, a good labourer will earn by piece work a sum sufficient to bring his average weekly wages up to 15*s.* 10*d.* including all allowances (Evid. 13 b). Women usually receive 8*d.* or 10*d.* a day, and in the north 1*s.* (Evid. 23). Boys when they first go to work at the age of 8 or 9 receive 3*d.* or 4*d.* a day; in the north 5*d.* or 6*d.* These wages are gradually raised as the boys get older.

Distance from work.

15. As a general rule the villages are conveniently situated with respect to the work to be done. From the answers to the printed circulars I distributed, I inferred that in the case of half the villages spoken of the labourers had to walk less than one mile to their work (Evid. 5). Cases where they have to walk as much as three are certainly rare. Where this is the case the time occupied in walking to work is sometimes reckoned as part of the day's work (Evid. 104). When speaking of cottages hereafter I shall have occasion to give my reasons for thinking that whatever inconvenience may exist in this respect is likely to be remedied; and on the whole it does not appear that legislative interference is called for on this point.

Hours of work. Meal hours.

16. The usual hours of work for labourers who work by the day are from 6 to 6 in summer, and and from 7 until dark in winter. There are very few exceptions to these hours; and the hours allotted to meals are half an hour at 9.30 for breakfast or luncheon, and one hour for dinner in the middle of the day. When the labourers work long hours, as at haymaking, they usually have another half hour's rest at 4 or 4.30 p.m.

Work done on Sundays.

17. No work is done on Sundays except what is considered abolutely necessary, such as feeding horses, bird scaring, the shepherd's work, and milking (Evid. 22). I am told that on one farm the man who looks after the horses has to come twice on Sunday for 1½ hours each time; the man who feeds the beasts comes twice for about 3 hours each time; the shepherd's work in the lambing season must occupy him all day, but another man usually does a portion of it for him (Evid. 43). This nearly corresponds with the information I received in another district (Evid. 65). The boys who are employed in scaring birds usually have to come on Sunday; occasionally they are relieved for a part of the day by another member of the family, so as to have an opportunity of going to church (Evid. 53).

Effect of labonr on health.

18. It is the almost unanimous opinion of all classes that the labour performed by women and children in the fields is not injurious to them. The evidence of Dr. Paley is peculiarly valuable upon this point. Dr. Paley has been physician to the hospital at Peterboro for 26 years, where nearly 2,000 cases pass through his hands each year, chiefly from the agricultural districts. He gives it as his opinion that the diseases which attack the agricultural population most frequently are rheumatism, inflammation of the air tubes, and asthma (with bronchitis). A record has been kept at the hospital of the ages of all the patients who suffered from these diseases; and from a reference to the record (Evid. 14) it may be seen that the ages between 5 and 20 (which may be taken as the limits of the ages within which children and young persons are employed in the fields) are particularly healthy. No doubt old men are subject to rheumatism (Evid. 47); but Dr. Paley gives it as his opinion that rheumatism occurring late in life cannot be said to be the result of exposure in early life when the patient has been healthy during the intervening years.

Surgical cases.

19. As regards surgical cases Dr. Walker (App. 15) says that a certain number of cases of accidents are brought into the hospital at Peterboro' every year; that horse accidents are not so frequent as accidents arising from machinery, and that the latter usually occur to children about the farmyard carelessly playing with machinery. On the whole he thinks that field labour is rather healthy than otherwise. Dr. Francis, of Northampton, writes to me as follows:—

"My medical experience of the poor has been derived from my connexion with the Northampton Infirmary, to which I have been physician 13 years. Nearly 5,000 patients, derived mostly from within a radius of 20 miles, annually enter the infirmary either as out or in patients. Of these the majority are women and children, and among them only an insignificant number work in the fields. I cannot call to mind a single instance in which any physical injury could be said to have arisen from such labour. The experience of the senior surgeon of the infirmary, who has held office there upwards of 30 years, and of the house surgeon, who has known it during the last 6 years, is similar to my own on this point." (See too Evid. 16.)

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20. Although field labour is not thought to be injurious to the health of women and children, it is considered to have a bad moral effect upon them. The mother of a family must neglect her children and her home duties, and her husband's comforts cannot be attended to. Upon young women the effect is said to be most demoralizing; they get into loose and disorderly habits, and are rendered unfit for domestic servants and badly trained for labourers' wives (Evid. 19). One woman who had worked in the fields herself, told me that she would not allow her daughters to go to work; "they learn what they ought not to learn and it is bad for their constitution" (Evid. 28). A clergyman tells me "We never like to take back to a mixed school (boys and girls) a boy who has been out to "work with men" (Evid. 47); and a labourer says, "My boy shall not go to work until he is 14." . . . . . "If he does he is sure to have a depraved nature and catch up all that is bad." . . . . . "There are three boys at work on the farm, and when they are altogether their "language is very bad" (Evid. 65). I am told also that the women who work in the fields are the lowest of the low (Evid. 152), and that when women go to work "The cottages are invariably dirty, "the children run half wild, and the money which they earn seems to do no good; in fact, they are "generally the poorest families in the place" (Evid. 168).

Effect on morals of females, of boys.

21. I do not think that the children are exposed to ill treatment; and the only employment in which they are engaged which appears to be attended with special injuries is the practice of sending small boys to scare with fire-arms; accidents occasioning loss of limb and occasionally loss of life not unfrequently occur from this cause (Evid. 15).

No ill treatment. Scaring with gun specially injurious.

22. It was the opinon of some witnesses with whom I communicated that the employment of females in field work should be prohibited by law. No doubt it should be discouraged; but I think that, as respects the County of Northampton, their employment is not sufficiently general or the cause of such decided evils as to call for parliamentary interference (Evid. 18).

Restrictions proposed on women's labour;

23. Restriction upon children's labour may be advocated upon two grounds, 1st, on the ground of health; and 2ndly, for the purpose of providing the children with education. I think it is clearly proved by the medical evidence I have above referred to, that no restriction is necessary upon the first of these grounds. What may be necessary as regards education may be explained more clearly after the state of education among children and young persons has been considered.

on children's labours.

II.—Education.

24. In order to test the sufficiency of the education it was necessary for me to lay down some standard of what amount of education was sufficient. I usually stated that I considered the children of the agricultural poor sufficiently educated if they could read a newspaper with ease and fluency, write a letter, and understand a tradesman's bill. Judged by this standard, it was the opinion of five out of the six Boards of Guardians which I visited that the state of education was defective (Evid. 1). The only place where the Board of Guardians considered the education sufficient was Oundle; and I regret to say that even in this instance my personal enquiries led me to the conclusion that the opinion of the Board was not well founded. I also examined the roll of the Northampton Militia, and the result of my examination was to show that from the year 1860 to the present time, between 39 and 49 per cent. of the recruits enlisted each year could neither read or write (Evid. 10). I should mention that the recruits were entered as not being able to read and write, if on being enrolled they made a mark instead of signing their names. These recruits are not taken from the agricultural classes alone, but I have no reason to think that the result would have been more favourable to education if they had been. It is the opinion of the school teachers of Northampton that at the age of 9, when boys usually leave school altogether, they can pass Standard III. of the revised code well (Evid. 11). This, however, must not be taken as a test of the state of education of the children and young persons actually engaged in work. As soon as they go to work they begin to forget what they learnt at school, and after having been at work some years they probably know far less than they did when they first began to work. It was my practice to carry a 2nd Standard reading book in my pocket, with which I tested the reading powers of those I found at work in the fields; I found that very few of them could read it fluently. It is however the general opinion that the state of education is improving (Evid. 17), although it does not appear from the returns of the Northamptonshire Militia that any great improvement has taken place during the last seven years (Evid. 10).

Actual state of education. Defective. Northamptonshire Militia. Can usually pass Standard III. when they leave school. Education improving.

25. The defective state of education is certainly not owing to the want of schools, for schools are maintained in almost every village,* and the villages are very numerous; nor is it, except when the parent is out of work, due to inability on the part of the parents to pay the weekly charge for the child's schooling; but it is mainly due to two causes.

Causes of defective state of education.

26. 1st. Indifference on the part both of the parents and the employers. As a general rule neither the one or the other is willing to make any sacrifice to obtain an education for the children; (Evid. 19). No

Indifference.

* The following paragraph appeared in the *Times* of April 10, 1868 :—"Church education in Northamptonshire. Adopting the data "of the clergy list, the number of parishes, chapelries, and other legally constituted districts in Northamptonshire, may be taken "as 315, and from all these, with the exception of eight only, returns have been received in answer to the statistical enquiry of the "National Society, made throughout England and Wales. There are in Northamptonshire 53 parishes and chapelries which have "not National or parochial schools situated within their respective bounderies, but only 13 of these are not reported as having "provision for church week-day education; and arranging these according to their populations, it is ascertained that eight have "fewer than 100 inhabitants, and five have more than 100 and fewer than 300. There are 16 of the remaining 48 parishes which "are supplied with church week-day education by schools in either adjoining or joint parishes for school purposes, and in not one "of these parishes does the population exceed 500. There are 24 parishes out of 53 above-named which yet remain to be "considered; these are supplied with cottage or dame's schools, more or less under clerical superintendence, and classifying these "with reference to their populations, two are found to have fewer than 100 inhabitants, 12 have more than 100 and fewer than "200, and the remaining 10 have more than 200 and fewer than 400. Passing now from the supply and absence of church "schools to the numerical state of church education at the present time as compared with what it was 10 years ago, the following "figures represent the cases:—1856–7, the number of week-day scholars in the church schools of Northamptonshire was 19,104, "or 1 in 11·6 of the entire population of the county at that time; 1866–7, the number of such scholars had risen to 21,529, or "1 in 11 of the population of the county in December 1866, this population having been estimated by the Registrar General. In "1856–7 the number of church evening school scholars was only 1,817; in 1866–7 the number had risen to 3,558."

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doubt when asked whether they value education, almost all labourers will say that they do; but it is quite clear that they do not attach any such importance to it as to induce them to make a sacrifice to obtain it. This indifference is not universal; some labourers do really value education; but some, if not many, are to be found in every parish who may be fairly complained of on account of their demoralization and utter absence of affection towards their children (Evid. 147, 169); and even in one parish where, owing to the liberality of the proprietor, the poor certainly possess peculiar advantages, it does not appear that they send their children to school more regularly or keep them there longer than in other parishes (Evid. 34). It is also said that this indifference on the part of the parents leads to great irregularity of attendance; "they come for a fortnight and stay away for a month on frivolous excuses" (Evid. 44). This complaint was frequently made to me.

Unwillingness to forego the children's earnings.

27. 2nd. The second cause of the defective education is the unwillingness of the parents to forego the earnings of their children. This causes the children to leave school before they can possibly have acquired a sufficient education. It is the opinion of the school teachers that boys begin to leave school at about the age of 8, and leave altogether at 9 (Evid. 11).

The Rev. W. L. Collins writes as follows:—

"Judging from my experience as diocesan inspector I should say that the great majority of children leave the school before they reach the highest class. I have taken the returns of 85 village schools which are under inspection in this county, and I find that the average age of the second class, taking the first as the highest, is 8 years and 9 months." (Evid. 143.)

By going to work at an early age the children get into the habit of attending school irregularly, and will not return to school again although they may be out of work for weeks together (Evid. 78).

Remedies.

Half-day and alternate day system objectionable.

28. It would be extremely difficult to apply either the half-day system or the alternate day system to agricultural labourers. The former would be inconvenient on account of the distances the children would often have to go from work to school, and the time which would be thus lost, in addition to the great inconvenience caused to farmers by having the children's labour during half the day only. The alternate day system would be inconvenient, because there are few places where the population is sufficiently numerous to supply two relays of children to work on alternate days; and if this could not be done, and work was to be consequently suspended, serious inconvenience might result to farmers at particular seasons of the year. In consequence of the great difficulty in compelling children actually engaged in agricultural labour to devote any considerable portion of their time to school, it seems that their education can only be effected by devoting a longer period of time to school attendance before field labour commences. For the purpose of meeting the education difficulty various plans were suggested.

Various suggestions.

Examination before going to work.

Objections to.

29. It was thought by some that no child should be permitted to go work until he or she had passed an easy examination in reading, writing, and arithmetic, or had attended school during a certain period (Evid. 19, 21. I desire particularly to call attention to the suggestion of these gentlemen). The objection to this plan appears to me to consist in the difficulty of granting the certificates. If the power of earning wages is to depend upon the passing an examination, some arrangement should be made by which examinations should be frequently held; it would be difficult for Government Inspectors to hold very frequent examinations, and the power of holding the examinations and of granting or withholding the certificate could not rest with the schoolmaster or the clergyman of the parish without exposing them to great unpopularity (Evid. 45). This plan would also often have the effect of placing an intelligent child in a worse position than a stupid child. An intelligent child might perhaps pass an examinanation at the age of 7 which a stupid child would fail to pass until the age of 10; but it seems hard that the former should consequently lose the advantage of three years' schooling. It was also pointed out to me that owing to want of intelligence some children would never be able to pass the examination, and that at any rate in their case some concession would have to be made. The principle upon which this proposal rests appears to be sound; if the parents are deprived of the child's wages and the farmer of the child's labour until some specified amount of education has been obtained, it will be for the interest both of the parents and the farmer to use every means to advance the child's education. It was also suggested to me that a certain amount of secular education should be given on Sundays (Evid. 45), that the compulsory system might be adopted at all times, when the child was not actually engaged in some employment with which school attendance would interfere (Evid. 78), or that a system of rewards for regular attendance and proficiency should be adopted, as by conferring some Government appointments upon those who distinguished themselves in the school examinations (Evid. 128).

30. Upon this point the Rev. W. Clarkson of Market Harborough writes as follows:—

"There are two objections to the half-time system working as well in agricultural as in manufacturing districts; (1). Being in the open air all the morning, they are more likely to be sluggish and sleepy than those working under cover. (2). They often work a considerable way from any town, and would have to walk some miles after working before they got into the school. The plan which found most favour with those to whom I spoke on the subject was this; let the children be kept at school altogether until a certain age (10 or 11), and for the next three years be required to attend school during those months when they would not be wanted so much in the fields; during these months (say six altogether) let them work and receive wages."

At present the attendance is only slightly more numerous in winter than in summer. From the returns sent in to me it appeared that 1 in 11·61 of the population were in average attendance in summer, and 1 in 10·84 in winter. But these numbers are in addition to night schools (Evid. 8, 9).

Up to what age the labour of children could be dispensed with.

31. It is very important to ascertain up to what age children could be spared from field labour. First, as to the requirements of farmers; it appears that in the 19 parishes (mentioned above), with a population of 8,975, 8 boys under 8, 80 between 8 and 10, and 10 girls between 8 and 10, are employed in field work (Evid. 5). The principal employment of young boys is scaring birds; but it is the opinion of some gentlemen well acquainted with agriculture, that this operation can be more economically performed by other agencies, as by a big boy who, if supplied with a hoe, could always employ himself advantageously, or by a man with a gun (Evid. 20, 21, 37, 71, 177). Weeding can be

done more effectively and possibly more economically by men than by children (Evid. 67). Some farmers think that children might be spared until the age of 12 (Evid. 21 and 35); others and probably the majority think they could be spared up to the age of 10; this was the age fixed upon by the Northampton Chamber of Agriculture (Evid. 4); while the ages fixed by the Boards of Guardians were 10, 9, and at Towcester 8 and in winter 9 (Evid. 1). The restriction of labour up to the age of 10 could hardly I think throw any serious additional expenditure on the farmers; as pointed out to me by one farmer "at the worst it would only cost a farmer 6*d.* a week more to get a boy over 10 to do the "work now done by a boy under 10," and I don't think that this additional expenditure can be considered as serious, especially as it would necessarily purchase more efficient labour. I found great difficulty in getting any precise information from the labourers as to the advantage they derived from the labour of their children. Few labouring men can say exactly how long any one of their children has been at work in any given year, or how much he or she has earned. However I learned from one witness (Evid. 90) that children between the ages of 8 and 10 years are employed from 10 to 12 weeks a year and earn 2*s.* a week; another says that no child under 9 earns more than 15*s.* a year (Evid. 25); another "that most boys under 10 would never be able to earn more than 40*s.* a year" (Evid. 162). However this may be, all are agreed that a boy has to be far better fed when at work than when at school; thus, one woman told me that it cost her 20*s.* a year more to keep a boy when he went to work than when he went to school (Evid. 162); another says that it costs 1*s.* a week more (Evid. 53); another that she saved 6*d.* a week out of her boy's wages of 2*s.* a week (Evid. 42).

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Up to what age can the parents dispense with the earnings of the children.

Upon this point the Rev. W. Clarkson writes:—

"It is thought by some well competent to judge that the children's working in the fields does not really make a difference of 1*s.* in their (*i.e.*, the parents') week's expenses, for the reason that though they want and ought to have a shilling'sworth more food, they do not in fact get it; it is not given them by their parents."

32. I doubt whether the children are usually insufficiently fed when at work. If this were the case, I think the fact must have been noticed by medical men. Then the additional outlay for clothes must be added. In the estimate of the expenditure of a poor man's family, the clothes of the father who was an invalid are put at 1*l.* per annum and those of a boy of 15 who was at work at 4*l.* (Evid. 12). It is quite clear therefore that the net gain arising from a boy's labour up to the age of 10 must be exceedingly small.

33. But when considering how far the earnings of the children could be dispensed with, certain other points must be kept in view. The income and expenditure of the whole family must be considered, and no doubt if children were prevented from going to work up to a certain age the wages of those just above the age fixed upon would rise; and in all probability if the education were improved the boys when they were allowed to go to work would earn more than they do at present. In addition to this it must be borne in mind that the mere fact of the employment of the wife and children has a tendency to depress the wages of the husband. The earnings of each family must be sufficient to support the family, or the population would decrease, probably by emigration. If the wife and children do not earn wages, the whole of the amount necessary for the support of the family must be earned by the father; but if it is customary for the wife and children to contribute to the earnings of the family, the father would probably be willing to accept a smaller remuneration for his labour than he would accept if he expected no assistance from his wife and children. None of these points must be lost sight of in considering the effect upon the earnings of the family of a restriction imposed upon the labour of the children. The effect of moderate restriction would probably be that what was lost in wages by the younger children would be made up for by the increased earnings of the father and of the elder ones.

Probable increase of wages (1) if a restriction imposed; (2) if education improved.

34. These considerations lead me to the conclusion that the labour of children in the fields might be dispensed with up to the age of 10, without interfering seriously with the present system of cultivation on the one hand, or encroaching too much on the earnings of the family on the other. If this prohibition was enforced the numbers of those now at work in the 19 parishes from which I received statistics, whose employment would become illegal, would amount to 88 boys and 10 girls out of a population of 8,975. If the labour of children were prohibited up to the age of 10, the parents would be unable to avail themselves of their children's earnings, and one of the main causes of the present defective state of education would be removed; and it is the opinion of the school teachers that a child who attended school regularly at least 200 days a year from the age of 5 to the age of 10, would fairly reach Standard V. of the revised code (Evid. 11).

35. It is very generally thought that the education of children will be altogether insufficient unless some means are provided by which a portion of their time may be devoted to school attendance after they go to work, and that this attendance can only be obtained by means of night schools. Night schools have already been established in most parishes; they are usually held during four or five of the winter months only, and for two or three nights per week. The statistics supplied to me show that in 12 parishes,* with a population of 7,302, there are 305 scholars on the register, and 237 in average attendance at their night schools (Evid. 9).

Education after field work commences.

36. † In the opinion of more than half the clergy the night schools as at present conducted are either unsuccessful (*i.e.* few attend them) or unsatisfactory (*i.e.* those who do attend are indifferent)

Failure of night schools.

* The parishes here referred to are Blisworth, Chapel Brampton, Cottingham, Deene, Eydon, Lamport, Marholm, Pytchley, Ravensthorpe, Spratton, Thornby, Watford.

† The following is an extract from a letter addressed to me by the Rev. T. Hutton of Stilton:—"Good men everywhere are "recommending night schools, but very few persons seem to consider the practical difficulties connected with them; when you have "got the school and the teacher how are you to get the lads to attend? If so many attendances at night or day school during "the preceding six months were required as a condition of employment, this probably would help to fill the night-schools during the "winter months; but how we are to get masters for night-schools I am unable to say. To my mind the whole subject is beset with "insuperable difficulties, and the more I think of it the more I am inclined to the opinion that we shall be obliged to look to the "day school for a solution of them. . . . . On one point my mind is pretty well made up; I believe compulsion in "some form or other to be absolutely necessary for the education of the poor. To accomplish this Lord Shaftesbury's suggestion "of making so many school attendances during the previous six months a condition of employment seems to me to be best. But "as regards the whole subject I am *in statu pupillari.*" The difficulties of carrying on a night school are well pointed out in two letters addressed to the Editor of the "Northampton Herald," on the 2nd and 16th May last, by "A Village Parson." I am authorized to say that Mr. Hutton was the author of these letters.

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(Evid. 17). Again, it is stated by the school teachers that "night schools, as found in most country "parishes, are deemed of very little use" (Evid. 11). At the same time it is thought that night schools if differently managed might be made useful. Mr. Lightfoot thinks that this might be done if the Privy Council paid for results without requiring certificated teachers. Country parishes as a rule cannot support certificated teachers, but they can provide sufficient teaching power for night schools (Evid. 17). And Mr. Graves states that many of the school teachers think that a child leaving school at 8 or 9, and being able to pass Standard III., might by subsequent attendance, &c. at night school for three evenings a week for the greater part of the year, be able to reach Standard VI. (Evid. 11). It seems that the amount of school attendance here mentioned might be obtained without interfering with the present system of labour. Mr. Graves also points out the chief difficulties which are at present met with in carrying on night schools, and suggests remedies for them.

Whether compulsion desirable?

37. It is thought by many that it will be impossible to provide a sufficient education for the agricultural poor unless the principle of the Factory Act is extended to the agricultural population, and a certain amount of attendance at school is required from those actually employed in farm labour. Thus the Rev. A. J. Empson proposed "that all boys over 8 and up to 13 years of age should be "compelled to attend an evening school at least 40 nights a year, and produce a certificate of such "attendance every spring before they are allowed to be employed for the ensuing year" (Evid. 175). On the other hand, the principle of compulsion is objected to by many witnesses whose opinions on matters of education are entitled to the highest respect (Evid. 17, 27, 142, 145, 147, 170). These gentlemen think that the object in view might be satisfactorily attained by an extension of the present voluntary system, and it certainly seems to me most imprudent to attempt compulsion in opposition to such opinions as these.

Necessity of technical education.

38. It was finally pressed upon me that the education of the future agricultural labourer could not be considered complete, unless a certain amount of education in the particular trade in which the future career was to be passed was also provided (Evid. 20), and that for this purpose it was very necessary that children should be early accustomed to field labour. No doubt this is important, but the necessary dexterity could probably be acquired if the field labour commenced at the age of 10. Between the ages of 8 and 10 great progress can be made in school work; whereas very little can be done in the field. The only instance in which I have found that any effort had been made to provide boys with instruction in the art of cultivation was in the case of Mr. Barton's school-farm at Wicken. This, however, appears to have resulted in the boys leaving school earlier than they otherwise would have done on account of their increased dexterity as farm labourers. Their book learning therefore has to a certain extent been sacrificed (Evid. 179).

III.—Cottages.

Condition of cottage accommodation.

39. The condition of the cottage accommodation varies so much in different parishes that it is almost impossible to frame any description of it which can be taken as generally applicable without entering into details which would be too long and too minute for insertion in this Report.

Two classes of cottages.

40. Cottages may, however, be divided into two main classes, 1st, those to be found in close parishes; and 2ndly, those to be found in open parishes. I will describe generally each of these classes of cottages.

Those in close parishes.

41. 1st. In close parishes a great number of new cottages are being or have recently been built. These are excellent. They are built of stone or brick, roofed with slate or tiles; the living room is about 12 feet by 14; behind this is a kitchen of rather smaller dimensions. None of these cottages have less than two bed-rooms, most of them have three, and a scullery in the house. The water supply and drainage are usually excellent; all have gardens of from 20 to 40 poles adjoining the cottage, a pigstye, wood or coalhouse and privy out of the house, and usually an oven in the house or access to an oven adjoining it. Besides these newer and more improved cottages there are a great number of old cottages belonging to the landowners in the close parishes, which, although not so complete in their accommodation, are nevertheless in good repair, wholesome and comfortable. The rent of these cottages is from 1*s.* to 2*s.* a week; some of the older ones are let for as little as 9*d.* or even 6*d.* per week.

Those in open parishes.

42. 2nd. In open parishes cottages of every description may be found; but rarely, if ever, is the accommodation sufficient to provide for the health, comfort, and morals of the inhabitants. In one parish (Cottingham) I find that "the cottages are built of stone and thatched; average size 12 ft. by "14; sometimes divided into two rooms upstairs, sometimes not; a small pantry cut off from this space "down stairs; ventilation generally obtained by leaving the door open. The drainage is everywhere bad. "The number of bed-rooms is generally insufficient; the water supply very good everywhere; most "of the cottages have half a rood of garden, and most of them an outhouse or hovel. But very many "are without privies, and where these exist they are generally badly constructed and almost always "without drains to them. . . . . In many cases there is only one privy to four or five houses, "and in one instance there is only one to seven houses. Many of the proprietors live at a distance; "rent about 3*l.* a year."

43. In another parish (Barnack) I am told by the clergyman that "a few cottages belong to the "landowner, viz., 20 in 100. These are low rented and repaired by the occupier, descending to their "widows or eldest sons. Many of them are too small and some in bad repair. The rest belong to "26 small owners. Some are good enough, rent 4*l.*; others are indifferent; but some are disgraceful, "out of repair, not weather proof, with no conveniences or even a back door; without staircase, and "ascended by ladders into the bed-rooms, necessarily unhealthy and a disgrace to civilization. I "cannot get them reformed; the owners being at a distance, poor, or utterly careless." The rent of cottages in open parishes is often if not generally higher, notwithstanding the deficiency in accommodation, than that of cottages in close parishes. It often reaches 4*l.* or even 5*l.* a year (Evid. 127).

44. I think that this may be taken as a fair description of the state of things which exists in open parishes. As a specimen of the mode in which small speculators operate in cottage building, I may refer

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to the circumstances mentioned to me by one witness, he says, "Four cottages stood together in the "village near a malt kiln. They had gardens; a speculator bought them. He turned the kiln into "six cottages and built five others on the ground which had been used for gardens (Evid. 133).

Cottages built on the waste.

45. In a few villages are also to be found cottages which have been built upon the waste, before the enclosures took place. These are usually, but not always (Evid. 171), of the worst description (Evid. 145.) The owners are common day labourers; the cottages descend from father to son (Evid. 170).

Overcrowding.

46. In almost all villages (certainly in all open villages) instances are to be met with of cottages seriously overcrowded, either with members of the family or with lodgers. The worst case I met with was one where a cottage, measuring 16 feet by 18, was inhabited by grandfather aged 84, father, mother, and 11 children, 14 in all; and at the time when the cottage was visited by my informant the mother of the family was engaged in washing clothes in the only living room. Other instances of overcrowding are to be found in (Evid. 19, 63, 86, 134, 138).

Deficiency in number of cottages in close parishes

47. Although the cottages in most of the close parishes are sufficient in point of internal accommodation to meet the requirements of the labourers, it must be observed that in point of numbers they are very frequently, if not generally, quite insufficient. The number of labourers necessary for the cultivation of the land in the parish is far more than the number which can be accommodated in the village, the result of course is that many labourers have to go two or three miles to work (Evid. 134). On the other hand, the superior convenience experienced by the labourers who have only to walk a short, compared with those who have to walk a long distance to work, enables the owners of the close parishes to obtain all the best and most respectable labourers as the tenants of their cottages, the remainder being thrust away into the open parishes. This deficiency, however, in the number of cottages, is now being remedied. The Union Chargeability Act undoubtedly offers an inducement to landlords to place their cottages in the positions which may be considered most convenient with reference to the work to be done; some of the families are consequently leaving the open parishes. Again, many of the open parishes in the southern part of the county are occupied by a large population of shoemakers. The shoe trade, has recently been to a considerable extent removed from the country villages to the towns, in consequence of the increased use of machinery; some portion of the shoemakers follow the machinery to the large towns. Thus, in consequence of the double action of (1) the increased building in close parishes, and (2) the additional use of machinery in towns, a large proportion of the inhabitants are leaving the open parishes, and numbers of the worst cottages in them are left unoccupied (Evid. 128, 156).

This deficiency is being remedied,

1st, by building in close parishes;

2nd, by the increased use of machinery in towns.

Should cottages be built on the farm or in the village?

48. The question frequently arises as to what is the most desirable position for cottages; on the land to be cultivated or in the village? Farmers almost invariably prefer the former, in order that they may have their men more under their control, and that no time may be lost in going to and from the work (Evid. 108, 119). It was also pointed out to me that where the cottage is near the farm the farmer can superintend and take an interest in the welfare of the labourer's family, which it is impossible for him to do when the family resides at a distance (Evid. 86). Farmers are usually willing to pay interest at 4 or 5 per cent. on the outlay necessary for building cottages on their farms (Evid. 19).

Farmers' view.

Labourers' view.

On the other hand labourers object to occupy a lone cottage (Evid. 23, 140), away from the school, the shops, and the society of the village; although the inconvenience is sometimes obviated to some extent by getting one of the tradesmen to bring the supplies (Evid. 109). The conclusion to be drawn probably is, that with the exception of the horsekeeper and shepherd, who have to be at their work early and late, the inconvenience arising to a labourer from having to walk a short distance (not more than one mile) to his work, is far less than the inconvenience arising to the family from being removed from the village. By some it is thought desirable that the duties which require constant attention should be performed by labourers boarding with the farmer (Evid. 108). This plan, however, is rarely, if ever, adopted, and is strongly objected to by some farmers on account of the insufficient accommodation contained in most farm houses, and the improprieties of conduct which young labourers are apt to be guilty of.

Necessity for good cottages.

49. All parties appear to be agreed upon the absolute necessity of supplying the labourers with good cottages. The healthiness of the labouring population in many cases where the supply of cottages is insufficient is probably due to the large portion of every day which is passed by them in the open air. Few will doubt that in cases of disease crowded cottages have a tendency to propagate infection and to retard recovery (Evid. 40); and in the opinion of one witness the labourers save in the doctor's bill what they spend in additional rent for a good cottage (Evid. 59). Few will be surprised to learn that in the opinion of a guardian of long experience the bastardy returns are most numerous in the parishes where the cottage accommodation is most deficient (Evid. 177). The labourers, too, are themselves willing to pay a large additional rent in order to obtain a good cottage (Evid. 18, 59), and we may so far infer that they appreciate the advantages they thus obtain.

Best arrangement between landlord and farmer as to letting cottages.

50. As regards the best arrangement to be made between landlord and farmer for the letting of cottages built on the farmer's land there is some difference of opinion. On the one hand, landlords think it undesirable to let cottages with the farm, because they thereby enable the farmer to control the labourer to an undue extent, or possibly to take the quality of the cottage into consideration when estimating the amount of wages to be paid. On the other hand it is said by farmers that they cannot supply themselves with efficient labourers unless they have some control over the cottages; that in many villages the supply of cottages is barely sufficient, and that they cannot obtain efficient labour unless they have power of discharging an inefficient labourer, and of substituting for him a suitable man, for whom cottage accommodation must be provided. One large landowner is of opinion that the landlord should let the cottages direct to the labourers, but that he should let them to the nominees of the farmers (Evid. 18). On the other hand, a large farmer who undoubtedly has the interests of the labourers sincerely at heart, is inclined to think "that where the occupation exceeds 300 acres, a certain "number of cottages should be let with the farm at fixed rentals, with a special condition that the "value of the cottage garden is by no means to enter into the arrangement of wages between master "and man" (Evid. 21). It appears to me that there would be a difficulty in enforcing this condition. The condition would not be considered as broken except by some overt act; and it would be impossible

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in each case to say what amount of wages the labourer would demand if he did not know that he was to occupy a good cottage.

Difficult to adopt any fixed rule.

51. On the whole it appears to me to be impossible to lay down any definite rule as to what is the best arrangement; it is just one of these questions on which landlords and farmers will have no difficulty in coming to an arrangement while they remain on good terms, but which nobody can arrange for them if they disagree.

Particular plans for cottages.

52. I have given a general description of the plans upon which the best cottages are built. I received a few specific suggestions which I think I should notice. Mr. Albert Pell and Sir C. Isham are in the habit of building cottages in blocks of two, with two bed-rooms in each, and with a third common bed-room, which can be entered from either cottage. The advantage of this is that either cottage can be increased or diminished in size by blocking up one or other of the doors of the third room, without moving the inmates of either house. This is very desirable in order to meet the requirements of increasing or diminishing families. Mr. Pell has also been in the habit of building a large landing to the staircase on which one or two of the children can sleep when the cottage becomes crowded (Evid. 20). One gentleman (Mr. Hughes) thought it desirable that a common barrack or lodging-house should be established in each village, under the regulation of a respectable labourer and his wife, in which the young men could board and lodge. This would tend to overcome the difficulty of overcrowding, and would facilitate the establishment of night schools and reading rooms (Evid. 21).

Faults usually found in the plans of cottages.

53. Mr. Hughes also points out the defects usually to be found in modern cottages. He says:—

"As a rule the poor do not like modern cottages. The reason I think is that their notions are not sufficiently consulted; the circumstances of their limited time and limited means not sufficiently considered. Among their reasonable objections the following are to be found in the majority of modern cottages; the sitting room too large, back kitchen too small, staircase cramped, and a lack of closets and cupboards above and below. Few poor people can afford two fires, consequently either the principal room should be adapted for cooking, or the kitchen or washhouse sufficiently large to allow of the family getting their meals there occasionally."

Suggestions as to how cottages may be built on self-supporting terms.

54. It was the opinion of Lord Henley and others that cottages could be built on self-supporting terms if a good sized piece of land, say a quarter to half an acre, immediately adjoining the cottage, were let with the cottage. It was thought that the wife and family of the labourer could be employed on this land, for which a garden instead of a farm rent could be obtained, and that thus the small rent received for the cottage could be increased (Evid. 170, 176). Possibly, too, the attendance of children at school might be prolonged by these means, because a parent might keep his child at school, and get the advantage of his labour in his spare hours; whereas, if a boy goes to work for a farmer the whole of every day has to be devoted to the work (Evid. 169). One obvious objection to it is that it would encourage the labour of women and children in the fields, and according to the experience of Mr. Barton at his school-farm at Wicken, it would probably lead to children leaving school sooner than they now do (Evid. 179).

Number of cottages necessary per 100 acres.

55. As regards the number of cottages necessary per 100 acres, opinions vary considerably. The number must of course depend upon the proportion of arable land and the nature of the soil. Probably the safest way of calculating is by looking to the sum paid in wages per annum. One witness (Mr. Hughes) says,—

"Suppose the average wages paid to a family per annum on account of work done to amount to 80*l.*; my wages here, on a farm chiefly grass, amount to 20*s.* per acre, so that here it would appear that a cottage would be required for every 80 acres; but if we take into account the extra hands of a migratory character employed at certain seasons, and the bachelors lodged at villages, I think that in our village we should be well off with one cottage for every 100*l.* actually paid in labour, or for every 100 acres" (Evid. 21).

This is rather a smaller number of cottages than have been thought necessary by other witnesses; and the discrepancy may arise from the earnings of a family being reckoned too high (80*l.*), this sum being more than the estimated annual earnings of two good labourers (Evid. 13b.) Most witnesses on arable farms think three the proper number.

Power to borrow money for building.

56. I met with few instances in which money had been borrowed in the county, under the powers given by 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114. It was suggested to me that the only objection to that Act was the large expenses necessarily incurred in surveyors' fees, &c. before the loan could be granted; and it was thought that if those expenses could be diminished, small proprietors might take advantage of the Act for the purpose of borrowing sums less than 500*l.* for cottage building (Evid. 59). In one instance serious complaints were made of the plans approved, and of the work passed by the surveyor (Evid. 21).

As to removal of nuisances.

57. I made it my special object to obtain suggestions if possible as to the mode in which the cottage accommodation could be improved. It was thought by those best able to judge, that the law as it at present stands, more particularly the 29 & 30 Vict. c. 90. ss. 19. & 20., gives ample powers of remedying all nuisances, even the overcrowding of cottages. In one case a gentleman informed me that under the powers conferred upon him by the guardians of the Hardingstone Union, he had visited nearly every cottage in the union; that he had served the requisite notices, and compelled the removal of all the nuisances he had met with. This he had effected without serious difficulty (Evid. 17).

58. At the same time it is clear that the powers conferred by that Act are very little known and rarely enforced. Perhaps Boards of Guardians, whose duty it is to enforce it, are usually too much interested in cottage property to be likely to enforce it. It was urged upon me that the defects in the cottage accommodation could be remedied at once if the application of that Act was made compulsory instead of optional (Evid. 178). In that opinion I fully concur. It was also pointed out to me by gentlemen whose opinions are entitled to the highest weight, that that Act only applies a remedy where an evil has been proved to exist; and that some officer should be appointed to see that no cottage was built without certain specified accommodation, and that the officer should have power to order and charge against the owner the expense of supplying the requisite accommodation where it was wanting (App. 18 and 19). It was objected to this plan that it was of too arbitrary a character, that it would probably have the effect of diminishing the number of cottages built, by increasing the

expense of each; those objections appear to me to be well-founded, and I am inclined to think that if it were known that the Act of 1866 would be rigidly enforced, the necessity for an inspector armed with such arbitrary powers would be obviated. E.

59. It may here be remarked that the cottage difficulty would be solved at once, if labourers were able and willing to pay an amount of rent which would render the building of good cottages a paying investment, and cannot I think be satisfactorily solved in any other way.

I learned on the highest authority that a good five-roomed cottage costs in Northamptonshire above 150*l.* (App. 19); add 20*l.* for the value of the land occupied by house and garden, and a sum is reached which would only yield 5*l.* per cent. if charged with a rent of 8*l.* 10*s.* per annum. But this rent which an ordinary labourer neither would nor could pay, would be nevertheless too low to tempt a speculator.

Thus as things now stand we must look chiefly to the larger landowners for improved cottage accommodation. They, owing partly to feelings of benevolence, partly to the additional value conferred on their farms by a supply of labourers well-housed and near at hand, have already done a great deal in this way and are likely to do more.

IV.—Allotments.

60. The practice of letting land in allotments to the occupiers of cottages is very generally adopted throughout the county. The parishes in which no land at all is let in that way are few in number, and in many parishes the quantity so let is large; for instance at Clipston with a population of just under 900, the quantity of land let in allotments is 82 acres (Evid. 163). Allotments.

At Ravensthorpe, with a population of 701, 47 or 48 acres are let in allotments (Evid. 153). At Thornby, with a population of 252, 24 acres of land are let in allotments (Evid. 155).

In many cases the men who hire these allotments have gardens adjoining their cottages in addition to their allotments.

61. In many cases the allotments are not situated as near to the villages as is undoubtedly desirable when the convenience of those who have to cultivate them is considered, and it happens not unfrequently that several allotment grounds are to be found in different parts of the same parish, and at a considerable distance apart, and that a portion of land in two or more of these allotment grounds are occupied by the same man. For instance, at Easton, where at the time of the enclosure five pieces of land of 20 acres each were set apart for the labourers in five different parts of the parish, each labourer who has an allotment (if so it may be called) has an acre in each place (Evid. 22). Distance of allotments from village.

62. The amount of land held by each man varies considerably. It is not often less than 20 poles, and more frequently 30 or 40 poles. Cases of as much as an acre being held by one man are to be met with, but these are not frequent (Evid. 22, 165). Amount of land held by each man.

63. The rent paid for these allotments varies considerably; in parishes where land has been left by some benevolent person to be let in allotments for the benefit of the parishioners (as is the case at Thornby), the land is let at a nominal rent, perhaps 2*s.* 6*d.* an acre (Evid. 155). Land let in allotments by the landowners is usually let at a rent slightly higher than that obtained for the neighbouring farms, and in these cases the rates and taxes are usually paid by the landlord. Again, the instances are numerous of land let in allotments at rents far beyond the ordinary farming rent; but so great is the value attached by the labourers themselves to the allotments, that they are always ready to pay these extravagant rents rather than not have the allotments at all. Rent.

64. As a general rule it is made a condition that the allotment shall be cultivated by spade labour only; though many cases are to be met with (most frequently in the southern portions of the county) of a plough being used, and in these cases it is usual for the allotment to be ploughed by the farmer for whom the labourer occupying the allotment works. As a general rule wheat or barley is grown on a portion of the allotment, and the remainder is devoted to garden produce, most frequently potatoes. Mode of cultivation,

65. The greater portion of the labour necessary for the cultivation of the allotment is performed by the labourer before he goes to work or after his return home in the evening. He is also assisted to some extent by his wife and children, and of course the labour of his sons when they arrive at the age of 15 or more is of great value to him. But the labourer almost always finds it necessary to absent himself from his regular work a few days in the spring for sowing, and in the autumn for harvesting his corn, or digging his potatoes; if the allotment is large, say one acre, he must absent himself a far longer time than this (Evid. 156); the time which each labourer is thus able to devote to the cultivation of the allotment is frequently insufficient, and in almost every village a few men are to be found who have no regular work, and who do jobs on the allotments by the day; they are usually paid by the piece for digging, &c., at a rate which enables them to earn about 2*s.* 6*d.* a day. and time devoted to it.

66. The produce of the allotment (whatever may have been grown upon it) is almost always consumed by the family. The wheat is sent to the miller to be ground and saves the bread bill for some weeks; barley is consumed by the pig. I made it my object to inquire of the labourers or their wives of what value the produce of their allotments was to them; unfortunately I found the utmost difficulty in obtaining information on which I could rely upon these points. Those who have had occasion to observe the want of method which usually characterises the habits of the labouring population will not be surprised at this. However, from the statements made to me by the best and most intelligent of the labouring class whom I consulted, it was evident that they derived a clear and decided pecuniary benefit from their allotments. Thus I was told by one witness that the wheat grown on an allotment of 13 poles was sufficient to feed the family for three weeks when the bread bill was 10*s.* a week (Evid. 42); and by another that on an allotment of 30 poles he could grow four bushels of wheat which produced 13½ stones of flour and lasted nearly three weeks, while on the rest of the ground he grew seven sacks of potatoes worth 10*s.* a sack (Evid. 67), and by others that a profit of about 50*s.* net could be made from a rood of land (Evid. 169). Produce of allotment consumed by the family. Amount of produce.

67. Having now given a general description of the extent to which the allotment system prevails in the county, and of the mode in which the allotments are managed, I will proceed to state the prevailing General opinion on allotments.

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opinions on the subject. It is agreed by all classes, landlords, farmers, and labourers, that it is highly desirable that labourers' cottages should be provided with gardens, each of about one quarter of an acre in extent. If possible the cottages should stand in a garden. The advantages of a garden are universally recognized. An allotment ground is useful as a substitute for a garden, and its value increases in proportion as it resembles a garden in extent, position, and mode of cultivation. These views are, I think, assented to by all classes.

In addition to these advantages allotments may be and often are made use of as an incentive to good behaviour. Labourers under some landlords are liable to lose their allotments if they get drunk or are guilty of some similar misconduct, and it is thought that this condition has the effect of improving their conduct (Evid. 73).

Opinions as regards the quantity of land to be held.

68. On the question of the amount of land which each labourer should have as a garden or allotment, the opinions of landowners and farmers appear to coincide. They think that one quarter of an acre should be held by each man; it is thought that he could not cultivate more than this without absenting himself for a considerable time each year from his daily labour; that he would thus to some extent cease to be a day labourer, and that the change would be disadvantageous to him and the community at large. Many of the labourers themselves would be glad to have a larger quantity of land than this, and would be willing to absent themselves from their daily labour for a sufficient time to cultivate the increased quantity (Evid. 169); but this opinion is not universal among them (Evid. 74). This opens the whole question of small farming, which of course I cannot enter into; and it is sufficient to point out that both employers and labourers think that one quarter of an acre (if conveniently situated) may be easily cultivated by a man without his ceasing to be a labourer, and that more cannot (Evid. 169).

As to distance from cottages.

69. I have already stated that all agree that the allotment should be as near the cottage of the labourer as possible. It is impossible to state any definite distance beyond which the allotments cease to be of value, especially when labourers are frequently found who are willing to cultivate them though at a distance of one and a half or two miles; but it may be safely stated that the inconvenience on account of the distance becomes very great if the allotment is more than half a mile from the cottage.

Opinions as to mode of cultivation.

70. I made constant inquiries for the purpose of ascertaining in what mode an allotment could be cultivated with the greatest advantage to the occupier; unfortunately I received no precise information upon this point. One witness (Evid. 36) made a calculation at my request, from which it appeared that by growing three quarters potatoes and the rest turnips or mangold a net profit of 6*l.* 4*s.* might on an average be obtained from one quarter of an acre of good land. It was thought by one or two gentlemen to whom I showed this calculation that the charge for labour was put too low, and the value of the produce too high. I have every reason to believe that the witness who made the calculations was well acquainted with the subject.

As to growing corn on allotments.

71. The only questions upon which opinions appear to me to be really divided is the question whether or not it is desirable to discourage the growing of corn. On the one hand it is urged that the growing of corn leads to a loss of confidence between employer and labourer, if not to actual dishonesty on the part of the labourer; that the corn is liable to be seriously injured by birds and vermin, from which the labourer has no means of protecting it, and that it is impossible for the labourer to harvest his corn at the proper time, because at that time the master's corn has also to be harvested, and the labourer cannot get permission to absent himself; and, finally, that even under the most favourable circumstances corn cannot be grown at a profit on small holdings (Evid. 156). Barley is grown to feed a pig, but it is the opinion of many farmers that pigs cannot be fed at a profit even on a large scale, much less on a small, and that the pigs frequently lead to the creation of a nuisance from a want of proper pigstyes attached to cottages (Evid. 68, 72). If the pig is kept for the purpose of making manure, it is stated that it costs the labourer far more to grow barley and keep a pig than it would cost him to buy manure. On the other hand, it would often no doubt be impossible for a labourer to buy manure for want of a seller, and by keeping a pig a labourer is compelled to save for the purpose of providing for the pig; the pig acts as a savings bank. It is also contended that although possibly the growing of corn may be unprofitable in itself, that nevertheless it is useful as affording a change of crops (Evid. 18), that the quantity grown is very small (Evid. 19), and that it is more advantageous to encourage independence and self-reliance in the labourer by allowing him to manage his allotment as he pleases than by attempting to bind him to definite rules.

Objections by farmers.

72. I was told by many of the farmers that they were often put to great inconvenience for want of labourers when their regular men went to work for themselves. The men never absent themselves without leave; but farmers find it difficult to refuse leave when applied to; and in point of fact it very rarely is refused (Evid. 163).

It was pointed out to me that the time when the labourers want to go to work on their allotments is usually the time when the farmers themselves are most busy; and that the labourers never wish to be absent except when the weather appears settled. Probably all will agree that it is quite open to the labourer to retain as much of his time and strength for his own work as he pleases; at the same time this can only be the case when the fact that he intends to do so is clearly explained to the farmer; the farmer undoubtedly has a fair ground of complaint if, after he has engaged a labourer for all day and every day, he finds him coming to work late and tired in the morning, and asking for and expecting to obtain permission to absent himself from his work at times when he is most wanted by his employer.

No apparent effect upon wages.

73. I endeavoured to ascertain whether the extension of the allotment system had had the effect of preventing wages from rising. I, however, obtained no information which led me to the conclusion that such had been its effect. It certainly seems probable that if a farmer knew that his labourer is in the habit of spending a portion of his strength upon his own land, he will be unwilling to pay him as much as he would if he knew that the whole of his strength is given in return for his wages. Probably, too, if a labourer knows he can make something by his allotment he will be willing to accept less from his

employer than he otherwise would. At the same time it cannot be doubted that the development of the allotment system in this county has been accompanied by a very considerabe rise in wages; 30 or 35 years ago wages were 9*s.* a week (Evid. 163, 169), they are now 12*s.*; 30 or 35 years ago allotments were rare, in one parish they were established in 1826 (Evid. 178). Since that time they have been enormously extended; and although possibly wages might have risen rather more if it had not been for allotments, my impression is that the number of labourers who occupy allotments is too few, and the amount of land held by each man too small for the allotments to have had any appreciable effect upon wages. This opinion however is not assented to by all (Evid. 154). E.

74. You instructed me to inquire whether there was any reason to believe that the allotments were valued by the labourers from a feeling that their status was improved from their becoming occupiers of land; I found no trace of any such feeling (Evid. 169).

75. There is one other matter to which allusion should be made before closing this report, viz., co-operative stores. These stores have been established in many different parts of the county, and usually with very beneficial results. The most prosperous institution of this kind with which I met was the Self-assistance Industrial Society of Long Buckby. This society was established in 1858; the amount of business done the first year was 2,809*l.* 11*s.* 8*d.*, the profit on which amounted to 194*l.* 5*s.* 3*d.* Last year the business done reached 8,845*l.* 0*s.* 3¾*d.*, the profit on which amounted to 856*l.* 19*s.* 6½*d.* At first there were 70 members; there are now 283 (Evid. 173). These stores are said to have done a great deal to raise the character of the labourer. He is enabled through their aid to supply himself with a better article at a cheaper rate than he could otherwise do. They also offer an inducement to education, both by the necessity of placing them under proper control and also because they occasionally lead to the establishment of night schools and reading rooms. Co-operative stores.

76. In conclusion, I may sum up shortly the result of my inquiries with special reference to the extension of the Factory Acts.

In the instructions to the Assistant Commissioners you point out that the leading principles of the Factory Acts are,—

1. The protection of the young and females from excessive labour.
2. The requirement of a certain amount of school attendance for children, between the ages of 8 and 13 earning wages.

77. As regards the first of these principles it does not appear that there is any necessity for legislative interference. The evidence which I have collected leads me to the conclusion that the labour performed by women, young persons, and children in the fields is not physically injurious to them. As a general rule they do not reside at excessive distances from their work, and whatever inconvenience may now exist in this respect is likely to be remedied. The hours of labour are moderate in length, and sufficient intervals are set apart for meals.

78. As regards the second principle, the evidence certainly leads me to infer that the education of the young employed in field labour is decidedly defective, and that the defect can only be remedied by increased school attendance. As to the mode in which the increased attendance is to be obtained opinions differ; but all appear to think that in consequence of the great difficulty experienced in securing the attendance of children at school after they begin to work in the fields, the period which elapses before they begin to work must be chiefly relied on for such attendance. Upon the whole it seems that the labour of children may fairly be dispensed with up to the age of 10 years without interfering too much with the demands of the farmer on the one hand, or with the earnings of the family on the other; and I think it is desirable that the labour of children under 10 years of age should be prohibited by law, except during the regular school holidays. It is also necessary that some provision should be made for the education of children after they begin to work; but in consequence of the continued demand upon their time, as farm labour is now arranged, I think that it would be extremely inconvenient for them to devote any portion of the day except the evening to school attendance. Night schools as at present carried on are certainly unsuccessful, but they may probably be made useful if well managed; and I think that an effort should be made to render night schools effective, as being the most feasible plan which has been suggested for carrying on the education after field work commences. I am inclined to think that at present it is undesirable to introduce any system of compulsion either direct or indirect, although some system analogous to that in use in the case of factories appears to be practicable and may eventually have to be adopted; but in the opinion of many gentlemen of great experience in matters of education the voluntary system might be so carried on as to effect the object in view. I certainly think that the advice given by these gentlemen should be adopted until proved to be erroneous; and that for the present it is sufficient to remove one of the main hindrances to education by restraining the children from going to work at as early an age as they now do.

I am, Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,
F. H. NORMAN.

July 16th, 1868.

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REPORT.—By Mr. GEORGE CULLEY.

Counties of Bedford and Buckingham.

To Her Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women in Agriculture.

Gentlemen,

1. Having been sent by you to the counties of Bedford and Buckingham to inquire into the employment of children, young persons, and women in agriculture, and generally into the condition of the agricultural labouring class, for the purpose of ascertaining to what extent and with what modifications the principles of the Factory Acts can be adopted for the regulation of such employment, especially with a view to the better education of the children, I beg to lay before you the evidence which I have collected on these subjects, and the impression which this evidence, as well as my own personal observation of the condition of persons employed in agriculture and their families in these counties, has made upon me.

Time occupied in collecting evidence.

2. I was in Bedfordshire for nine weeks, between the 20th of February and beginning of May, and in Buckinghamshire for eight weeks, between the beginning of May and the end of June, and again in Bedfordshire during the early harvest of this year, when I was engaged in arranging the evidence previously obtained from both counties.

Arrangement of evidence.

3. The evidence from each county is arranged separately, beginning with a summary of the answers to the questions contained in such of your "Circulars of Inquiry" as were returned to me by the persons to whom I had given or sent them. The second part of the evidence in each case contains a description of the cottage accommodation in the parishes for which returns were sent to me, or which were visited by me personally; evidence as to the rate of wages and earnings of agricultural labourers or their families; evidence given by the labouring class themselves; and such other evidence as appeared to me to be peculiar to the parishes from which it was obtained. The third part of the evidence in each case includes answers given to questions proposed by me to benches of magistrates and boards of guardians; evidence given by medical officers of unions, relieving officers, school teachers, and all classes of persons who did me the honour of corresponding with me on subjects pertinent to this inquiry; evidence on allotment systems; returns of plait and lace schools; and such other evidence as applies to areas larger than parishes.

Mode of conducting the inquiry in Beds.

Having received your instructions to visit first the county of Bedford, I endeavoured to obtain an introduction to some gentleman who, from his position and experience, would be able to aid me in obtaining a general view of the mode of employment in agriculture in the South Midland district, and of the subjects bearing on the condition of agricultural labourers and their families. I was fortunate enough to receive such an offer of assistance from Mr. Thomas Bennett, principal agent to the Duke of Bedford, and I cannot too warmly express my thanks to that gentleman for the great assistance which I received from him in conducting the inquiry intrusted to me. It was this offer of assistance from Mr. Bennett which led me to select Woburn Union as my starting point; and as apart from the reason which first induced me to go there, I found that it might very fairly be taken as a representative union of the county, I visited in detail all the parishes in that union. After concluding the inquiry in Woburn I visited as many parishes as the time at my disposal would allow in Bedford, Ampthill, Biggleswade, and Luton Unions, my endeavour being to leave behind me no mode of employment in agriculture, or of agricultural labourers' children, which I had not seen. Having fixed upon a parish or group of parishes which I intended to visit for the above purpose, I gave notice of my intended visit to the clergyman of the parish or parishes, and such other persons as were likely to give me useful information, in some cases asking the proper authorities to call a parish meeting. And on the day of my visit I inquired into the state of the school or schools, inspected the cottages, and received evidence from all classes of persons. Occasionally, on receiving a special invitation to visit a particular parish, I was obliged to depart from the plan which I had sketched for myself, but this was rarely the case, and my movements, keeping in view the general scope of the inquiry, were entirely guided by a desire to see as much of the labouring class and their employment as the time at my disposal would allow. As an example of this I visited one or two parishes in Biggleswade Union to inquire into the employment of children and women in market gardening and coprolite works; and being in the parishes to which this object led me I of course inspected the cottages and schools. I am anxious to show by this sketch of the manner in which I conducted the inquiry, that where it becomes my duty to point out serious defects in the want of proper cottage accommodation, or provision of schools, such cases were not sought for by me.

Evidence of boards of guardians;

4. Before visiting each union I made an appointment with the board of guardians, asking the board to discuss the subjects of the inquiry, and to allow me to be present at the discussion. On every occasion my proposition was accepted, and the questions which I proposed fairly considered; with what result will be seen in the evidence.

Besides giving very important evidence, as coming from the representatives of the most intelligent employers of labour in each union, these discussions served to introduce the subject of my mission, as well as myself, in a manner which very greatly assisted me in obtaining evidence.

Of benches of magistrates;

5. In the same manner also I consulted benches of magistrates, the attendance, however, on these occasions being so small as to induce me, after obtaining the necessary introduction, to record the opinions of the magistrates individually rather than as representing the petty sessional bench.

In Bucks.

6. In Buckinghamshire I made Aylesbury my starting point, visiting a considerable number of the parishes in that union, and remaining there until I had made appointments with all the boards of guardians in the county, and arranged the groups of parishes I could visit at the time of keeping such appointments. Acting in this manner I was able to visit, more or less satisfactorily, upwards of 50 parishes in Beds and 60 in Bucks, besides receiving evidence through your circulars of inquiry from several other parishes in both counties, some of the circulars from Bucks being unfortunately returned too late to enable me to produce them in evidence, though of great service to me in framing the report which I have now the honour to make.

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7. Out of 200 circulars of inquiry distributed pretty equally between the two counties I have had returned to me up to the time at which I write 90 from Bedfordshire and 87 from Bucks, in all 177 circulars, from 130 different parishes; of these 80 have been returned by clergymen for their parishes, and 97 by owners and occupiers of land or their agents for their respective farms or parishes, most of the occupiers being also guardians of the poor for the parishes for which their returns are made. The collective force of the summary of answers given in 172 of these circulars, taken in conjunction with the resolutions of 12 out of the 14 boards of guardians acting for the two counties, and the opinions expressed by medical and relieving officers, is the most important evidence which I have to lay before you relative to the desirability, or otherwise, of placing legislative restrictions, analogous to those of the Factory Acts, on the employment of children, young persons, and women in agriculture.

Circulars of inquiry.

8. Before entering more minutely into the bearing of the evidence upon the subjects involved in this inquiry it may be well that I should give a slight sketch of the position of the labouring class as affected by the agricultural requirements and customs of the two counties of which I am treating.

Farming in Beds.

9. Bedfordshire is a tolerably compact little county, having, according to the estimate for 1867, 141,909 inhabitants, and containing 295,582 statute acres, of which 45,967 acres are not accounted for in the agricultural returns for 1867; of the remaining 249,615 acres 176,365 are arable, and 73,250 in permanent grass. The surface of the land varies from a stiff clay, covering a large portion of the north part of the county, through the rich loamy soil of the Vales of the Ouse and Ivel to the sand-hills running in a north-westerly direction from Woburn through the centre of the county, and the chalk hills of the south. Farms vary from 100 to 900 acres, 400 being about the average for farms on the Duke of Bedford's large estates, the tendency being to increase the size of farms by throwing small ones together when the opportunity arises. A four-course rotation is the most common course of husbandry, by which means about one half of the arable land in the county produces in each year a crop of white corn, the proportions being about 50,000 acres of wheat, 30,000 acres of barley, and 10,000 acres of oats of the 90,000 acres accounted for in the agricultural returns.

Cost of labour paid in wages;

10. The cost of labour paid in wages, according to the evidence given to me, varies with and is generally about equal to the rent, being highest where crops of all kinds can be best grown, and lowest where a bare fallow is considered the best preparation for a good crop of wheat. The lowest payment per acre for labour, as stated to me, was 24*s.*, and the highest 38*s.*, the latter figure being much higher than in the case of farms most closely resembling it in the north of England, but lower than in several cases of which I received evidence in Bucks.

In Beds;

I do not think that the farmers in Bedfordshire, who are an industrious and intelligent class, can afford to add much to the cost of cultivation as far as payment in wages is concerned. On an average, as will be seen from the evidence, where farms consist, as they generally do in Bedfordshire, of three-fourths arable land there would be required for the cultivation of a farm of 400 acres of such land capable of growing all kinds of crops a staff of 14 men and eight lads, and the cost in wages would be nearly as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
3 men at 37*l.* 14*s.* each	113	2	0
11 men at 35*l.* 2*s.* each	386	2	0
8 lads, averaging 13*l.* each	104	0	0
Total cost in wages of regular staff	603	4	0

In Northumberland.

As nearly as may be 30*s.* 2*d.* per acre. Compare this cost of labour with that on a farm of the same size and nature and under the same course of husbandry in North Northumberland, and let us see how the different systems affect the labourers, farmers, and landowners.

The corresponding wage account on such a farm in Glendale would be—

	£	s.	d.
*8 men at 38*l.* 12*s.* each	308	16	0
8 women at 14*l.* each	112	0	0
3 lads at 13*l.* each	39	0	0
Total cost in wages of regular staff	459	16	0

As near as may be 23*s.* per acre.

Some part of this reduced cost *may* be due to management, some part *is* due to the employment of a class of women almost equal to the ordinary run of Bedfordshire male labourers, and the remainder, which is no very small part, is due to the fact that the northern hind at a slightly higher wage is a much cheaper article.

Effect of distribution of labour on labourer, farmer, and landowner.

11. The difference of the result of these systems to the labourers is, that whereas in one case the tolerably certain income arising from employment in agriculture amounts to 603*l.* 4*s.* to be divided amongst 14 families, giving about 43*l.* 1*s.* 9*d.* to each, in the other it amounts to 483*l.* 16*s.* (adding 24*l.* as the annual value of eight cottages), to be divided amongst eight families, giving 60*l.* 9*s.* 6*d.* to each, the difference of upwards of 17*l.* having to be made up to the southern family by the far less certain earnings of one grown up daughter in lace making or straw plaiting and the chance of having children employed younger in farm labour than would be the case in the North; if "plait was good" the Bedfordshire girl of 18 would probably make the 17*l.*, but how much of it would go to the family purse? and, unhappily, plait is not always good.

The difference to the farmer amounts to an ability to pay about 7*s.* an acre more rent, besides escaping with a much smaller poors rate.

To the landowner there is the difference of 7*s.* an acre greater rent as a compensation for building eight cottages (an obligation he cannot escape from in Northumberland) and letting them rent

* The labourer (or hind) besides the 38*l.* 12*s.* which he receives in money or money's worth from the farmer, has a cottage and small garden rent free worth, say, 3*l.* a year supplied by the landlord.

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free, instead of building, or thinking he ought to build, 14, for which, if built, he would receive a rent amounting to a fair interest on the cost of eight.

Females in Beds not employed in field work but in lace making and straw plaiting.

12. It is not, however, the custom to employ women in farm labour in Bedfordshire. In the north of the county the females of the labouring class are engaged in lace making, and in the south and more populous part of the county in plaiting straw; straw plait, especially when the trade is good, finding employment also for a good many boys and men. When plait is "good" straw plaiters, both male and female, are able, so I was constantly informed, to earn higher wages than persons of the same sex employed in agriculture, but during the time I was in the county plait was very "bad," and many families were in consequence in great distress. I shall never forget the scene I witnessed when accompanying the relieving officer on one of his usual weekly visits to Toddington (a large "open" village in the plait district, to which I shall refer afterwards), where, according to evidence which cannot be gainsayed, a large portion of the male population of so-called catch workmen expect the female plaiters to maintain them throughout a great portion of the year. At the time of my visit one-third of the entire population of the parish were receiving relief, and it seemed altogether to puzzle the relieving officer to account for the manner in which one half of the remainder lived. (See Beds Evidence, 14a, 14b, 14c, and 68.)

Hiring and wages in Bedfordshire.

13. The hiring throughout the county is a weekly hiring, the weekly wage (exclusive of additional payments for piece or extra work and allowances, such as beer) varying from 11*s.* to 14*s.* per week, 11*s.* being the lowest weekly wage for a regular able-bodied farm labourer, and 14*s.* the highest, where the labourer's duty involves Sunday attendance. In Bedford Union the weekly wage for an ordinary labourer is 12*s.*; in Woburn Union, and in the plait district generally, the weekly wage is 11*s.* It will be my business afterwards to endeavour to show how far this nominal wage is increased by piece work, extra wages in hay time and harvest, and other allowances, when referring to the evidence on the earnings of labourers and their families.

Cottages not generally attached to farms.

14. The labourers' cottages, except in a few cases where blocks of two, three, or four cottages have been built attached to the steadings on larger farms (a custom which is, however, extending), stand in villages pretty thickly scattered over the county, and in few instances have the labourers to go far to their work.

Cottage accommodation bad and reason for it.

15. The feature most striking to me in this county, as well as in Bucks, was the want of proper cottage accommodation, especially in the so-called open parishes, arising, as it appears to me, from the fact that so small a proportion of the cottages belong to the landowners. No one, I apprehend, will maintain that a landowner can be expected to provide more cottages than will suffice for the accommodation of persons employed in the cultivation of his estate, but such has been the policy or necessity of landowners in these counties in times past, that it would be difficult, I should think impossible, to find any large estate on which these conditions are fulfilled; the nearest approach to it which I saw was on the estates (speaking of large estates) of the Duke of Bedford and Sir Harry Verney. The proportion of cottages on the Duke of Bedford's property is about three to 100 acres, falling short of the required number, even if all these cottages were occupied by farm labourers, by 25 per cent. according to the estimate of farmers in answer to circular question III. 31, or by about 17 per cent., as I think is more correctly shown by the labour returns. It has never been my good fortune to see any large estate upon which so much has been for many years past and is now being done for the comfort of all persons connected with it as on that of the Duke of Bedford, and I have only cited this instance to show that even with a large purse and willing hand the evil growth of past years has not yet been altogether overcome.

Remarks on chances of improvement of cottages.

16. The Union Chargeability Act will no doubt have its effect in increasing the proportion of landowners' cottages, and the power of borrowing money on entailed estates "for the erection and improvement of labourers' cottages," under the authority of the Inclosure Commissioners (especially if the process be simplified and cheapened) may aid towards the attainment of the same desirable object; but where large open villages, in which the cottages belong either to persons who have built on speculation or are the property of the occupiers themselves, now exist, yielding a supply of labour greater than the agricultural demand of the surrounding estates, the cost of buying, pulling down (to build without pulling down being only to increase the evil), and rebuilding is beyond the means of most landowners. (For instances of this kind see General Evidence Beds, 14, 33, 40, 46; Bucks, 13, 22, 23.)

17. What I have here said of the state and ownership of the cottages in Bedfordshire, applies equally to Bucks, and the general condition of the agricultural labouring class is very much alike in the two counties.

Farming in Bucks.

18. Buckingham, a long straggling county, cut across in the centre by the chalk downs of the Chilterns, and reaching from the vale of the Midland Ouse to that of the Thames, has, according to the estimate of 1867, 170,494 inhabitants, and contains 466,932 statute acres, of which 78,826 are not accounted for in the agricultural returns for 1867. Of the remaining 388,106 acres, 207,094 are arable, and 181,012 permanent pasture. The features, in an agricultural point of view, most peculiar to the county are the rich pastures of the vale of Aylesbury, and the farming of the Chilterns.

In the north-east of the county the ordinary four-course husbandry prevails; on the Chilterns, the four-course rotation is often lengthened into five by taking a crop of oats instead of fallow after wheat; in fact, a "five-course shift" is fully as common as four-course on the Chilterns; in the vale of Aylesbury and valley of the Thames the course of cropping is more irregular, and often severe, involving a more costly cultivation.

Cost of labour in wages.

19. In one or two cases in The Vale the cost of labour paid in wages on farms having the larger portion arable was stated to me to be over 40*s.* an acre, and the lowest estimate on well-cultivated farms was 30*s.*; in the valley of the Thames, in one instance, the cost was stated to me to be 50*s.* per acre; and in another, where the labour books are well kept, and almost all work is done by the piece, it appeared to be 45*s.* As a result of sometimes taking two white crops in succession, about 5½ per cent. more acres of arable land than would be the case under the four-course system are yearly in white corn, and a larger proportion of oats are grown than in Bedfordshire.

Number of cottages required for cultivation of land.

20. The average requirement of cottages for the use of farms having the same proportion of tillage is, judging from the answers to circular question III. 31, pretty much the same in Bucks as in Bedfordshire, slightly diminished towards the Oxfordshire side, where some adult women are employed, and

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prevented by the same cause from being considerably increased in the valley of the Thames, where cottages are very dear, as they are also in all the towns throughout Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire.

21. A yearly hiring for important servants, as shepherds and carters, as well as for lads and single men, still exists, at least in the Wycombe Union, where the hiring is from Michaelmas to Michaelmas, and the custom of hiring single men to lodge in the farmer's house is still practised in the valley of the Thames, owing to the difficulty of securing cottages at a rent which farm labourers can afford to pay; the common hiring, however, throughout the county is a weekly hiring, and the custom of having young labourers lodging in the farmer's house is fast disappearing. Hiring by year and week in Bucks.

22. Females, except in haytime or harvest, when families work together, are only employed in agriculture on the banks of the Thames and on the borders of Oxfordshire. Straw plaiting, lace, chair and paper making find employment for most of the females of the labouring class. Females not much employed in field work.

23. Farm labourers' wages in Bucks vary from 11*s.* to 15*s.*, ordinary labourers receiving from 11*s.* to 13*s.*, and Sunday men, *i.e.*, shepherds, cattlemen, and carters from 13*s.* to 15*s.*, exclusive of piece work and other allowances; wages being highest in the vale of Aylesbury and the valley of the Thames, and lowest towards the head quarters of straw plait. I have said that the tendency to increase the size of holdings is brought about in Bedfordshire by the landowners throwing small farms together; in Bucks the result is arrived at in a less convenient and less economical manner, many farmers occupying farms in different parishes and under different landowners. Wages.

24. I confess that I was agreeably surprised to find the supply of schools in both Bedfordshire and Bucks better than I expected, although, as will be seen from the evidence, I found parishes of considerable importance in both counties altogether without such provision; great progress has been made in this respect during the last few years, and many of the schools have been very recently opened, in some cases through the liberality of the landowners, in many through the exertions of the clergymen, upon whom falls a much larger share of the expense of maintaining schools than they ought to be expected to bear. In some parishes, where two schools exist, Church and Dissenting, it would be well if they could unite their funds, and so increase their teaching power. To visit on the same day a parish where there is no school, and then one in which there are two and ought only to be one, makes one inclined to cry out for a national scheme which can level such inequalities. Progress in providing schools and inequalities in such provision.

25. I now beg to call your attention to the evidence which I have the honour of laying before you; taking first, the labour returns, the school returns, and the opinions expressed by the different witnesses as to the desirability, or otherwise, of applying to agricultural labour legislative restrictions similar to those of the Factory Acts.

26. It will be seen from the evidence that employment in private gangs exists only to a very limited extent in either Bedfordshire or Bucks, and is usually confined to the employment of from 10 to 20 boys between 8 and 13 years of age under a steady labourer or foreman; in only one instance was a return made to me of such a gang where both girls and boys are employed, and in that case it consisted of five boys and five girls, all under 13 years of age, occasionally employed in twitching, weeding, &c. (See evidence of Mr. T. T. Hine, of Knotting, in Summary of Circular Questions.) Employment in private gangs.

In only one case is a gang such as I have described employed throughout the whole year, viz., the Woburn Park gang, consisting of 16 boys between 10 and 13 years of age employed under a skilled workman in such light work as is suited to their age; their hours of labour are 11 hours in summer and nine hours in winter, including 1½ hours for meals, and there is a rule that every boy must be able to read and write before entering the gang. (See Mr. Stephenson's evidence in Summary of Circular Questions.)

I had several opportunities of seeing these boys during my stay at Woburn, and I think that if children are to be continuously employed in farm labour between 10 and 13 years of age they could not be employed in a manner better calculated to make them efficient labourers without overtaxing their strength than that in which the boys composing the Woburn gang are employed. The Melchbourne Park gang consists of 10 boys between 8 and 10 years of age employed in light work during spring, summer, and autumn. The Aston Clinton gang is composed of 15 boys whose average age is 10½, and of these the Rev. C. W. W. Eyton says, "there is nothing injurious to the health of these boys arising "from the nature of their employment, nor are they ill treated in any way."

The same remark would, I think, apply to all the boy gangs in these two counties, and, putting aside the educational part of the subject, it appears to me that children are better employed in such gangs or parties than when mixed up with adult labourers or draggling after their parents in piece work.* Not injurious as practised in these counties.

27. There is one return under the head of employment in private gangs which, though referring to what is not strictly employment in agriculture, should, I think, be noticed here; it is a return of women and children employed for from eight to 12 weeks during each year in *peeling onions* for the market gardeners in the neighbourhood of Biggleswade; it will be seen from the evidence that 339 females are so employed in the parish of Sandy, of these 93 are married women, 108 young women and girls over 13 years of age, and 138 girls under 13 years of age; in the return from Sandy no mention is made of boys so employed, but from the Beds general evidence, 47 (d, e, f, g, h) it appears that boys up to 12 years of age assist their mothers in onion peeling; the work is done in sheds on the gardens under a foreman whose business is to measure the onions, peeling being done by the piece. Women working from 7 a.m. till 6 p.m., with an hour's rest, can earn from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* per day, and children of 12 about 6*d.* per day. I heard of no complaint concerning this mode of employment except that it prevented the mothers from attending properly to their household duties, and helped to make the children's attendance at school very irregular after 7 years of age. "Onion peeling."

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* I cannot help here quoting what is said by the Rev. J. W. Hayward, of Grandborough, Winslow, in a circular which reached me after I had written the last sentence, too late, I am sorry to say, to be inserted in my evidence for Bucks. Mr. Hayward says, "I wish to express a decided opinion in favour of field work for the occasional employment of the young of both sexes; I have "never known any injury to arise from it to health or morals; upon small farms, under the superintendence of the farmer "or some trustworthy man, the employment of young children with others of the same age is to be preferred to the common "custom of the father of a family performing a piece of work which he has taken by the united labour of his family, inasmuch "as the younger children are sure to be strained to keep up with the elder." Rev. J. W. Hayward on field work for children.

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Labour returns, showing average number of persons employed on 1,000 acres in Beds and Bucks.

28. The labour returns and summary of answers to circular questions II., 22, a, b, c, e, g, give a very fair general view of the comparative number and ages of all persons employed in agriculture in the two counties. The tables in the Beds summary marked C, D, E, F, and in the Bucks summary D, E, represent as accurately as possible the average number of persons of the ages given who are employed upon the acreage as it is there given, the tables marked E in each case giving the number of adult males as well as children, young persons, and women. The other tables are collected from the answers given in circulars where the acreage is not stated, or where the return is for a whole parish of which the proportion under cultivation is not known. Comparing first the tables which give the number of adult males as well as children, we find that in 2,725 acres, of which 695, or not much more than one-fourth, are pasture, included in 10 farms in the parishes of Cople and Willington, in the Vale of Bedford, in four-course husbandry, the usual staff per 1,000 acres is, as nearly as may be,—

35 men over 18 years.
10 lads between 13 and 18 years.
7 boys „ 10 and 13 „
4 „ „ 8 and 10 „

and that in 8,442 acres of which 4,031, or nearly one half, are pasture included in farms in six of the unions in Bucks the usual staff is for 1,000 acres,—

35 males over 18 years.
5 females „ „
8 lads between 13 and 18 years.
5 boys „ 10 and 13 „
1½ „ „ 8 and 10 „

Showing that although in one case nearly three-fourths of the land is arable, and in the other not much more than one-half, the number of adult males employed is the same, and the total number of persons employed nearly the same. Where females are not employed the ordinary staff per 1,000 acres would be increased by as many lads between 10 and 18 as would represent five women.

Take again total males under 18, and females of all ages employed on 16,100 acres, of which 11,417 are arable included in 42 farms in four of the unions of Bedfordshire, we have an average staff of,—

8 lads between 13 and and 18
9 boys „ 10 and 13 } approximately per 1,000 acres.
3 „ „ 8 and 10

(omitting 11 little girls occasionally employed in twitching).

On 13,459 acres, of which about one-half are arable included in farms for which accurate returns were made in Bucks, the average staff is approximately per 1,000 acres,—

7½ lads between 13 and 18.
4½ boys „ 10 and 13.
1 boy „ 8 and 13.
4 adult women.

The gross returns from answers to circulars of inquiry under this head (see Table A. in each case) are,—

—	Males.					Females.						
	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Total Males under 18.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
Bedfordshire	1	55	204	241	501	—	11	10	4	6	5	36
Buckingham	4	86	297	373	760	—	—	7	8	91	39	145

Children under 10 very little employed in farm labour.

29. From a comparison of this table with the results given above from farms covering a large area in both counties it is evident, as is often stated in other parts of the evidence, that children under 10 years of age are very little employed in farm labour, except in occasional jobs, such as field keeping, twitching, stone picking and the like, that they are so employed rather more in Bedfordshire than in Bucks, probably owing to the larger proportion of arable land in the former county, and that from the same cause the proportion of boys between 10 and 13 years of age as compared with the whole number of persons so employed is also greater in the same county, boys from 10 years of age becoming permanently attached to the staff of farms as plough or team boys and helpers of shepherds or cattle men.

Plough boys.

30. The services of the ploughboy being required throughout the whole year, he becomes the chief difficulty as far as these counties are concerned, of applying to boys employed in farm labour regulations for school attendance somewhat similar to these under the Printworks Act. It may be that as economy in the management of horses becomes better understood the system of "driving" teams will disappear and the driver be set free to attend school during the winter months, as nearly all other boys under 13 years employed in farm labour could do; at present, however on most of the arable farms in both counties the ploughboy is expected to crack his whip in November and December as frequently as in March or April, and the only way of catching him would be to insist upon his stopping work when the horses do, at 2 p.m., so as to give him time to rest and prepare himself for an evening school.

Hours of work of boys.

31. The usual hours of work for boys employed in farm labour, except in some parts of Bucks, where they are employed with and have the same hours as women, are the same as for men, in Bedfordshire from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. in summer, and from light to dark in winter with one and a half or two hours allowed for meals; in Bucks from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m., with one and a half hours allowed for meals, except in the north-east of the county where the hours of labour are the same as in Bedfordshire.

32. Of 122 answers from both counties to the question—"Does the demand on their physical powers

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"injuriously affect their health?" (answers which apply also to the employment of females) 114 witnesses say "No," seven say that "farm work improves their health," and one, speaking I presume of female employment, says not till after 50 years of age. The medical evidence (Beds, general evidence, 63 to 67) generally confirms the same view; the only objections to the nature of the employment of boys which would occur to me after conversing on the subject with several medical gentlemen in both counties, besides those whose evidence I have above referred to, are, the effect produced or supposed to be produced on the feet and limbs of plough boys and field keepers by travelling over the tenacious clay soil which covers a considerable area in the north of both counties, and the practice of leaving boys when too young in charge of horses and carts; upon the whole, however, the evidence I have above quoted must be held to justify the very strong opinion expressed by almost every witness I examined, that as far as protecting the children from physical injury arising from the nature of their employment in agriculture is concerned, *no legislative interference is necessary.*

Effect of employment on health.

Legislative restrictions not required on this account.

33. Except in hay time and harvest, the employment of females in agriculture is hardly known in Bedfordshire. The answers of Mr. Charles Howard of Biddenham, and the Rev. B. Trapp of Thurleigh, to circular questions II. 22, k and l, may be taken to represent the whole county. Mr. Howard says, "There are no females employed except in hay time and harvest, in my opinion, "more might be beneficially employed to the advantage of all parties at these seasons." Mr. Trapp says:—"The employment of females is so rare that no inconvenience would be felt "if it were prohibited altogether, except in hay and corn harvest." It is, however, curious to observe how many witnesses as it were seize the opportunity offered by questions II. 22. j., k., l., to point out the evils arising from straw plait and lace making. The same remarks which I have made with respect to Bedfordshire, as to the absence of female labour in the fields, applies to a great part of Bucks. It is only towards the borders of Oxfordshire and in the valley of the Thames, that women are at all regularly employed on farms; in both cases most of the women are married, and I received no return from Thame or Eton Unions of females under 18 as engaged in farm labour; the hours of work, in Thame Union, are usually from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and in Eton Union from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; besides the usual work in haytime and harvest, these women are generally employed in hoeing and cleaning corn and root crops, in winter their work is confined to assisting in thrashing corn and preparing roots for cattle and sheep, in fact, they are employed in very much the same manner as unmarried women are employed in the northern counties, and their wages, taking into account the shorter hours, are as high.

Employment of females in agriculture.

34. The answers to questions II. 22, j, k, l, from Aylesbury, Thame, Winslow, Buckingham, and Wycombe Unions, are chiefly interesting from the fact that the witnesses are to a certain extent able to compare the effects of the more usual employment of females in straw plait and lace making with the effect of their employment in farm labour. Of 51 answers from the county, most of which come from the unions I have named, to the question, "Do any special employments injuriously affect females, or the "young generally?" 33 say "No," nine say straw plaiting, and nine say lace, no reference being made to farm labour, to which the question is intended especially to refer. It will be observed that in the answers to questions II. 22, k and l, the employment of females in farm labour, as affecting their morality, is never compared unfavourably with their employment in straw plaiting or lace making, and that the restrictions recommended for female field labour are not such as to affect at all the manner of employment in the district from which the recommendation comes.

Effect of employment in field work, straw plait, and lace making on females.

35. The tables of school returns (Beds, summary A, B, C, D, E, and Bucks, Summary A, B, C,) will sufficiently illustrate the answers given to circular question iv. 43, which asks for a return of the approximate number of children of the *agricultural labouring class* in attendance at elementary schools. In some cases the returns given include all the children in attendance at the school for which the return is made. In most it is confined to the children of the class intended, and in one instance (Woburn) it is confined to the children of agricultural labourers; as a whole, however, the returns may be fairly taken to represent the school attendance of the agricultural labouring class, being most accurate in the case of rural parishes where the population consists almost exclusively of that class.

School returns

36. Table A, Beds summary, contains returns from all the elementary schools in Woburn Union, and the account amounts to this, that in a union containing 29,603 acres, and, according to the census of 1861, 11,682 inhabitants, most of whom belong to the class in question, there are in average attendance at elementary schools—

Woburn Union

In summer - - - - - - - - -	399	boys under 10 years of age.
	74	„ between 10 and 13.
	289	girls under 10 years of age.
	77	„ between 10 and 13.
Total number of children under 13 in average attendance	839	
Total number of such children on the registers of schools	1,100	

Supposing that 80 per cent. of the population belong to the class (labouring class) for which the returns are made, it would appear that there is one child under 13 years of age on the register of some elementary school for every 8½ persons, and one in average attendance for every 11 persons nearly. Of the children under 10 years of age there are about 25 per cent. more boys than girls in average attendance, whereas of the children between 10 and 13 there are 4 per cent. fewer boys than girls. It will be remembered that these figures relate to a union where straw plait or lace making, but chiefly straw plait, are the only occupations of females of the labouring class.

37. Taking the returns from seven parishes in Ampthill Union, four parishes in Biggleswade Union, and one parish in Luton Union (*see* Beds summary of school returns C, D, E, excluding Biggleswade, there being no return from the large boys' British School there), in all of which parishes, except Cranfield, straw plait is the usual occupation of females. We have again (allowing the same proportion of inhabitants not to belong to the class for which the returns are made), one child under 13 in average attendance at school for every 11 persons. Here, however, the boys under 10 years are only 12 per cent. in excess of the girls under 10, and the boys between 10 and 13 exceed the girls by about 20 per cent., (the attendance of girls between 10 and 13 being very small in the parish of Sandy, where there is the attraction of onion peeling as well as straw plaiting.

Ampthill, Biggleswade, and Luton Unions.

F. Bedford Union.

38. In 18 parishes in Bedford Union, where the occupation of females is lace making (see Beds summary, school return B, excluding Kempston, where two schools for elder children, open two days a week each, are included in the return), containing 44,376 acres, and 10,310 inhabitants, there are in average attendance—

In summer - - - - - - - - -	370 boys under 10.
	32 „ between 10 and 13.
	310 girls under 10.
	93 „ between 10 and 13.
Total children under 13 years in average attendance - -	805

Giving, after deducting the same per-centage for persons not of the labouring class, an average attendance of one child under 13 years for every 10 persons nearly, and showing that the boys under 10 exceed the girls by 20 per cent., and that of the children between 10 and 13 there are three times as many girls as boys in average attendance.

Comparative attendance in summer and winter in Beds.

39. To show the difference of average attendance in summer and winter, take the aggregate attendance of the 46 parishes just mentioned, and the account stands thus:—

—	Boys		Girls	
	Under 10 Years of Age.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.
Summer - -	1,178	200	957	247
Winter - -	1,212	225	870	282

While, therefore, there is an increase in winter of about 3 per cent. for boys under 10, about 12 per cent. for boys between 10 and 13, and about 16 per cent. for girls between 10 and 13, there is a decrease of 11 per cent. for girls under 10. The tables also show that the number of children at school under 10 years of age is 4½ times as great as the number between 10 and 13.

Deductions from evidence of school returns.

40. The increase of 12 per cent. in the number of boys between 10 and 13 attending school in winter shows that a certain number of boys over 10 years of age, though prevented by farm work from attending school in summer, are not so prevented in winter, and would not, as far as their earnings are concerned, be affected by legislative interference demanding school attendance during the winter months. The very slight winter increase in the number of boys under 10 appears to me (considering that there is little or no farm work for them in winter) to show that their school attendance is not so greatly affected as is generally supposed by the demand for their services in farm labour. That the attendance of boys, taking the year throughout, exceeds that of girls for children under 10 years of age, shows that up to that age straw plait and lace making are more serious opponents of school attendance than farm labour. After 10, however, the tables are turned, and we find that girls so employed find more time for school attendance than boys even in winter.

Kempston parish.

41. In Kempston parish, where two schools (besides the ordinary day schools) are open in different parts of the parish for two days a week each, the comparative attendance of boys and girls between 10 and 13 is—

In Summer - - -	Boys, 32.	In Winter - -	Boys, 32.
	Girls, 80.		Girls, 83.

Showing an attendance of about twice as many girls as is the case where the ordinary day school only is available.*

School returns, Bucks.

42. Table B of the Bucks school returns will show the difficulty of tabulating the returns as given in the answers to circular questions iv. 43.

The average attendance in summer in 32 parishes in Bucks (adding returns from Chilton, Granborough, and Stoke Goldington to table C) is—

Boys under 10 - - - - - -	897
„ between 10 and 13 - - - - -	101
Girls under 10 - - - - -	758
„ between 10 and 13 - - - -	151

Showing for children under 10 an attendance of 18 per cent. more boys than girls, a difference which is diminished by the greater attendance of girls in three parishes which are out of the plait and lace district. The same remark which I made for Bedfordshire would therefore apply here as to the comparative effects of these occupations for girls, and the demand for boy labour on farms, on the school attendance of children under 10 years of age. Of children between 10 and 13 there are 50 per cent. more girls than boys at school, farm labour here, as in Beds, telling against the boys. As between summer and winter there is an increase for boys under 10 of 2 per cent., for boys between 10 and 13, of 25 per cent.; of girls under 10 of less than 1 per cent., and of girls between 10 and 13 of 6 per cent. Showing, I think, for Bucks as well as for Beds, that farm labour does not affect the school attendance of boys under 10 so much as is supposed, and that there are a considerable number of boys over 10 years of age whose employment in farm labour is confined to the summer months. As between children over and under 10 years of age there are more than six times as many children under 10 at

* A letter addressed to the Rev. James Fraser by Mr. Charles Howard (see Beds general evidence, 23, a, b, c) called forth some correspondence about Kempston parish, which a reference to the school returns will, I think, settle in favour of the parish.

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school as children over 10; as far as boys alone are concerned thereare eight times as many. A reference to the tables for Bucks will show that in 12 rural parishes for which returns are given there is no attendance of boys over 10 years of age, and in the same manner in Bedfordshire 13 rural parishes for which I have returns show no attendance of boys over 10 years of age.

Parishes without schools.

43. The following parishes which I visited, having a population over 200, had no school.

In Bedfordshire:			
Harlington - -	Population	529	Acreage 1,815
Tilsworth - -	„	348	„ 1,510
Barton-le-clay - -	„	956	„ 2,225
In Buckinghamshire:			
Cublington - -	„	288	„ 1,212
Long Crendon - -	„	1,570	„ 3,120
Saunderton - -	„	232	„ 1,590

The parish of Swineshead, in the county of Huntingdon, though surrounded on all sides by Bedfordshire, is without either school or resident clergyman (see evidence for Beds, 32).

Few children neither at school nor at work.

44. From the answers to circular question IV. 44, it will be seen that owing to the prevalence of straw plait and lace making, comparatively few children are neither at school nor at work.

Education generally insufficient.

45. A reference to the answers to circular question IV. 45, asking for the "approximate number of "young persons of the agricultural labouring class growing up with insufficient education," will I think show that the answer of the Rev. W. B. Russel for Turvey, would apply generally to both counties; Mr. Russell says, "From the early age at which both boys and girls are taken from school, the education "of the great mass is insufficient."

Evening schools in Beds.

46. Eight of the 16 parishes in Woburn Union have evening schools, with a total average attendance of 165 scholars, from a population of 11,682, or about 1 in 54 of the labouring population, the number on the register of such schools is about 1 in 45 of the labouring population, making the same deduction from the whole population as I did in the case of day schools. Out of 50 parishes in the county of Bedford, for which returns were made, having an aggregate population of 44,378, 29 have evening schools, with a total average attendance of 546 scholars, and 952 names on the register, giving an average attendance for the labouring class (supposing that all these scholars belong to that class) of rather more than 1 in 65 persons, and of names on the register of schools, of about 1 in 37 persons.

In Bucks.

47. Of 52 parishes in Bucks, containing a labouring population of 33,713 (deducting 20 per cent. from the entire population), 39 have evening schools, with an average attendance, as given in circular returns, of 914 scholars, or 1 for every 37 persons, showing, after making allowance for a certain amount of looseness for returns made in summer of winter evening schools, that evening schools are much more appreciated in Bucks than in Bedfordshire.

Subjects of instruction.

48. Most of these schools are open for 20 weeks during the winter months, and of the 68 for which I have returns, 26 are open for three nights per week, and the same number for two nights, the usual time per night being from one and a half to two hours. In all evening schools, reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught, and in very few anything further is attempted.

Success and failure of evening school

49. The answer of the Rev. T. J. Williams, of Waddesden, to the question, "Do you consider that "the evening school adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school?" May be taken as expressing the opinion of the majority of witnesses who answer this question. Mr. Williams says, "Not "*adequately* certainly; but it is a great help to those who use it regularly." The principal difficulties in the way of evening schools, appear from the evidence to be "want of teaching power," and "weari-"ness and indifference of the young;" these two causes of difficulty being dwelt upon about equally frequently.

Evidence shows insufficient state of education.

50. Bearing in mind the force of the educational returns which I have just referred to, adding thereto the evidence gained from an examination of the young found at work, and other evidence on the state of education (*see* Beds, general evidence, 3b, 5b, 11c, 11d, 12c, 14g, 14h, 23h, 23i, 24b, 26c, 33e, 35d, 45f, 47i, 54, 58, 59, 61. Bucks, general evidence, 1b, 3d, 21c, 21d, 30e, 30h, 36d, 36e, 41c, 41d, 43e, 43f, 56a, 81e, 81f, 106, 120). I think there can be no reasonable doubt that there are a great many young people of the agricultural labouring class growing up without sufficient education, meaning by sufficient education, the power of reading, and writing, and using for ordinary purposes the first four rules of arithmetic, and that not a few are growing up without any education whatever in both of the counties to which these returns apply.

Opinions as to the application of Factory Act principle very much divided

51. Whether the application of principles analogous to those of the Factory Acts, *i.e.*, the fixing of a limit under which children should not be permitted to be employed in farm labour, and the exaction of a certain amount of school attendance, up to a certain age, from children earning wages, is the most desirable remedy for this defective state of education, and if so, what are the limits of age which it would be most desirable to fix, are the most important questions on which I had to elicit opinions. It will be seen from the answers to circular questions, II., 22m., and III., 23, 24, 26, that opinions are very much divided upon this subject; of those who give direct answers, 28 say that such legislative interference is not desirable, and 22 say that it is; in most of the circulars returned to me no answer is given. To the evidence on this subject, contained in resolutions of board of guardians, I attach great importance, the opinions expressed in such resolutions being those of the majority of guardians present, when the question of the application of the principles of the Factory Acts to agricultural labour was fully discussed by a body of men who ought thoroughly to understand the effect of such legislation on the supply of labour necessary for the cultivation of the land, and the capability of the labouring class to bear such pressure as is implied by restricting the age at which their children should be employed. In Bedfordshire (*see* general evidence, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, and 61), the Bedford, Ampthill, and Luton Boards decided in favour of such legislative interference; the Woburn Board, while deprecating any compulsory scheme of education, expressed an opinion that no boy should be employed in farm labour under 10 years of age; the Biggleswade Board objected altogether to legislative interference. In Bucks (*see* general evidence, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93), the Thame and Newport Pagnell Boards decided in favour of legislative restriction for boys up to 10 years of age, the Amersham Board expressed an opinion, that if the principles of the Factory Acts are to be applied, there should be an absolute prohibition up to 10 years of age, and that

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after that, legislative interference should cease. The Aylesbury, Buckingham, Eton, and * Wycombe Boards decided against the desirability of any legislative interference.

It will be seen, therefore, that the boards of guardians which I consulted, though universally opposed to legislative interference for the protection of the young or females from supposed physical injury arising from the nature of their employment in farm labour, were pretty evenly divided in opinion as to the desirability of such interference for educational purposes. On the one side there are the weaknesses and inequalities of the voluntary system, and the duty of the State for its own sake as well as for theirs to help those who cannot help themselves. And on the other, a certain amount of interference with the liberty of the subject, the chances of an educational tax which may or may not be levied as a poor rate, some doubt as to the ability of the parents to bear the necessary pressure, and some fear of what is called over-educating.

Local educational tax.

52. One argument I have often heard urged against a local tax for educational purposes, is that the object of the improved education is to put the children in a position to be able to carry their labour to the dearest market, and so deprive of their services the parish or district which has paid for their education.

Opinions on extent of interference necessary.

53. If, however, there is a great diversity of opinion as to the expediency of applying to employment in agriculture legislative restrictions resembling those of the Factory Acts, there is a great similarity of opinion as to which of the modes under those Acts of providing for the education of the young is most applicable to such employment. The half day and alternate day systems are condemned by a great majority of witnesses as utterly inapplicable to the case of children employed in farm labour. Most of the occupiers who approve of legislative interference think that it would be sufficient to prohibit children from being employed under 10 years of age, and leave the maintenance of the education then arrived at in the hands of the parents.

Archdeacon Bickersteth.

54. Archdeacon Bickersteth, in his answer to Question III. 26, expresses the view of most of the clergy, where he says:

"I doubt much whether either of the plans 1 or 2 (the half day and alternate day modes) would answer in agricultural districts. The principle of the Printworks Act (plan 3) might I think be applied with advantage with some modifications such as the substitution of 12 months for six;"

i. e., that as he had in answer to an earlier question recommended a total prohibition up to 10 years, he thinks that for children between 10 and 13 it would be most convenient to demand a certain number of hours attendance at school during the preceding 12 months, thus allowing the parents to choose the time of year when work is slack, probably the winter months, in which to send their children who are between 10 and 13 years of age to school.

Woburn Bench.

55. The Woburn Bench of Magistrates say:

"If the Factory Acts' principles are to be applied to children employed in farm labour, we think that school attendance for four winter months would be much better suited to such employment than either a half day or alternate day system." (See Beds evidence, 53.)

Bedford Bench.

56. The Bedford Bench of Magistrates, after recommending 9 as the age under which children should not be permitted to be employed for educational purposes, say:

"Of the Factory Acts' modes of interference with children actually at work we think the 3rd, or Printworks Act plan, of demanding a certain number of hours of school attendance during the preceding six months, most applicable to farm labour, substituting 12 for 6 months." (See Beds evidence, 54.)

Luton Bench.

57. The Luton bench, after recommending 10 as the age under which children should not be employed, express an opinion similar to that of the Bedford bench in favour of the Printworks Act mode of interference, substituting 12 for 6 months, provided that any interference after 10 years of age is deemed necessary. (See Beds evidence, 55.)

Woburn Board of Guardians.

58. The Woburn Board of Guardians say:

"We do not want any compulsory scheme of education, but we think no boy should be employed below 10 years of age. We think the half day and alternate day systems wholly unsuited to employment in farm labour, and we object to the Printworks Act provision as interfering unnecessarily with our employment of boys between 10 and 13 years of age, and with the ability of the parents to support a family where the elder children are between 10 and 13." (See Beds evidence, 56.)

Bedford Board.

59. The Bedford Board of Guardians, after recommending 9 as the age under which boys should not be permitted to be employed in farm labour, resolved:

"That, if the Factory Acts principles be applied to labour in agriculture, attendance at night schools should be deemed sufficient after 10 years of age." (See Beds evidence, 58.)

Ampthill Board.

60. The Ampthill Board of Guardians, after fixing 10 as the age under which boys should not be employed in farm labour, resolved:

"That this Board desires that the Government should take measures for the encouragement of *free* night schools for boys above 10 years of age, and if that should be done they think no further legislation would be necessary with respect to such boys. (See Beds evidence, 59.)

Biggleswade Board.

61. The Biggleswade Board of Guardians, after deprecating any legislative interference, say, that if such interference is deemed necessary it should be confined to children under 10 years of age, and that Government aid ought to be extended to night schools. (Beds evidence, 60.)

Luton Board.

62. The Luton Board of Guardians resolved, that for the sake of education children should not be employed under 8, that between 8 and 10 they should only be employed six months in the year, and that after 10 legislative interference should cease. (Beds evidence, 61.)

Thame Board.

63. Turning now to Bucks:

"The Thame Board of Guardians resolved that children of both sexes should be kept at school until 10 years of age; that no legislative interference after that age is desirable." (See Bucks evidence, 90.)

Newport Pagnell Board.

64. The Newport Pagnell Board of Guardians, after fixing 10 years as the age under which boys should not be employed, passed a resolution in favour of extending Government aid to night schools for

* The resolution of the Wycombe Board has been accidentally omitted from the evidence.

boys over 10 years of age, whether such schools are superintended by certificated or uncertificated teachers. (See Bucks evidence, 92.) F.

65. The Amersham Board of Guardians passed a resolution to the effect that, if the principles of the Factory Acts are to be applied to farm labour there should be an absolute prohibition up to 10 years, after which all interference should cease. (Bucks evidence, 93.) Amersham Board.

66. Boards of Guardians, therefore, if they differ in opinon as to the necessity for legislative interference, agree in recommending that all such interference should cease at 10 years of age, asserting that night schools, if somewhat more liberally assisted by Government, would be quite sufficient after that age to maintain such an education as is necessary for the agricultural labouring class. It will be seen also that their opinion is very much shared by the magistrates and clergymen whom I consulted, and rests upon the belief that if a regular attendance at school could be secured up to 10 years of age, very little would be required afterwards to secure to the children the use of the elementary education (reading, writing, and ciphering) arrived at at that age, and so the great difficulty of mixing up school attendance and farm work might be avoided. Interference after 10 years of age generally deprecated.

67. As soon as I found that there was a general willingness on the part of employers of labour to do without the work of boys under 10 years of age, and that, as I think will be shown by the labour returns, no very serious loss would be sustained by the parents from the want of the earnings of children under that age, I consulted as many school teachers as I found opportunity to do as to what in their opinion would be the average state of education, supposing a regular attendance up to 10 years of age, and what school attendance would be necessary between 10 and 13 to secure for ordinary purposes the power of reading, writing, and ciphering. It will be seen from the evidence that I consulted on this subject 16 school teachers in Bedfordshire, and 11 in Bucks, and that the following may be taken as the answer of all of them to the first part of the question: *Granted a regular school attendance from 5 (some say 6) years of age up to 10, a child of ordinary ability would be able to read and write and use the first four rules of arithmetic with facility.* Evidence of school teachers.

As to the second part of the question, the attendance necessary between 10 and 13 to keep up this elementary education, there is considerable difference of opinion, some witnesses asserting that attendance at Sunday and night schools would be sufficient (see Beds evidence, 75, 78, 80, Bucks evidence, 106, 109, 110); others that a half time system would be necessary (see Beds evidence, 73, 82, 83, 84, 85, Bucks evidence, 111, 115); others again would be content with 4 winter months or one day per week throughout the year.

68. From all the evidence that I have received in these two counties on the subject of education and the difficulties in the way of legislative interference on that account, it appears to me that without interfering with the labour required for the cultivation of the land, or putting any very serious pressure on the parents, boys might be prevented from being employed in farm labour up to 10 years of age, and that supposing they attended school regularly up to that age, so little is required to keep up such an elementary education as I have described that by an elastic rule, which did not altogether ignore evening schools, even the ploughboy might crack his whip throughout the year and still fulfil the necessary condition of school attendance. I confess that if it was not for the ploughboy I would not second an application for Government aid to evening schools, although it cannot be denied that under the present system many young persons are indebted to them for all the education they have. Result of evidence on subject of education.

69. Before leaving the subject of education it is only right that I should call your attention to the evidence of Mr. Harvey, chairman of quarter sessions for Bedfordshire, Sir Harry Verney, Bart., M.P., and the Rev. W. R. Fremantle (see Beds evidence, 132, Bucks evidence, 117 and 118), in which the advantages of an educational instead of an age test are very clearly stated.

70. The answers to circular question III., 37, giving a general description of the cottages, will be found in the general evidence for Bedfordshire, Nos. 1 to 52, and in the general evidence for Bucks, Nos. 1 to 87. In the summary of answers to circular questions for Bedfordshire I have thus summarized the descriptions given:—In about half of 55 parishes the cottages are described as good, fairly good, or generally good; in all of these, except one, the cottage property belongs either altogether or in part to the chief landowners; in the remaining half of these parishes the cottages are described as either mixed, bad and good, or generally bad, and in these cases the ownership is usually described as "various" or "chiefly small proprietors," or it is said that many cottages are built on the waste and belong to the occupiers, in which last case they are always described as bad. Evidence on state of cottage accommodation in 134 parishes.

Except where they belong to chief landowners, and in some cases even then, the cottages are generally described as lacking accommodation necessary for a family. Where cottages belong to chief landowners sufficient outhouses are generally, but not always, provided. The cottages built on speculation are very deficient in outhouses.

In only two cases I found that the occupiers of cottages were supposed to have to deal with the owners who are tradesmen. The rooms in the old cottages are very small and low, ventilation generally stopped by the occupiers; artificial drainage very unusual. Rents vary from 1*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week, being highest in such towns as Biggleswade, and lowest in proportion to the accommodation where the cottages belong to the chief landowners. The water supply is described as bad in four parishes.

In 30 of 79 parishes in Bucks for which the cottages are described they are said to belong altogether or chiefly to the principal landowners, and of these 30 cases 14 may be said to have the cottages described as generally good, 11 as fairly good, 4 as mixed good and bad, and 1 as generally bad.

In 42 cases the ownership is described as various; in 6 of these cases the cottages may be said to be described as fairly good, in 28 cases they are described as mixed good and bad, and in 8 cases as generally bad.

In 7 parishes a considerable number of the cottages are built on the waste and belong to the occupiers, in all of which cases the accommodation is bad.

In 7 villages the water supply is described as bad. In two villages the occupiers of certain cottages are expected to deal with the tradesmen to whom they belong.

Rents in the north of the county vary from 1*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.*, and in the valley of the Thames from 2*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* per week.

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Number of cottages generally sufficient.

71. In 22 out of 102 parishes for which answers are given in both counties there are said not to be sufficient cottages for the accommodation of persons employed on the land, the deficiency being in close parishes, where the cottages belong to the chief landowners. In several parishes there are said to be too many cottages.

Misfortune that more cottages do not belong to landowners.

72. The above evidence will, I think, justify an opinion which I hold very strongly, that it is a great misfortune for the agricultural labourers in these counties that so small a proportion of their cottages belong to the chief landowners; when they do there is somebody to care for the manner in which the poor are housed, somebody to be ashamed of a bad state of things, somebody upon whom the pressure of public opinion may be brought to bear; when they do not, the labourer has either to rickle up a miserable hut for himself or pay an exorbitant rent for a house in which the ordinary decencies of life become a dead letter.

Villages with good cottages.

73. Of the villages *which I visited* in Bedfordshire those in which the cottages are best and the poor most cared for are Husborne Crawley, Tingrith, Biddenham, Cardington, Cople, Melchbourne, Oakley, Turvey, Silsoe, and Southill; in Bucks they are Aston, Clinton, Halton, Chilton, Botolph and Middle Claydon, Shalstone, Great Brickhill, and Chenies, all of them villages in which the cottages belong to the landowners, and all of them, except three, lying, as it were at the door of the owner.

21 villages in which cottages are bad.

74. Of the villages *which I visited* in Bedfordshire I saw the worst specimens of cottages in Salford, Sheeplane (Potsgrove), Tilsworth, Toddington, Sharnbrook, Swineshead, Thurleigh, and Biggleswade; in Bucks, in Cublington, Oving, Ickford, Long Crendon, Oakley, Shabbington, Stewkley, Winslow, Maids Moreton, Ivinghoe, Great Missenden, Burnham, and Hitcham. There are cottages in these 21 villages, in some of them many, quite unfit for human beings to live in; in five of them, viz., Salford (where the cottages belong to All Souls College, Oxford), Tilsworth, Sharnbrook, Swineshead, and Maids Moreton, as bad specimens as any to be found belong to the landowners; in five of them most of the bad cottages are built on the waste; and in the remaining 11 they belong to small freeholders and speculators (see Beds evidence, 7, 12, 14, 30, 32, 33, 47, and Bucks evidence, 7, 13, 20, 21, 22, 23, 30, 32, 41, 63, 81, 84).

In some of these 21 villages the cottage evil has reached such a position that I confess it appears out of the power of the landowners to remedy it; in others I think their duty is pretty evident; in Toddington, for instance, about half a dozen of the many cottages belong to the chief landowner, but as there are already many more cottages than are required for the cultivation of land to build without buying and pulling down would appear to be only to add to the evil, and the process of buying to pull down and rebuild is beyond the power of most landowners, especially on such a scale as would be required before the chief estate in this parish could be said to be fairly represented by labourers' cottages belonging to it. I beg to call your attention to the evidence on this village and the condition of its inhabitants as given in the general evidence from Beds 14b, 14c, and 14d. In Thurleigh out of 110 cottages, 52 are built on the waste and belong to the occupiers, the proprietors of two estates, containing nearly 1,400 acres between them, being represented by four cottages. Here, again, occurs the difficulty of buying up these wretched waste cottages and rebuilding; the occupiers prefer their poor cottage, rent free, to a good cottage even at a moderate rent, and would not sell their mud and thatch dwelling except at an exorbitant price. A description of the cottages in the town of Biggleswade is given in the report of Mr. Edwin Blunden to the Board of Guardians (see Beds evidence, 47b), and exhibits a deplorable state of things. In Cublington parish the chief landowner has one cottage, five miserable cottages on the road side belonging to the parish might no doubt change hands at a moderate price. In Oving, a large proportion of the cottages stand on the waste and either do now or have belonged to the occupiers; the chairman of the Aylesbury Board of Guardians informed me that this parish (Oving) was given up to the labourers at a time when under the old poor law the rates had reached 25*s.* per acre. In Ickford was the only very clear case which I came across of a tradesman as owner of cottages compelling his tenants to deal with him. In Shabbington nearly all the cottages belong to the occupiers, and are badly constructed. In Stewkley the cottages belong generally to small tradesmen, and are very bad with one very small bedroom (see Buck's evidence, 30, d, e, f, g, h); in one such cottage I found a man and his wife and 10 children. Of Maids Moreton the Rev. M. W. Davies (see Bucks evidence, 41) says:—

"The cottages are badly constructed, many of them with but one room below and one above, and these of course crowded; the drainage is imperfect; the water supply deficient; gardens are scarce; privy accommodation extremely bad; rents low, though high enough for what the cottages are; ownership chiefly vested in landowners."

This is one of the few instances I saw in which any very serious complaint can be made of the state of cottages where the chief landowners are also the chief cottage owners, and I can fully attest the correctness of Mr. Davies' description. I have attempted to describe the rag pit village at Ivinghoe in Bucks evidence, 63c. It is, I think, the most extraordinary collection of dwellings I ever saw, but here too, as at Toddington and Stewkley, the increase of the straw plait trade has brought into the parish a much larger population than can find employment in farm labour or than any proprietor could be expected to find houses for. A description of the Burnham "Barracks" will be found in Bucks evidence, 81c. In the valley of the Thames cottages are very dear and very difficult to get. What Mr. Richard Webster says of Hitcham would apply to many parishes near it:—"Cottages are very dear, "the better ones are occupied by gentlemen's servants and persons better off than agricultural "labourers, and these have often to content themselves with a poor cottage at 2*s.* 6*d.* a week."

75. I cannot help thinking that in the neighbourhood of Slough farmers would be willing to pay an additional rent equal to a fair percentage on the outlay if landowners would build a few cottages attached to the farm steadings and let them with the farms. (See evidence 82a, 84a, and 87a.)

Advantage of cottages attached to farm steading.

76. The custom of building a few cottages attached to the farm buildings, especially where farms are large and farm offices good, is considerably extending, and as these cottages are landowners' cottages, and are not built under the idea of receiving a fair interest for the cost in the shape of rent paid by the cottager, it is to be hoped that other landowners will follow the example shown in this respect by the Duke of Bedford, Lady Cowper, Sir Harry Verney, and others. It is almost necessary to the safety of farm offices and the valuable live stock which they contain that such responsible servants as foremen,

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carters, and cattle men should live near the objects of their care. Cottages so situated have other advantages, which have been so often quoted in arguments in favour of building cottages attached to the farm offices instead of in villages that it is unnecessary for me to dwell on them here.

Manner of letting them on three large estates.

77. On the Duke of Bedford's estate the occupants of the cottages I am now speaking of hold direct from the landowner, who gives a power of nomination to the farmer. On Lady Cowper's and Sir Harry Verney's estates these cottages are let with the farms, the farmer having entire control over them and their occupants. Mr. Trethewy, agent to Lady Cowper, in speaking to me of this arrangement, said that he considers this supply of cottages necessary as a substitute for the old plan of having a certain number of single men living in the farmer's house; that the horsekeeper, cowkeeper, and shepherd on a farm are or ought to be in the same position as a groom or domestic servant; and that he has never known any evil result to the labourer from his being brought more under control of the farmer.

Sir Harry Verney says (see Bucks evidence, 117):—

"What I desire for my outlying farms is to have a couple of cottages for each on the hard road supplying a dry walk to the village; and I would let those with my farm so that the farmer would have entire control over his labourers living in them; this power might occasionally be abused, but it would be to the interest of both farmer and labourer to do fairly by each other."

Inducement to landowners to build such cottages.

78. All the evidence which I have received from farmers themselves goes to show that they at least accept it as a fact that if cottages were built contiguous to their farm offices and let to them with their farms they would not only have more efficient servants, but that the cost of labour to them and number of cottages required for the cultivation of the land would be diminished, a fact which I think points to a strong inducement to landowners to follow the example of those I have already quoted. The probability of a habitable house, near his work, out of the way of the beershop, with a good garden attached to it, outweighs, in my mind, as far as the labourer's interest is concerned, the possibility of oppression from bad masters.

Cottages on self-supporting terms.

79. The few answers given to Circular Question III. 41, show that the persons most interested are not yet aware of any mode by which good cottage accommodation can be secured on self-supporting terms, meaning by that, at a cost which would make the rent that a farm labourer can pay a fair return in the shape of interest. A good cottage, as far as any ordinary mode of construction is concerned, can only be considered self-supporting in the same sense that good stables and good cattle sheds are self-supporting, and it is evident that until some happy man can confer the great blessing upon his country of explaining how house building can be conducted at half its present cost, the only hope that the labourer can have of being properly housed is that the landowners should accept the position that good cottages conveniently placed pay in the same sense that good farm offices so placed pay. That, however, many landowners are not in a position to act upon this belief, even if they accept it, is beyond a doubt; and if the Legislature thinks proper to extend to them such aid as is intended by the Act 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114, July 1864, it is most desirable that the manner of using the powers of that Act should be as simple as possible, and that as little as possible of the money advanced by the State, or through the agency of public companies, should be diverted from the use for which such loans are sanctioned.

Allotment systems.

80. In obedience to your instructions, I obtained as much evidence as I could on the subject of allotments and their value to the labourer. Examples of the systems adopted on the Duke of Bedford's, Lady Cowper's, Lord St. John's, Lord Dynevor's, and Mr. Whitbread's estates, are given in Beds evidence, Nos. 88 to 92; and on Mr. Henley's and the Dorton estates in Bucks, evidence 128 and 129; in Beds evidence, No. 89, will be found extracts from a very able paper on this subject, read by Mr. Trethewy, agent to Lady Cowper, at a meeting of the Central Farmers Club, in which the advantages of an allotment of a moderate size to a farm labourer are very clearly stated; what this moderate size should be is still a moot point; on the Duke of Bedford's estates, in these two counties, nearly 1,400 allotments of about 20 poles each, are provided at rents varying from 2*d.* to 4*d.* per pole, 20 poles being considered sufficient for the spade husbandry of a farm labourer in his leisure hours. On Lady Cowper's, Lord St. John's, Lord Dynevor's, and Mr. Whitbread's estates, the common allowance is 40 poles, and as in all these cases, the sole object in granting the allotment is to confer a benefit on the labourer, it would appear that the experience of the owners of these estates where the allotment system has been long established (since 1829) is that an allotment, to be of real benefit to the ordinary farm labourer, should not exceed 40 poles, and it is a question whether even that is not too much; I had the pleasure of hearing this question discussed by Messrs. Trethewy and Bennett, who have under their care the largest systems of allotments in these counties, and accepting the position that the allotment is intended to take the place of a garden, and is injurious to the farm labourer in regular employment as soon as it induces him to neglect his legitimate work, or to grow crops which can be produced by the farmer at a much cheaper rate, I am inclined to think that the best quantity to allow, if the quantity must be invariable, lies nearer 20 than 40 poles, that 20 poles is a perfectly safe allowance to make is I think shown by the fact, that many farmers themselves allow that quantity to their labourers in cases where there is no such provision by the landowner; that the poor themselves fully appreciate the advantages of having a "bit of land," is too well known to require any reference to evidence on the subject, the desire is so great that landowners and their agents have taken advantage of it to overcome the lawless habits of the inhabitants of such villages as are found in the west of Buckinghamshire, by a rule that a conviction before a bench of magistrates carries with it a forfeiture of the allotment. On this subject, Mr. Golding, agent for the Dynevor estate in Bedfordshire, says, "the men would suffer "anything rather than forfeit their allotment" (see evidence, 91). The man who showed me the allotments in Oakley and Shabbington parishes summed up his account of them by saying, "You see, Sir, "Oakley were a wild blackguard, place, and Mr. Henley have done it to cure the place." It is evident that an allotment system, which should be confined to, say, 30 poles in a parish, where the labour market is only fairly supplied with hands, might be for the sake of "curing the place," considerably extended where there are many more labourers than the cultivation of the land in farms can find work for, but I am afraid that such a cure can only produce temporary relief, and that the disease which sleeps for a time may break out in a form more difficult to grapple with, when the allotment-bred children grow

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up to think that it is the business of their life to grow wheat crops by spade husbandry, as their fathers did.

Value of an allotment pecuniarily and morally.

81. The actual value of an allotment, such as 20 poles, to a farm labourer does not altogether depend on the money value of the produce, and the labourers themselves find it difficult to estimate the value, taking, however, the money value of the produce of good land, cultivated as an allotment should be, to be 1*s.* 6*d.* per pole, and the rent (including rates and taxes) 6*d.* per pole, there would be a payment in return for labour of 1*s.* for every pole he could so cultivate; 6*d.* per pole should secure the best land for spade cultivation, and 1*s.* 6*d.* would about represent the money value of the produce. If then 20 poles is all that a farm labourer can cultivate by spade husbandry, without interfering with his regular employment, the allotment is worth to him, as an addition to his earnings, 20*s.* a year; if, however, without injuring him as a hired servant he could be intrusted with 30 poles, as I am not prepared to deny that he could, the increase to his earnings would rise to 30*s.* a year, and that paying a rent which would be sufficient to induce most landowners to adopt an allotment system, putting aside all the moral and physical benefits which arise from the possession of a "bit of land" which provides him with a wholesome and educating employment for his leisure hours, keeps him out of the beershop, and opens his eyes to the advantage of keeping in his pocket the shilling which he would have spent there on Saturday night if he had not been too busy on that "bit of land."

System in Woburn Union.

82. The tabular statement of the allotment system in Woburn Union (*see* Beds evidence, 87), shows that there are about 800 allotments such as I have described provided for 29,603 acres, or say 27,000 acres of cultivated land, employing about 945 adult labourers, and that there are (even if all the allotments were held by men employed on farms, which is not the case) 18 per cent. of the labourers for whom no such provision is made.

Garden *versus* allotment.

83. A garden of 20 poles attached to a cottage would of course be a better arrangement than an allotment of the same size even only 100 yards from it; but such an arrangement is impossible where cottages are already built in villages with no more ground attached to them than is occupied by the cottage itself and its offices, or the cottage without offices.

Benefit societies.

84. I would now call your attention to the evidence which I received, acting under your instructions, on the subject of benefit clubs, more especially such as are held at public-houses. It will be seen from Beds evidence, 120, that Mr. Charles Howard, who read an interesting paper upon this subject at the Central Farmers' Club in November 1867, then estimated the number of public-house benefit clubs in Bedfordshire to be 260, or nearly two to every parish; the number is now no doubt somewhat smaller, as the old public-house club is yearly dying out, and the inclination of young men is to join larger societies, such as the "Odd Fellows," "Foresters," or local societies, such as the "South Bucks Friendly Society," conducted on a much larger scale and safer basis than the old beerhouse club. The desire to make some provision for sickness and old age is a most laudable, and happily common one, and we cannot wonder that labouring men, finding it necessary to meet at a public-house for the purpose of forming a society, under rules which they thought would insure such a provision, should commit the grave error of combining business of so serious a nature with the pleasure of drinking beer. To the publican such a society was a little fortune, if only he could insure the adoption of such rules as those of the King's Arms, Hockliffe, Friendly Society, (see Beds evidence, 123). And accordingly the publican became the ruling spirit of the club. At first, when all the members were young, the annual Whitsuntide feast was what an old member of the Duncombe Arms Club called an "all joble;" but as time went on the original members became old, young members would not join, preferring to hold their "all joble" together, and the club funds were exhausted at the very time when most of the members were in need of their assistance. I have spoken in a past tense, but the process of exhaustion is going on now, and all the hardships that accompany it. That the public-house club should have its place taken by such societies as the "South Bucks Friendly Society,' which I have already quoted, is a step in the right direction, and all praise to the promoters and honorary members. But I hope the day will come when the labouring man will have within his reach the power of investing his savings in such a manner that he will be certain in sickness or old age to reap the benefit of his thrift without the aid of honorary members.

Lace making and straw plaiting.

85. A report on the condition of the agricultural labourers and their families in the counties of Bedford and Buckingham would be very incomplete if some account were not given of the manner in which their children are employed in making lace or plaiting straw. Speaking generally, in North Beds and North Bucks all the females are engaged in making lace, in south Beds and the centre of Bucks all the females, and not a few boys and men, are engaged in plaiting straw. In the lace district a farm labourer treats it as a matter of course that his daughters will be sent to a lace school at 4 or 5 years of age, and that from the time of their leaving the school to the time when they leave his house for good, it is his wife's business to see that they stick to their lace pillow, and work at least as many hours as he does himself. Lace making, from the fact that it entails sitting in a stooping position with the hands out in front of the body, and must generally be performed in the cottage room, causes fully as much physical injury to the frame of the worker as straw plaiting, though there are not such loud complaints of its effect on morals. Lace schools, in their arrangements, and the extent to which they injure children by close confinement in badly ventilated rooms and interfere with their education, so much resemble plait schools that the description of the latter, which will be given presently, may be held to apply equally to them (see Beds evidence, 115, 116, 117, 119).

Lace schools.

Earnings.

The earnings of girls engaged in lace making are very difficult to get at, but according to the evidence of the lace makers themselves and those who know them best, the earnings at the time I was in Bedfordshire, when the trade was very much depressed, as it has been for some time, were about as follows:—Working 11 or 12 hours a day girls of from 10 to 12 years of age could earn about 1*s.* per week, and girls of from 16 years and upwards from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* per week. (See Beds evidence, 16f, 23k, 26c; Bucks evidence, 8b, 43d).

Plait schools.

86. As farm labourers in the lace district send their daughters to the lace school, so farm labourers in the plait district send their children, both male and female, to plait schools, where for a payment of from 2*d.* to 3*d.* (more commonly 2*d.*) per week, a master or mistress (generally a mistress) teaches

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them to plait, and sees that they execute the task set them by their parents, the plait so made being the property of the parents, who buy the straws and sell the plait when made.

A return of the number of children attending such schools in the central and south-eastern divisions of Bucks was kindly given to me by the chief constable, from which it appears (see Bucks evidence, 141), that there were 1,457 children, of whom 658 wore under 8 years of age, in attendance at 102 plait schools in those districts, and there can be no doubt that if the straw plaiting trade had not been in an unusually depressed state at the time the return was made, a very much larger number of children, especially of the younger ones, would have been found in attendance. I visited several plait schools about the time this return was being collected, and in three of these where I asked the question the teachers confessed to having from 30 to 40 per cent. more children when "plait was good." (See Beds evidence, 109, 110, and Bucks evidence, 142). From these returns it will be seen that the hours of work most common in schools at the time the returns were made were six or seven hours, which, however, are lengthened to nine or ten when "plait is good," or the extra three or four hours considered necessary to make out a fair day's plaiting are worked out at home. Some of the schools I visited, even with the reduced number of learners, were very close and offensive, and the accounts I received of their state in times when plait "went well" were enough to justify the very strong feeling existing in the plait district that some legislative interference is necessary, if only to protect the children from the physical injury sustained by working in close heated rooms. Warmth appears to be so necessary to insure sufficient suppleness of the fingers, that in cold weather every breath of air is carefully excluded from the little cottage kitchen where 30 or 40 children are packed together as closely as they can sit.

Although there is a general pretence of teaching the children to read, the teachers themselves are often unable to do that which they profess to teach the children to do, and the reading is reduced to the repetition of a few verses of the Bible which they all know by heart. In some plait schools there is not even this pretence, and the result is that a great many children (girls especially) are growing up without any education.

Plaiting in day schools.

87. In some parish schools, in order to secure the attendance of children, it has been found necessary to allow plaiting in school, under a sort of half-time system, and the result has been a great increase in the attendance at these schools. The same result, it will be remembered, was arrived at in Kempston parish, where the girls are lace makers, by having schools open for educational purposes two days in the week.

Application of Workshops Regulation Act to plait schools.

88. Soon after arriving in Bedfordshire I wrote to call your attention to the difficulties which the employment of boys at so early an age (beginning from 4 or 5 years) in straw plaiting put in the way of legislative restrictions for children engaged in agriculture, unless such restrictions were also placed on their employment in plaiting as to prevent the probability of their being sent to plaiting schools up to the time when they would by law be permitted to engage in field work. You were kind enough, in answer to my letter, to send me a copy of the Workshops Regulation Act (1867), which I believe was intended to include under its regulations plaiting schools. I had some doubt as to whether the Act would apply to these schools, and very great doubt that, if it did apply, it would do so in a manner calculated to interfere unnecessarily with the means at a parent's disposal of teaching a child, sufficiently early, the trade by which it will in all probability have to earn its livelihood. That there was some ground for the doubt as to the applicability of the Act will be shown by a letter from the Hon. A. F. O. Liddell to the Rev. P. T. Ouvry, J.P., by whom a case against a plait school teacher, taken by the chief constable of Bucks, was heard and referred to the Secretary of State.

I am sorry that the case came on too late to allow me to put this letter in evidence, but as you will see by a copy of it which I enclose, the opinion of the law officers of the Crown seems to be against the application of the Act.*

If it be true, as plait and lace school teachers assert and parents believe, that children to become good workers must learn these handicrafts as early as 5 or 6 years of age, it appears to me that these trades, affecting so large a number of the inhabitants of the South Midland district, are entitled to regulations peculiarly suited to them.

Plaiting injurious to morals.

89. Straw plaiting is accused by some witnesses of doing physical injuries to those who practise it under any circumstances (see Beds evidence, 98), and by very many of being in the highest degree injurious to morals (see Beds evidence, 14b, 14c, 99 to 105, and Answers to Circular Question II. 22j, 22k for Beds and Bucks). The great want of chastity amongst the plait girls probably arises from the early age at which, when plait is good, the girls become independent of their parents, and often leave their homes, and from the fact that male and female plaiters go about the lanes together in summer engaged in work which has not even the wholesome corrective of more or less physical exhaustion.

Earnings at plait.

90. One of the worst features in the plait trade as affecting the plaiters is the great variation in the money value of the article they produce. At the time I was in the plait district the trade was, as I have said before, unusually depressed, and the earnings of plaiters of the ordinary stamp were reduced for girls over 16 years to about 2*s.* 6*d.* a week, for 10 or 11 hours' work per day; and for girls of 12 years to from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.*, children under 8 years of age being unable to pay for the straw (then very dear) and school fee. (See Beds evidence, 14c, 15c, 45d, 71a, 110, 111; Bucks, 7d, 143.)

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* *Copy of Letter from the Hon. A. F. O. Liddell to Rev. P. T. Ouvry, J.P.*

"SIR, "Whitehall, 31st July 1868.

"I am directed by Mr. Secretary Hardy to inform you, with reference to the question submitted in your letter of the 7th inst., as to whether plaiting schools or workshops come under the operation of the Workshops Regulation Act, 1867, that the Attorney and Solicitor General have reported that it is mainly a question of fact whether the children referred to are employed in workshops within the meaning of the Act. That if the *bonâ fide* object be simply to have the child instructed in the art of straw plaiting they think that the child would not be 'employed,' that is, occupied in the handicraft, 'within Sec. 4 of the said Act, as handicraft' is 'manual labour exercised by way of trade or for purposes of gain in or incidental to the making of any article, &c.,' and they think that a child *bonâ fide* in the course of education or instruction in plaiting would not fall within the above words, though the straw plait made in the course of that education was a saleable article and was sold by the parents; neither do they think that a room in which instruction is afforded as above is a workshop in which a 'handicraft is carried on' by a child within the meaning of the Act.

"I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,
"A. F. O. LIDDELL.

"Rev. P. T. Ouvry, J.P.,
"Wing Vicarage, Leighton Buzzard."

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I was informed on very good evidence that when plait was good, as it may be again if ladies take to wearing straw bonnets, plaiters from 16 years of age could earn from 6*s.* to 10*s.* per week.

Plaiters ignorant of domestic duties.

91. Women, as a rule, in the lace and plait districts are utterly ignorant of such common things as keeping their houses clean, mending their own or their children's clothes, and cooking their husbands' dinners, and domestic service is at a great discount among them. Such an institution as the Cardington Industrial Day School for girls (the only industrial school I saw in either county), maintained by the daughters of Mr. Whitbread, cannot be too highly spoken of; I was very much struck with the completeness and simplicity of its arrangements, but as the cost of instructing 30 girls amounts to 70*l.* a year I am afraid the example of these kind-hearted ladies will not be very often followed. (The report of this school will be found in Beds evidence, 19d.)

Earnings of labourers and their families.

92. Before concluding this report I must trespass a little longer on your patience, whilst I state as accurately as I can the result of a mass of evidence on the earnings of farm labourers and their families, as affecting their ability to bear such pressure as might be inflicted upon them by placing legislative restrictions on the employment of their children.

In Bedfordshire the ordinary day-labourers wage varies from 11 to 12 shillings a week, being about 1*s.* per week higher in Bedford than in Woburn Union; the wages of men who have Sunday work, such as horsekeepers, shepherds, &c., vary from 12*s.* to 14*s.* a week, or more generally from 13*s.* to 14*s* a week.

In Bucks the ordinary labourer's wage varies from 11*s.* to 13*s.*, being highest in the Vale of Aylesbury and valley of the Thames; the wages of Sunday men (carters, cattle men, and shepherds) vary from 13*s.* to 15*s.* a week. The difficulty is to ascertain to what extent this nominal wage is augmented by piece work or allowances of any kind.

Earnings in Beds.

93. After a considerable discussion at the Woburn Board of Guardians, the increase under these heads was thus stated:—

Average increase by piece work	52*s.*	for the year.
" " by extra wages or piece work in hay time and harvest	52*s.*	"
" " by value of beer allowance	40*s.*	"
Total increase for the year	134*s.*	

Making the nominal wage of 11*s.* a week up to 13*s.* 9¼*d.* I received this evidence soon after I went to Bedfordshire, and from what I have since learnt I am inclined to think that the increase by piece work is put a little too high, and the cost of the beer allowance about as much too low; I think the beer allowance costs the farmer (as was often stated to me) nearly 52*s.* per year, or 1*s.* per week, and that it would be safer to put the addition by piece work at 40*s.*; taking then the addition by piece work as 40*s.* a year, and leaving the other additions at the estimate of the Woburn Board, we have the average wage for the year as calculated by the board reduced to 13*s.* 6½*d.* a week, and I think it may be fairly said that an efficient farm labourer may in Bedfordshire command an average wage, taking the year throughout, of 13*s.* 6*d.* a week, and that many of them earn 15*s.*

Where piece work is much given the earnings of industrious men are increased without adding to the actual cost of work done, and in some cases of which I received reliable evidence I was surprised to find how much men earned in this way. On Woburn Park farm, where the nominal weekly wage was 12*s.*, and where the beer allowance is paid in money (an example which I think might be followed with advantage) 22 men earned on an average 15*s.* 6*d.* a week throughout the year 1867 (see evidence, 15f, Beds.)

The wages paid by market gardeners round Biggleswade are to ordinary labourers 12*s.* a week with two pints of beer per day in summer and one pint per day in winter, to men who have charge of horses they pay 14*s.* a week with the same beer allowance.

Earnings in Bucks.

94. The wages of farm labourers, as will be seen by the evidence, vary more in Bucks than in Bedfordshire. Putting the unions in order of the value of wages, beginning with the highest, they would stand thus,—

Eton.	Thame.
Aylesbury.	Buckingham.
Newport Pagnell.	Winslow.
Wycombe.	Leighton.
Amersham.	

Eton Union.

95. In Eton Union ordinary labourers have 13*s.* a week, carters 14*s.* (I am of course speaking of the wage for the years 1867 to 1868) (see evidence for Bucks, 81b, 82b, 84a). Examples of the earnings of men in different kinds of piece work are given in the evidence of Mr. C. S. Cantrell, of Riding Court Farm, Datchett, see Bucks evidence, 82b, by whom the system of piece work is thoroughly worked out, and it will be seen that the earnings of four ordinary labourers employed in this way were never under 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, and sometimes reached 3*s.* 6*d.*, and that it may be safely said that an ordinarily efficient farm labourer has it in his power to earn an average wage (including allowances) for the year of 15*s.* a week.

Vale of Aylesbury.

96. In the Vale of Aylesbury (leaving the outlying parishes of the union to be dealt with as part of the adjoining unions) the wages of ordinary labourers vary from 12*s.* to 13*s.* a week, horsekeepers, cowkeepers, and shepherds have from 13*s.* to 15*s.* a week. From the evidence of Mr. Ambrose Taylor (Bucks, 2c), who was kind enough to show me his labour book, it will be seen that the lowest class of labourers employed by him for Sir Anthony de Rothschild, received 13*s.* a week, and a better class 14*s.*, all of the men receiving 13*s.* being in the habit of absenting themselves when better wages, as in hay time and harvest, could be earned elsewhere; their earnings, however, for the year would naturally be somewhat less than the better class who absent themselves only for harvest, and of whom I took the actual earnings as examples, the result is that the better class earn on an average 14*s.* 9¼*d.* a week for the year, and that the lower class may be safely takeu to earn 14*s.* Mr. Bell of Bierton, an occupier from whom I received important evidence on this subject, said after referring to his labour book,—

"In 1867, when the nominal wage was 12*s.* a week (now 13*s.*), my men averaged 14*s.* a week throughout the year in money only, and they had beer besides all the summer months (see Bucks evidence, 4b)."

Other evidence for the Vale of Aylesbury will be found in Bucks evidence, 5a, 9d, 14c, 15b, 16c (the last refreence is to the evidence of Mr. Morris, of Bedgrove Farm, from which it appears that his shepherd's earnings are worth 16*s.* 8*d.* a week for the year). An ordinary farm labourer has therefore at his command in the Vale of Aylesbury an average wage of about 14*s.* 6*d.* a week, including beer allowance, or say in money, 13*s.* 9*d.* a week. F.

97. In Newport Pagnell Union the ordinary labourer's wage is 12*s.* a week, and his whole earnings for the year, including beer, cannot be taken to be less than 13*s.* 9*d.* a week. Newport Pagnell.

98. In Wycombe union shepherds (where they are hired by the year) have about 16*s.* 4*d.* a week for the year, and carters (hired in the same manner) 15*s.*, and the ordinary labourer's earnings, at a nominal wage of 12*s.*, cannot be taken at less than 13*s.* 9*d.* a week fr the year. Wycombe.

99. For Amersham Union important evidence on this subject will be found on Bucks evidence 64c, 64d, 68a. 22 of the lowest class of farm labourers employed by Mr. Drake of Shardloes (see Bucks evidence, 64b), earn 13*s.* a week for the year, including hay time and harvest, and exclusive of beer allowance or any ordinary piece work; six labourers employed by Mr. Crouch, occupier in and guardian for Amersham parish earned an average of over 15*s.* a week, between Lady-day 1867 and Lady-day 1868. Mr. Metcalfe, steward to Lord Chesham, puts the average wage, taking the year round, at 14*s.* (see evidence, 68a.) It cannot therefore be said, I think, that an ordinarily industrious labourer has less than an average earning of 13*s.* 9*d.* a week at his command in Amersham Union. Amersham.

100. In Thame, Buckingham, and Winslow Unions (see evidence, 19a, 25b, 30b, 32c, 39a, 43b, 44a), the ordinary labourer's wage varies from 11*s.* to 12*s.*, and in Leighton Union, to which some parishes in Bucks belong, the wage and earnings are about the same as in the adjoining union of Woburn in Beds; in none of these last four unions the able-bodied labourer ought to earn less than at the rate of 13*s.* 6*d.* a week, all allowances included; that some of them do not is in part caused by a larger system of allotments existing in those unions; on this head Mr. R. King, relieving officer, Tingewick, says:— Thame, Buckingham, and Winslow Unions.

"The men if planting beans make it a rule to plant a bushel and then go and work on their allotments, some few work out the day and earn 2*s.* 6*d.* a day at it." (See Bucks evidence, 97.)

I think, too, that the allotment systems have had something to do with shortening the hours of labour, from 10 hours as they are in Bedfordshire to 9 hours as in the greater part of Bucks, 5 p.m., instead of 6, being the end of the work-day.

101. To the earnings of the labourer, if measuring the means at his disposal for the maintenance of his family, must be added the value of his allotment (an addition to their income enjoyed by probably 80 per cent. of the heads of families). The account would then stand thus for the different unions as near as I can make it. The average income per week (including value of beer allowance) *at the command of any able-bodied farm labourer in the following districts is:—* Table of earnings.

—		For those who have an allotment.		For those who have not an allotment.	
		s.	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*
In Beds	North Beds - -	14	6	14	0
	South Beds - -	14	0	13	6
In Bucks	Valley of Thames -	15	6	15	0
	Vale of Aylesbury -	15	0	14	6
	Rest of county - -	14	0	13	6

102. If however it is difficult to estimate the value of the earnings of an adult labourer, it is still more difficult to give an intelligible account of the earnings of families. As I said in speaking of the lace and straw plait makers, the earnings in these trades not only vary with the age of the worker, but unfortunately also with the market value of the article they produce. It will be sufficient perhaps for the main object of this inquiry to take the case of families where all the children are young, say, first, where they are all under 10 years of age, and second, where they are all under 13 years of age; the employment and earnings of children under 10 years of age in farm labour varies very much in different parts of the counties of which I am speaking, but in the district where few children under 10 years of age are employed in agriculture, the earnings of that class are generally made up by straw plaiting. In agricultural labour, even where the demand is greatest, the employment of boys between 8 and 10 years of age is limited to about six months in the year at about 2*s.* a week, and where such boys are plaiters, they cannot earn much more than 1*s.* a week, so that the most a labourer can expect to receive from the earnings of such of his children as are between 8 and 10 years of age would be 1*s.* per week for the year, and which would, therefore, measure his loss if boys under 10 were prevented from being employed in farm labour; there are few cases in which a labourer has more than one child which would be affected by such a restriction at the same time. Boys of from 10 to 13 earn from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* a week, and their work, at any rate towards 11 years of age, becomes more constant. A legislative restriction enforcing a school attendance of, say, four months in the year for such boys would at the most (taking two children as available between these ages) rob a family of about 2*s.* a week for the year, and when all the other children (supposing the case of a large family) were under 10 years of age, the same family might be suffering the loss of 1*s.* a week for a boy between 8 and 10. This extreme case would require a man to have three sons between 8 and 13 years of age, all capable of earning the maximum agricultural wage paid to boys of their age. Such cases may exist, but for one such there are 10 where the number of children is as great and the earning power, under no restriction, is less than it would be in the case I have supposed under an application of the Factory Act principle, which would prevent children's labour up to 10 years of age, and exact four months school attendance between that age and 13. That there are cases where such legislation as I have hinted at would oblige parents of young families to apply for aid in some shape cannot, I think, be denied, and the question in my mind appears to be, whether the evil effect on the parents by, as it were, forcing them in a few cases Earnings as affected by restrictions on children's labour.

F.

to obey the law, through the aid of charity in one form or another, would be greater than the good to be arrived at by educating the children. The great lessons which the labourers of these counties require to be taught are independence and providence. Education will I doubt not greatly aid in this teaching, and any legislative interference which will secure to every child such an elementary education as will suffice to put his career in his own hands, will command the approval of all classes of the community if it can only avoid such pressure as might tend to reduce still lower the feeling of self reliance now existing amongst the labourers of whom I am speaking.

Examples of what labourers can do.

103. What a labourer can or cannot do towards the education of his children will, I think, best be arrived at by examining what *is* done in certain cases, such as are given in Beds evidence, 4b, 10e, 24b, 26d, and in Bucks evidence, 13e, 14b, 30e, 30f, 32d, 43c, 69c, and 76c, in not one of which a rule preventing the employment of children under 10 years of age in farm labour would change the position of the family; the one of these instances most to the point is that of Mrs. Bunyan, Sheeplane, in Woburn Union, who says:

"I have four children" (one was an infant), "three are at school, the eldest 10; they are not fit to go to work till they are 12. I find it very difficult to keep my children at school, but I think it my duty to keep them out of the plait school. My husband has 11*s*. a week regularly, now he is draining, and may get 13*s*. by the piece."

This woman's house was much the cleanest and best kept of those which I visited in the hamlet of Sheeplane, where, to say the truth, the cottages are not such as to hold out any encouragement to the occupiers to keep them clean.

Points of difference in position of northern and southern labourer.

104. The whole question of how by education or otherwise to improve the condition of the agricultural labourer depends so much on the removal of the causes which have tended to degrade him, causes whose comparative effect can only be understood by examining the effect produced by their presence or absence in the case of others of his own class, that I cannot lose the opportunity of pointing out some of the points in which the position of the northern labourer, where I know him best, differs from that of his southern brother.

His earnings are very little higher than those of any fairly industrious man in Bedfordshire or Bucks, and yet he is mentally and physically a superior animal, treating his family in a manner which three or four times the difference in wage would not account for. What then are the causes operating in his favour? I take them to be chiefly the following:

He has no need of a club, his hiring is a yearly hiring and his wages are paid when he is sick as punctually as when he is at work.

His own earnings and those of his family all go to the family purse, and suffer very little variation.

And last, but not least, it is not his habit to drink beer; except at the annual hiring, he hardly knows what a beershop means, and his children suck at the milk bowl instead of himself at the beer jug.

Of all the temptations to improvidence which beset the south Midland labourer there is none to compare to the beershop, and I may conclude this report as the wife of a farm labourer in Kempston wound up her address to me, "Sir, them alehouses is our curse."

It now only remains for me to thank as best I can all classes of persons with whom the prosecution of the inquiry entrusted to me brought me in contact, in the counties of Bedford and Buckingham, for the great kindness and hospitality with which I was everywhere received, and for the prompt assistance which was given to me by every person who saw that he could in any way help me.

I have the honour to remain,
Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,
GEO. CULLEY.

Fowberry Tower, Sept. 23, 1868.

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* The following evidence on the comparative merits of the northern and southern labourer is extracted from a letter just received by me from G. A. Grey, Esq., of Milfield, Northumberland, a gentleman of very large experience in the employment of men in drainage works at piece-work wages:—

"In 1855 some letters appeared in "The Times" throwing blame on landowners for not giving employment at fair wages to labourers, and stating the wages that an able-bodied man had to support his family on as 8*s*. or 9*s*. a week. I ventured to reply to these by saying that it was unfair to expect proprietors to give more than the market price for labour, or to find work that they did not think necessary or remunerative; and unreasonable to require work to be found at the doors of the labourers when there was actually a greater demand for labour in other districts than men could be found to supply it. I went on to say that I had at that time about 2,000 men employed in drainage works, at which they were averaging from 20*s*. to 25*s*. a week by piece work, and that I engaged to employ any number that might be sent to the same works, at the same piece-work wages. I was shortly inundated with letters from all parts of the south of England, Bedfordshire, Essex, Herts, Leicestershire, Middlesex, Norfolk, Suffolk, Surrey, &c., and about 200 men were sent to me who were stated to be good workmen and well accustomed to the use of the spade and pickaxe. I apportioned these men in parties of 10 to 20 to different places in Northumberland where draining was going on. It was soon found that where the cutting was hard and strong they could do nothing, and many left without finishing any work. Some went on for a few weeks or months, but none made more than 12*s*. a week, or from one-third to one-half less than the Northumbrians were making in the same fields. Before the year was out all had left except 10 out of 20 men who were allotted to Chevington, where the soil is clay, without stone, and is easily cut. These 10 men remained for several years and got to be tolerably expert workmen, but owing to want of strength and energy they never got beyond 15*s*. a week, indeed there was not a man among the whole importation that had legs or shoulders to compare with our lads of 17 years of age."

It will be remembered that the earnings spoken of in this letter very much exceed the average value of the farm labourer or "hind's" wage, and that at the time Mr. Grey speaks of there was an unusual demand for drainers, *and let it not be forgotten that in this case the better education is on the side of the better labourer.*

MISCELLANEOUS.

(*Referred to in* §§ 215–7 *of the Report.*)

EXTRACT FROM JOURNAL OF THE LONDON CENTRAL FARMERS' CLUB, 39, NEW BRIDGE STREET, BLACKFRIARS.—NOVEMBER 1858.

THE ALLOTMENT SYSTEM.

The first monthly meeting of the club, after the usual autumnal recess, took place on Monday evening, November 1, at the club house, Blackfriars. The subject for discussion, introduced by Mr. H. Trethewy, of Silsoe, Ampthill, was, "The Allotment "System, its Uses and Abuses." Amongst those present were Thomas Owen, Esq., of Clapton, in the chair, supported by Messrs. B. P. Shearer, W. Bennett, H. Trethewy, J. J. Mechi, S. Skelton, E. Little, W. Gray, John Thomas, C. J. Brickwell, E. Purser, R. T. Howell, J. B. Spearing, J. G. King, J. Tyler, T. Stagg, J. A. Williams, M. Reynolds, T. Congreve, F. Dyball, R. Marsh, Dr. Ellis, R. F. Jennings, J. Halkett, S. Sidney, W. Eve, E. B. Acton, R. B. Hammond, B. E. Waite, J. Russell, &c. &c.

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Mr. Trethewy.—It may be said that the subject which I have the pleasure to introduce to you this evening is one more calculated for the consideration of landowners and those concerned in the management of estates than for discussion at a farmers' club. A little reflection, however, will show us that it is one involving, if possible, even more the comfort and prosperity of the occupier than of the owner of the soil; for it cannot be denied that much of the success of the farmer depends upon the class of labourers he may have about him, whether steady, industrious, and skilful, or otherwise. No matter what skill and capital the agriculturist can command, unless the strong arm and ready will of the labourer are at hand to carry his designs into execution. Any system, therefore, having a tendency to elevate the moral character of the labourer and to improve his condition must be worthy of encouragement; and therefore I think the committee have exercised a proper discretion in selecting this subject for an evening's discussion, for it is one upon which much prejudice exists, and not without some reason, as I shall presently show. Like many other useful schemes, the allotment system has suffered from the injudicious zeal of its advocates, some of whom have taught people to expect too much from it, and who themselves have regarded it almost as a panacea. Hence it has in some instances been carried to such an extent as totally to alter its character, and therefore the prejudice which I have just alluded to has arisen against it. A desire for the occupation of land is inherent in the human mind. From the nobleman and large landed proprietor, who cultivate their own broad acres, to the dwellers in our cities and towns, this feeling is continually manifesting itself. Almost every man, whatever may be his pursuit in life, attaches himself more or less to the soil. He feels that he possesses in his garden or paddock at least one spot which he can call his own, and where he can indulge his own peculiar taste. No wonder then that the labourer, whose very existence is identified with vegetable life, should participate in this feeling. No wonder that while the greatest portion of his time is devoted to the cultivation of the crops of his employer he should aspire to the occupation of a small area for himself, independently of its value and convenience to him. And when we consider how influential this feeling often is in diverting his attention from places and objects having a tendency to demoralization, surely it is the duty of every one interested in his well-being, so far as is consistent, to promote his wishes. How many hours, which might otherwise be passed in the alehouse, may thus be spent in profitable occupation! But here it is possible I may be met by an objection which I have sometimes heard made, that if the labourer does his duty to his employer during the day he can have little desire to work afterwards. In other words, that he employs that strength and exertion on his own land which of right belong to the farmer who pays him for his day's work. To this I would reply that if the day's work is done (and I apprehend no employer would keep on a man who habitually failed in doing it), to restrain him from devoting his leisure hours to his own pursuits would be to reduce a labourer to the lowest degree of serfdom. Upon this principle the cottage garden must go uncultivated, and all recreation would have to be given up. I do not, however, for one moment anticipate such an objection at the Central Farmers' Club in the nineteenth century, and it is therefore scarcely necessary to advert to it. To trace the history of the system as it is now developed is not my intention, but rather I would seek to offer a few practical remarks upon its working, that those who are favourable to a trial may benefit by the experience of those who have already introduced it. I may, however, remark that so long ago as 1796 the state of the labourer attracted the attention of several influential persons, by whom a society was formed for "bettering "the condition and improving the comforts of the "poor," of which King George III. was patron. This society published reports from time to time till 1814, from which it appears that one of the principal elements of success they considered the "allotments "of land to the labouring population." Other attempts, having the same object in view, were shortly afterwards made; but about the year 1830 a number of noblemen and gentlemen, "to meet the pressing exi-"gencies of the times," formed a society called the "Labourers' Friend Society," having more especially for its object the obtaining a small portion of land for the labourer "at a moderate rent in addition to the "fair price of his labour." They published a very interesting report in the year 1835, which I should be glad to extract largely from would time and space permit. One cannot but feel thankful, after perusing some of their reports, and comparing the state of the labouring population of those days with that of the present generation of labourers, for the great improvements which have taken place, both in a social and moral point of view. But it would be attributing too much to the system they advocated to give it credit for all this improvement. Various causes have operated to accomplish this end: education, improved dwellings, and, although last, not least, an alteration in the poor laws. In Bedfordshire allotments were laid out on the estates of the Duke of Bedford and Earl de Grey in the year 1829. In that year it appears that on the former estate, in the parish of Maulden, 18 acres were divided into parcels of from 20 to 40 poles each; while on the latter estate in the same year 30 acres were set out in parcels of from one rood to two roods each. Other proprietors soon afterwards followed these examples until garden allotments became very general. I would, however, here observe, and I beg particular attention to the remark, that it is not my opinion that allotments are suited to all districts, and that it does not follow that because they answer well in one locality that they will succeed in another. It would be a task far beyond my power to point out and describe such districts, residents being

by far the best judges in the matter. I would merely observe that where labourers live in villages, as in the midland counties, the system would be more practicable than in those districts where they more generally reside on the farms they work upon. In selecting ground for allotments, the principal points to be attended to are *situation* and *soil*. It is of the utmost importance that they should be within an easy distance of the dwellings of the poor; and should the village be a long and straggling one, a central position would be the best, unless it were expedient to have ground at each extremity. The *nature* more than the *quality* of the soil has to be considered; for it is astonishing how much poor thin land is improved by spade husbandry, while strong heavy clays are wholly unfit for the purpose of allotments, no matter how well they may be drained. Of course the rent would be in proportion to the quality. As in every other instance, good land would be preferable to bad; still, its adaptation to the purpose, as being easily worked, is the main point. And now as regards the quantity for each occupier. My experience convinces me that a rood is sufficient under almost any circumstances; and the greatest error that has been committed has been the allotting of too much land to one individual. To dwell upon the evils arising from such a proceeding is scarcely necessary, as it must be obvious that without sufficient capital the occupation of land cannot be attended with profitable results. Some instances in confirmation of this view have come under my own observation, and I can confidently assert that instead of the position of such men having improved, it has retrograded. Occupied nearly the whole of their time upon their own land, they can no longer be classed under the head of labourers, and they actually injure regular workmen by throwing their labour into the market at seasons of the year when the demand for it is unusually depressed. If it be argued that the restriction of the system would have the effect of preventing a labourer from improving his condition, and effectually debar him from rising in the world by his own industry, I would answer that I am not now discussing the relative advantages of large and small farms, but am confining myself to the agricultural labourer in the broad acceptation of the term. Every employer knows, and every man of common sense must feel, that it is as important to the farmer to have his regular men at work at all times as it is to the manufacturer or tradesman, and that the business of the farm could not be carried on without such regularity. I regard it, then, as a fatal error for the labourer to follow any pursuit that would at all interfere with the claim of his employer upon him; for be it remembered, that it is upon *hired* labour that the working man must chiefly depend for his subsistence, and any scheme that has a tendency to interfere with this, his chief capital, must very shortly end in disappointment and distress; but any plan that can be devised which will improve his condition, without interfering with his free labour, must be hailed as a great boon. Such I believe the allotment system properly managed to be. That there always have been, and that there always will be, men to raise themselves by their own industry above their original position, no one can deny; nor would any man of common justice and generous feeling attempt to prevent such an occurrence; but such men have always risen *gradually*, and not at once jumped from the one state to the other. Wherever a man shows himself superior to his fellows in intelligence, skill, or application, he will be sure to push himself, and by obtaining higher wages, the natural result of his superiority, gradually improve his position. And it often happens that such men, after saving a little money, are assisted by their former employers, or by others who have watched their career, in accomplishing the object of their desire, whether a small occupation or otherwise. By the sweat of his brow man must ever live, and so long as society exists there must be rich and poor.

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I will now say a few words upon rents and managements. As regards the first, I can only state that it must be an open question, as in the cases of farms and other occupations. There is no reason, that I am aware of, why the labourer should have land at a lower price than others would give for it; nor do I see upon what principle he should be asked to pay more. After all, it is not a question of rent, so much as to have the allotment ground on a convenient spot. If situated near a village, as it should be, the land may assume the value of accommodation land, and should of course be paid for accordingly. On the estate of the Right Hon. the Earl de Grey, in Bedfordshire, with which I am connected as agent, the rents vary from 32*s.* to 72*s.* per acre (or from 8*s.* to 18*s.* per rood), including all rates and taxes, and the gates, fences, ditches, and watercourses are kept and maintained for them, so that they have nothing to pay but the rent. Of course, many of those rents are higher than are paid by the farmers; but, as I before observed, they are many of them accommodation lands, and would readily let at the same prices to others. It is to me a matter of peculiar gratification to be able to testify to the punctuality with which those rents are paid. Including a few market gardeners, there are on his lordship's rent roll, in Bedfordshire, some 750 tenants. The collection occupies five days, and it rarely happens that there are any arrears. Now and then a little time is asked for, but very seldom, and then not given unless some sufficient reason, such as illness or some other visitation is pleaded. Below is a tabular statement, showing the acreage and the number of allotment tenants in a few of the parishes where the principal portion of the Wrest estates are situate.

Parish.	Population per Census of 1851.	Area of Parishes.	Number of Allotments.	Acreage of Allotment Land.
		Acres.		Acres.
Silsoe - - -	755	2,067	78	24
Clophill - -	1,186	2,317	180	55
Flitton - -	656	1,020	163	140
Pulloxhill - -	688	1,584	131	51
Upper Gravenhurst -	357	895	66	24
Lower Gravenhurst -	58	757		

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Many of those, especially in the parishes of Clophill, Pulloxhill, and Flitton, which are what are termed "open parishes," *i. e.*, parishes where the cottages belong to several proprietors, have no ground whatever belonging to their dwellings. Hence it may be easily conceived what an advantage an allotment must be to them. Indeed, so anxious are they for it, that whenever a vacancy occurs numerous applications are sure to pour in. No restriction as to cultivation is imposed, except such as are common to the farmers. Some people have an objection to cottagers being allowed to grow wheat, but I cannot say that I have ever found any inconvenience to have arisen from it. I see no reason whatever why such a restriction should be imposed; for a crop of wheat is as much a change to the soil as any other crop, and at times no doubt as profitable; while the straw comes for litter for the pig, and returns to the ground in the shape of manure. It is not found that the privilege is abused by excess of cropping, and therefore the practice has not been prohibited. In every parish on Lord de Grey's estate, where there are allotments, a barn is provided for the use of these tenants alone for the purpose of thrashing, &c., and they generally agree pretty well among themselves, so that it is seldom necessary to interfere with their arrangements as to its use. The early promoters of the system seem to have been very much prompted to it by a pressure of the poor rates. It was a very general impression for a few years before the passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act, in 1834, and indeed for some time subsequently, that great relief would be given to the

ratepayers by the introduction of allotments; but I have not been able to learn that such was, or has been, the case to a very great extent. That it may have, and has had, a favourable effect in that direction I firmly believe, but I would not overrate it. I would here notice a curious circumstance in connexion with this part of the subject, which occurred in a parish with which I am acquainted. It contains about 650 inhabitants, nearly all of whom would be engaged in the cultivation of the soil; and in consequence of so many labourers being out of employ, the poor rates at one time amounted to nearly 16*s.* in the pound. In this fearful state of things the largest occupier gave up his farm, saying he could manage to pay his rent, but that the rates would ruin him. A considerable portion of his occupation was then let out to the labourers in parcels varying from one to five and ten acres each. In a few years the rates were considerably reduced; but whether this improved state of things was to be traced to the division of the land as described or to the operation of the new poor law, is a point which is yet open to speculation; for both causes, as well as one or two others of a local nature, were in operation at the same time. My own conviction is that to the legislative enactment the credit principally belongs. The original allottees were allowed to remain in possession of their land till they were removed by death or became incapable of managing it; but it was not considered good policy to continue this system; but rather, when one of the little holdings became vacant, to divide it into allotments of a rood each, thus affording land upon a sounder principle, and providing for the necessities of greater numbers. The rates are now about the same as in the adjoining parishes similarly situated. There may be a difference of opinion as to whether it be more desirable that each man should have a garden of sufficient size for his wants, or whether a piece of ground should be set apart for the whole village, in the shape of an allotment. Now we know, in many parishes, the utter impossibility of getting garden ground attached to every cottage; and therefore, as a rule, that plan could not be relied upon; and even if it could be, the latter scheme offers advantages peculiarly its own. They are, first, that a spirit of emulation is excited when all are brought into a kind of friendly competition, as is the case in an allotment field. Labourers are quick to discern successful cultivation, and to trace its causes. If one man succeeds beyond the rest in raising any particular crop, it will be sure to be noticed, and the reason of it inquired into, and his system most probably adopted. Every man has the advantage of the experience of the whole field, and in general benefits by it; whereas in a garden there are not those opportunities. How frequently does one sees a garden overrun with weeds, overgrown with trees, bushes, and fences, absolutely excluding sun and air, and producing next to nothing to the cultivator! In an open field allotment, the sun and air are freely admitted; the land is more easily kept clean, and the state of cultivation patent to all the neighbourhood. I believe example has a strong influence in promoting good and clean cultivation among all classes of occupiers. With a view to encourage it amongst the allotment tenants of the district, a society, called the "Silsoe and Ampthill Labourer's Friend Society," was established about seventeen years ago. It offers several prizes annually for competition, and great interest is excited among the exhibitors. This society is under the patronage of Earl de Grey, and has Lord Wensleydale as president, while the stewards consist entirely of tenant farmers, who thus evince their sense of its usefulness. The subscribers comprise the clergy and gentry of the neighbourhood, and the exhibition is invariably fully attended. In fact, all classes unite to promote the object it has in view; and the result is an exhibition of fruits, vegetables, &c., that would surprise any one who had never before witnessed it. I believe this to be a most useful institution, and where allotments prevail to any extent I would strongly recommend the establishment of similar associations. Some persons have an objection to prizes being offered for length of service; but I cannot conceive that any opposition can be offered to the encouragement of good cultivation, whether on a small scale or on a large one. We all know it is the practice of some large proprietors to offer premiums to be competed for by the tenants on their estates—in some counties such premiums are given by the agricultural societies. In either instance the same effect is produced—honourable competition among the larger occupiers. Why, then, should not the smaller ones have similar inducements held out to them? Upon the latter part of my subject I have little to say. The chief abuse of the system (to use the word on the card) consists in giving the labourer more land than he can manage consistently with his usual occupation. Every scheme must be kept within due bounds—every system must have a limit. To extend the allotment system beyond its legitimate bounds would have the effect of completely changing its character, and turning that which was intended to be an auxiliary into a leading pursuit.

Mr. Bennett (of Cambridge) said he would not shrink from taking his part on a subject in which he had for many years of his life felt a very lively interest. First of all, he must beg permission to tender his best thanks to Mr. Trethewy for having called attention to a subject of great importance to the labouring classes, and more or less so to the community at large. He felt the obligation the greater to that gentleman, because he very properly directed attention to the *abuses* as well as the *usefulness* of the cottage allotment system. (Cheers.) For himself he thought he could more usefully follow in the discussion by giving somewhat greater prominence to what may be regarded as some of the leading abuses of this otherwise very beneficial *practice.* First and foremost of its evils was the allotting unsuitable land, and often at a very inconvenient distance from the dwellings of the labourers. (Cheers.) To allot from a rood to half an acre of poor clay land to a labourer, and that sometimes from half a mile to a mile from his cottage, so far from benefiting him, they did him a great disservice. In such cases they added much to the toil of the poor body, and harassed his mind without the remotest chance of doing him good. I am aware (continued Mr. B.) that good strong land will often yield a greater crop than a lighter soil; but in that case it must first be well drained and, most of all, as contiguous to his home as possible, otherwise the result can only be great improvement to the land, and increased poverty and discomfiture to the labourer. (Cheers.) The rent the labourer pays must not be left out of consideration. He had known land let out to labourers at such prices as precluded all hope of the occupier deriving the least profit—poor wretched glebe land, for instance, let at double its value, and irrespective of its distance from the dwellings of the labourers. In such cases there was no wonder that the result should be anything than beneficial. The quantity of land granted was also sometimes more than could be well managed, offering a temptation to the labourer to apply himself at his allotment when he should be rendering service to his master. Those were some among the many abuses of the allotment system; and he thought Mr. Trethewy would agree with him (cries of hear, hear, from that gentleman). In the teeth of all those abuses, which in many cases had been but too manifest, he (Mr. Bennett) was fully of opinion that the good results to the labourers, where skilfully managed, far more than counterbalanced all the evils incident thereto. In some parts of the kingdom they were justly regarded as a great boon to the labourer, making a nice addition to his wages, and greatly adding to his comfort; and perhaps nowhere more so than on the estate of the Right Hon. Earl de Grey, so skilfully watched over as it was by

the gentleman who had so ably brought this subject before the attention of the club. (Cheers.) That there had been great improvement in the condition of the British labourer within the last quarter of a century must be evident to every observant agriculturist. That the establishment of cottage allotments, however, must not have the entire credit of this improvement he was free to admit. The improved poor laws had done even more. On the old system (which offered a sort of bounty on improvidence) they could do nothing effectively in that way. They regarded the overseer as their national parent, and flew him on every emergency, and often from one year's end to the other. But recently the law had taught a man that his first dependence must be on his own exertions, and on the overseer only when all other means fail. Good cottage allotments were now properly prized and sought after, and had already very materially aided the honest and industrious labourer; and if wisely and prudently managed were destined to be of far higher service to the entire rural population; for it was a fact patent to all, that if a man possessed but the smallest portion of property, so that he had something he could call his own, they gave him a sort of stake, and attached him more or less to the common weal of his country. He (Mr. Bennett) thought, therefore, that every true patriot should lend his willing aid to carry out in the most efficient manner this highly beneficial system (cheers).

Mr. Alderman Mechi entirely concurred in the admiration expressed by Mr. Bennett of the manner in which Mr. Trethewy had introduced the subject. He, for one, went very much with that gentleman in his conclusions; but there were some points on which he differed from him. He thought that every farm should, if possible, have a sufficient number of cottages for the labourers employed upon it. (Hear, hear.) He was also of opinion that the cottages should invariably have attached to them such a portion of land as the labourer could conveniently cultivate. (Hear, hear.) He agreed with Mr. Trethewy that an eighth of an acre, or a little more, was generally quite enough. He did not concur with him, however, that a cottage garden so situated would not possess the same advantages of comparison as an allotment, because there would be other cottages and other cottage gardens on the same property, or in the neighbourhood. They all knew that labourers mixed together, and they might just as easily observe the difference between good fencing and trimming and bad fencing and trimming in their gardens as the farmers could make such comparisons on their farms; that might be done just as well from cottage to cottage, and from garden to garden, as from one allotment to another. The aggregation of cottages without gardens was a disgrace to a past management. The horrid system of getting rid of labourers by driving them to another parish had placed such persons to a very great extent at the mercy of itinerant builders, who raise dwellings for them as close together as possible, and took care that there was very little land attached to them. (Hear, hear.) He hoped that a better feeling was now abroad among both landlords and tenants in reference to this question; he hoped they had now begun to feel that is was as necessary to have labourers near their work as it was to have horses near their work. (Hear, hear.) In his own neighbourhood, he might remark in passing, a practical farmer was now building three cottages near his farm for the occupation of some of his labourers. If a labouring man had to walk two or three miles in the morning before he could begin his work, and two or three miles on his way home when the work was over, his labour must be proportionately less valuable to his employer. It was clear that you could only have a certain amount of physical power out of a man, as out of a horse, and that was a truth which should always be borne in mind in reference to the situation of the dwellings of agricultural labourers. (Hear, hear.) He did not agree with Mr. Bennett as to clay land being so disadvantageous to those who choose to cultivate it. (Laughter.) On the contrary, he had great faith in an honest clay (laughter); nor did he see how the use of clay soils was to be avoided in purely clay districts. Such land should indeed be well drained previously to being let to the cottager. Was that generally done? He knew it was hardly ever done. (Hear, hear.) When once clay lands had been effectually drained, and when once the system of burning, which was very profitable, had been carried out, the soil was often found to be more useful and enduring than soils of a different description. He hoped there would ere long be some alteration of the poor law, which would tend to stimulate the building of cottages in the immediate vicinity of farms. He knew that was not a question which they were met to discuss that evening, but he could not refrain from remarking incidentally, that he trusted there would not much longer be any inducement to the farmer and the landlord to get rid of labourers by pushing them, as it were, into adjoining parishes. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. B. P. Shearer (Bishop's Waltham) wished to ask Mr. Trethewy whether it were customary on the estates to which he had alluded to give allotments to all persons who asked for them.

Mr. H. Trethewy said he had a list of applicants in which every application was entered; and whenever a vacancy occurred he selected the person whom he considered most suitable.

Mr. Mechi supposed that even if applicants were small tradesmen their application was not rejected on account of their calling.

Mr. Trethewy: No.

Mr. J. A. Williams (Baydon, Hungerford) said there could be no doubt that the new poor law had done much towards placing the agricultural labourer in the improved and improving position he now occupied; and he hoped that in ten years the labourer would be in a better position than he was at present. The circumstance that he was now thrown more on his own resources than he was before the alteration of the poor law made it the more incumbent on their part to aid and assist him in his endeavours to improve his own position, and to make himself comparatively independent; and by letting him have the raw material to produce some of the necessaries of life, in addition to what he obtained in his master's service, they placed him on a footing which enabled him to rear his children honestly and respectably, and made both him and them better members of society than such persons generally were 20 or 30 years ago. (Hear, hear.) The subject on the card had, in his opinion, a very close connexion with the welfare of the agricultural labourer. He agreed with Mr. Trethewy that a rood of land was the very outside quantity that either landowners or occupiers should ever think of allowing labourers to cultivate. A rood would require all the spare time beyond what the labourer ought to give to the service of his master in return for the wages he received. (Hear, hear.) Masters, of course, expected an honest day's labour for a day's pay; and if the allotment in any way interfered with the day's labour for the master it must be classed under the latter part of Mr. Trethewy's subject—"the abuses "of the system." (Hear, hear.) He believed, however, that a rood was not more than a labourer could properly and conveniently cultivate; that quantity would occupy his time usefully. During the long evenings of autumn he would be engaged in breaking up the soil and securing his produce; in the spring he would be occupied in cultivation; and in the summer in cleaning his land. And all this would tend to keep him from the public house; while, by this opportunity thus afforded to him of the working up the raw material, he might make a great addition to the comforts of his household, and secure for it many

comforts which could not otherwise be obtained. (Hear, hear.) He knew that many persons had objected to the production of wheat on the ground, that it might be injurious to the farmer; it should, however, be remembered that there were many instances in which the labourer could not employ a rood of land profitably unless he was permitted to cultivate a portion of it with cereal crops (Hear, hear). To say that he should produce nothing but potatoes on a rood of land was to say, in effect, that he should follow the rotten system which prevailed in Ireland until a few years ago. If he were allowed to cultivate one-third with cereal crops, with good spade cultivation and the refuse of the pigsty as manure, he would be enabled to manage that proportion profitably, and, with the aid of gleaning, would secure comforts to the poor man's family which they themselves, perhaps, could hardly conceive. It was of course possible that the labourer might, by the production of such an article as wheat, be tempted to turn rogue, and to increase his stock by robbing his employer; but he did not think they ought to stand in the way of the agricultural labourer by supposing that he must of necessity be a rogue (hear, hear). If they took a fair and practical view of the question, the objection that the growth of cereal crops must be injurious to the employer would vanish. One thing that would add greatly to the comforts of the poor man's family was the possession of a fat pig. He felt quite certain that a man of industry and economy might, with a rood of land, fat two pigs. Every time the pot was boiled there was something that would aid in the subsistence of the pig. It was possible, therefore, for him to fat two pigs, and the sale of one would more than pay his rent, while he might keep the other for the consumption of his own family. This was a practical way of viewing the question. Many years ago he himself allotted seven acres of a farm which he occupied among labonrers; that land laboured under two disadvantages, which had been condemned by Mr. Bennett and Mr. Mechi. In the first place it was strong clay soil, and undrained; and in the second place, some of it, instead of being close to the village where the labourers resided, was about half a mile from it. That the distance, however, in this case was no obstacle in the eyes of the poor man was evident from the fact that there was as great a demand for the allotments half a mile from the village as for those which were close to it. Of course, labourers generally would give the preference to land which was near their dwellings; but it should be remembered that there must be reciprocity in all such matters; the party who lets an allotment must let it partly for his own benefit as well as for the benefit of the occupier, and in all cases the allotment system must be self-supporting if it was to continue to exist. Whenever there was an allotment vacant half a mile from the village there were plenty of applicants for it, and that appeared to him to show conclusively that the distance was not material. At all events, it was better that the labourer should have land half a mile or even a mile distant from his dwelling, than that he should have none at all (hear, hear), and he was convinced that if the allotment system were well carried out it would do much to improve the condition and elevate the character of the labouring population. He had only one more observation to make. He recollected hearing Mr. Baker, whose absence on that occasion he much regretted, speak some years ago of one of the abuses of the allotment system—namely, that in some cases the poor employed the Sabbath in working on their land. That was indeed one of the greatest abuses that he could conceive, and he thought that wherever it existed the owner of the soil should put his veto on such a practice, and compel the labourers to abstain from cultivation on the Sabbath.

Mr. Mechi thought Mr. Williams was mistaken in supposing that labourers having a rood of land would be able to fat two pigs with their own produce. In his (Mr. Mechi's) part of the country they generally bought two or three sacks of barley-meal for each pig.

Mr. Williams said he was of course aware that labourers could not fatten a pig on nothing; but he meant to say that when a man had forty poles of land in his occupation, they must take into account the produce of his land, and consider how far the refuse of his cottage might, in his improved circumstances, be made use of in the cultivation of his land. He did not mean to say that it was always advantageous to grow wheat. After cropping his land for two or three years with wheat, the labourer might have recourse to barley, and he believed that was done with advantage on his own allotments.

Dr. Ellis (Sudbrook Park, Richmond) thought that there was nothing more graceful to be found in the history of agriculture than the assembling of a number of owners and occupiers of the soil to consider how they might improve the condition of labourers. Half a century ago it was supposed that all farmers cared about, as regarded those whom they employed, was to get as much out of them as possible. This could no longer be imagined when owners and occupiers met together and devoted their time and thoughts to the promotion of the interests of agricultural labourers. Such discussions as this must tend to make labourers feel an additional interest in those who were so anxious about their welfare (hear, hear). He had watched the allotment system ever since it came into operation with great interest, and he was convinced that it was attended with very good results on the whole, and with very little evil. He had seen it carried ont on land which had not been considered worth enclosing; he had seen that land brought into a state of improvement far snperior to that which it could have attained under a broader system of cultivation, and he had seen people thus raised from a condition of degradation, rags, and misery to one of sobriety, comfort, and morality. This improvement was owing, he thought, in a great degree, to the mere fact of their being employed; for it was an universal truth, which they had probably all learnt in their childhood, that "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do." If they wanted to keep a labouring man out of mischief, they must endeavour to keep him constantly employed (hear, hear). Indeed, whatever grade of society they examined, it wonld generally be found that the best and most useful members of society were persons who were nearly always occupied in a profitable manner. It was a mistake to suppose that the strength which a labouring man gave to his ordinary day's labour for hire was all that he could employ for his own advantage. There were great fundamental errors with respect to physical strength. Strength was to be obtained from rest and repose, not by filling the body with stimulants. When the labouring man had returned from his day's labour for his employer, if he took a wholesome meal, provided he were in good health, he would in about half an hour renovate his strength and be fit for work again, although he had been occupied all day; he was now speaking of course of the fair working day. The man might go to work for an hour and a half, or two hours, according to the time of year, and if he produced more in his garden than was required for the wants of the household, his wife might take the surplus to market, and thus procure the means of buying barley-meal, and saving part of the wages for the benefit of the family. There were, it must be admitted, two or three very serious evils connected with the allotment system. One evil was, that some proprietors charged too much rent for land let out in allotments. He had really felt quite ashamed sometimes, on asking labouring people how much they paid, when he heard their reply. He had not, indeed, told them it was too much, not wishing to do anything to create bad feelings in the community; but he made the inquiry because he felt deeply interested in what so much concerned the welfare of the labouring classes. He had heard of 18*d.* a pole being charged for what was

in fact nothing scarcely but common white sand; it formed part of land which had never been enclosed.

Mr. Mechi. That is 12*l.* an acre.

Dr. Ellis said he could mention a place where that rent had been charged. He hoped, for the sake of decency and justice, that it was not done generally. Whether, however, it were done only in a few instances or in many, they must all feel that it was a very serious matter to charge too high a rent for land cultivated by the labourer (hear, hear). Attempts on the part of clergymen or laymen to get an enormous rent for land was an enormous evil. Another evil was the allowing persons to have too much land. He had seen instances in which shoemakers, tailors, &c. had neglected their regular work in consequence of having to cultivate a large garden; and the result was that they suffered both ways—they lost their customers, and they were unable to pay their rent. Another and a most grievous evil was, that in many parishes—he believed in all the parishes in his own district—a considerable number of persons cultivated their allotments on Sunday. He had been exceedingly pained at witnessing this desecration.

Whoever was found spending any portion of that day in working on his land should forfeit his allotment.

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Mr. W. Gray (Courteen Hall, Northampton) said he had witnessed the satisfactory working of the allotment system in a parish in Huntingdonshire, where he had lived for some years. In referring to that parish, it was necessary for him to go back for a few years. No doubt many in that room well recollected the agricultural disturbances, as they were called, of 1830. At that period the burning of machines and cornstacks was the order of the day; and after the law of the land had quelled the disorder, it was considered necessary to do something to prevent a recurrence of it. Accordingly a meeting was convened, and it was there suggested that the allotment system might do something towards correctiug what was wrong. The parish was at that time rather notorious for badly-conducted labourers, and it was proverbially said in Huntingdonshire of any bad district, "It is as bad as the parish of Alconbury." The late Bishop of Durham, Dr. Maltby, happening to have some land contiguous to the parish, he offered it to the churchwardens, to be let out in allotments, and it was offered at the rate of 35*s.* per acre free from parochial charges. The applications were very numerous, and there was some difficulty in making a selection. The system soon got into working order; the men seemed pleased with their occupations, and it was delightful to observe what industry the system seemed to bring into the parish. He had heard strangers ask, "What are all those children doing "with their wheelbarrows?" There you would see twenty little children picking up manure, and it was not merely the value of the manure that was to be considered in such a case—the children were acquiring industrious habits. (Hear, hear). Well, the thing worked well, and there was a great improvement among the labouring population. He did not mean to say that that was the only means of regenerating the parish; the poor law of 1834 gave the finishing stroke. He himself left the parish, he believed, in 1835; but he kept up a connexion with it, and in visiting the parish he was very much pleased to witness the improvement which had taken place amongst the agricultural labourers. His having 20 poles of land set apart for his cultivation had taught the labourer that there was some one who cared for him; it had raised him in the scale of ambition, and it had given him ideas which he never had before. There you saw the man and his wife well dressed, and attending church with their children. *Moreover, the children were sent to school to a far greater extent than was the case previously. There was hardly anything, indeed, which had more struck him through life than this—that when once you had improved the condition of the labouring man you found him desirous of having his children educated.* (Hear, hear). Now, what was the result of all this? Why, he had no hesitation in saying that at present the parish of Aiconbury, the population of which was from 1,200 to 1,400, would bear comparison with most other parishes of the same kind. The men went round the district sweeping away the prizes for hedge-cutting, draining, and so on; and there could be no better proof of their usefulness as labourers. He would now come a little nearer home. The parish in which he resided at present all belonged to one proprietor. There the allotment system had been carried out also. The labourers paid 6*d.* a pole for land which was honestly worth the money (they paid no rates), and which was all fenced in drained. Collecting the rents, as he did, once a year, he had never had 6*d.* left unpaid. At Michaelmas he went round the allotments, and he saw one pig at least—in some cases there were two—in every sty. It was, he might remark, very soon discovered that if you gave a man an allotment you must also give him a pigsty, and hence pigsties were attached to all the allotments. He did not consider it essential that there should be white crops on allotments. In his own parish, indeed, labourers had no conveniences for growing such crops. The practice was to take one-third potatoes, one-third mangel wurzel, and one-third beans. The beans and the mangel fed the pig, and the potatoes the labourer and his family ate with the pig. He had always been an advocate for the allotment system; and from what he had seen of its working, he was convinced they could do nothing more likely to improve the agricultural labourer than the giving him a small quantity of land to cultivate. He thought 20 poles were sufficient. He had always been on his guard against letting the labourer have too much land. If they did that, they turned a good labourer into a bad farmer. When the labouring man had one or two acres of land he became powerless. He would mention a case which would serve to illustrate this. A noble duke, who was a very charitable man, was told by some labourers on his estate that, if he would let them each have an acre of land they could live upon it. The duke yielded to their request, but what was the result? Why, entire failure. One day he (Mr. Gray) went to one of the men on his allotment, and said to him, what was the fact, "Why, my man, you seem to have your land in "very poor condition." "Yes," was his reply, "I'm "beat sir—I can't do it" (hear, hear). They all know how much profit an acre of land will yield, and if a man were entirely dependent on it, the result could not be satisfactory.

Mr. R. T. Howell (Llanelly, Carmarthenshire) wished to bear testimony to the benefit which had been conferred on the labouring population of the district in which he resided by that which had been this evening termed the allotment system. He lived in a district which was partly agricultural, but mainly manufacturing; and he believed that nothing tended so much to the improvement of the condition and comfort of the working people there as the system of alloting small portions of land for cultivation. In that neighbourhood it was customary to let land on long leases for cottage building, but the quantity of garden ground attached was usually very small; and, not satisfied with this, the labourers obtained from agriculturalists and landowners in the neighbourhood an additional quantity—generally about 15 or 20 perches—which they cultivated in the manner which had been so ably described this evening by Mr. Trethewy. There were few only who grew wheat, barley, or other cereal crops, the general practice being to use the land for growing potatoes and vegetables. He knew of nothing which contributed so much to the happiness, comfort, and prosperity of the labouring community as garden cultivation. As regarded rent, his own experience was, that labourers looked not so much to the price of the land as to fixity of tenure. It was a common practice with farmers in his district to let out land in small allotments for a year, and to

resume the occupation of it after it had been benefited by the manure which had been carted at the expense of the labourer, who would thus derive only one crop. He felt sure that men would rather pay 4*l.*, or even 6*l.*, per acre with some certainty of longer tenure, than 20*s.*, or even 10*s.*, with the prospect of the farmer resuming the occupation of the land after it had been improved by cultivation.

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Mr. T. Stagg (of Grafton, Wilts) said, some allusion having been made to the price of land let out in allotments in the West of England, he wished to say a few words on that subject. He had happened to be a tenant of one of the largest landed proprietors in that part of the country, the Marquis of Aylesbury, and he knew that in his own parish land was let to labourers at less, rather than more, than he himself paid. Some of the best land on the marquis's estate was let at 10*s.* a rood. Mr. Williams had spoken of the fatting of two pigs on a quarter of an acre of land. He should like to know how that was done. (Hear, hear).

Mr. J. A. Williams wished to say one or two words in explanation. First, as regarded price, he would observe that he himself charged 15*s.* for a rood of land, taking the whole of the liabilities upon himself. He occasionally met with a defaulter.

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As to the fatting of two pigs, he did not mean to say that that was the rule, but, as their friend Mr. Mechi had made one of the best farms in Essex out of one of the worst, so the labourer might, partly from his own resources, and partly from other resources, be enabled to keep two pigs instead of one. Of this he was quite certain that the labourer who used his best endeavours to fat two pigs instead of one would be better able to fat two than others. The system of high farming, might, he believed, be carried out effectually on a small occupation, as it had been by Mr. Mechi, through the expenditure of a large sum on his farm.

Mr. Howell wished to make one additional observation. In his district labourers' houses had been built too much in rows and blocks. He advocated the building of detached houses, giving to each man his own separate allotment immediately contiguous to his house, especially in rural villages.

Mr. E. Little (Chippenham) said there were near 700 allotments on the estates with which he was connected, and in no instance did the rent exceed 2*l.* an acre. The system worked well in his part of the country wherever it had been adopted. One valuable rule which was carried out in reference to these allotments was, that the doing of any labour on Sunday excluded the occupier from further occupation (hear, hear). That was one of the conditions on which the land was held, and it was never violated (hear, hear).

Mr. Mechi. The 2*l.* included all charges?

Mr. Little. Yes.

The Chairman said he listened very attentively to the able paper read by Mr. Trethewy, a paper comprising almost everything that could be said in favour of the allotment system (hear, hear). He thought the carrying out of the allotment system depended in a very great degree upon landlords. Where cottages were situated on farms the labourer generally had an opportunity of increasing the quantity of garden ground if it were not sufficient, and the farmer of course took care not to let it be augmented beyond what was required for the necessities of the family. But where the labourers' cottages were situated in a village some distance from the farm, it rested solely with the proprietor of the soil to provide land for the convenience of those who had not a sufficient quantity attached to their dwellings. He happened to receive rent from about 70 labouring tenants; the rent charged had never exceeded 6*d.* a pole, the land being close to the village, some of the best land in the district, and being exempt from poor rates and all other charges. The rents were paid regularly and cheerfully; he did not remember a single defaulter. Speaking generally, he might say that the object of all present was, he presumed, to make the cottage home a scene of happiness, comfort, and contentment, and to give labourers an interest in their abodes; and he believed the labourer felt as much pleasure in walking up and down his allotment as they felt in walking round their farms (cheers).

Mr. Trethewy having briefly replied, on the motion of Mr. Little, seconded by Mr. Bennett, thanks were voted to him for the able manner in which he introduced the subject.

(*Referred to in* § 221 *of Report.*)

COMMUNICATION from the Right Honourable J. SOTHERON ESTCOURT to the Commissioners, in answer to questions numbered 1 to 7.

1. About the year 1795 the livelihood gained of old in the neighbourhood of Tetbury by women and children in carding wool died out. My grandfather, the principal landowner, having occasion to stub up overgrown gorse cover, hit upon a notion of letting it out to his neighbours; and after each had finished his quantum of the cover he was allowed to rent it as an occupation for himself, his wife, and children at odd hours. The field so let to the inhabitants of Newnton continues to be their ground still, and is in as good cultivation as any field in the village.

2. The quantity held by one individual does not exceed a quarter of an acre, except in some few exceptional cases.

3. I do not think our allotments have had any effect on wages. Almost all the labourers in the parish have an allotment. Many single women living alone have an allotment; all, indeed, except those who become disqualified by the receipt of parochial relief, which is, and always has been, a forfeiture of land. I do not think the farmers have ever used the allotment system as a means of getting work done more cheaply; they have no voice in the matter, nor ever have tried to interfere. The letting of an allotment rests entirely between the labourer and the landlord.

4. I never heard any complaints by farmers of the labourers expending their strength on their allotments; on the contrary our farmers see the moral good effects and approve the system. It might be otherwise if our allotments on an average exceeded a quarter of an acre.

5. There is no restriction as to growing corn. Most of our people grow corn in alternate years. There is no complaint about its encouraging pilfering.

6. The labourers value their allotments greatly. They are held to be equivalent in value to the rent of their cottage. They struggle hard to avoid giving them up, and are often helped by the farmers and others in that struggle. There never is a single case of nonpayment of rent, except where the man is about to give up his land altogether from poverty.

7. The moral effect is great. It encourages industry. It occupies time which might otherwise be given up to the alehouse. It excites emulation in point of cultivation, which is increased by a horticultural society and prizes. It helps a man to keep a pig. It makes him a man of visible substance, something above the bare level of servitude. It draws a *visible* line between those who are in receipt of relief, and those who are independent. It occupies children, and is altogether a family concern.

I have now answered briefly the questions. I will just add a remark or two.

1. The merit of the system depends on two things: One, that the amount of land shall not be enough to convert a man from a labourer to a little farmer.

The other, that the rule shall be at once and inevitably enforced which forfeits the land the moment relief (except medical aid) is applied for.

2. The transaction of letting, with the choice of persons who shall have land, must be in the same independent hands as the land let to farmers, namely, the hands, and absolute discretion of the landlord. A committee, or a society, or a vestry would be fatal, for the letting would then be jobbed, or supposed to be jobbed.

J. Sotheron Estcourt.

April 10, 1868.

Letter to the Commissioners from Captain Scobell, R.N., referred to in § 221 of Report.

Field gardens, or allotments, are as flourishing and healthy as in their youth, and remain one of my chief remaining objects in life. From 1831 to the present day I have constantly carried out this blessed link between classes, at a just rent, and under simple regulations.

I have around me my usual number of about 60 or 70 of these tenants, besides a smaller number in two more distinct parishes with which I am connected by property. They continue to occupy the exact same fields which, from manure, show no symptom of being tired of the cultivation. This is gratifying, as it was the only point I had originally some doubt upon.

The whole families, the wives and children, take part in this scene of industry. The first occupiers are, from age, mostly past away, but the vacancies are eagerly sought for as they arise by their successors, and the plan proceeds with a regularity and success unfailing.

For many of the early years of the system, public meetings were held annually in Bath and other places, and the example was productive of plenty of imitators in surrounding parishes. There is scarcely a county in the kingdom from which I did not, for many successive years, receive urgent applications for information, and in many of which the field garden plan I drew got a footing. By circulars to the clergymen I ascertained, at that time, that in this county alone it was established in above 200 parishes.

I have not unfrequently found, however, a tendency to charge a higher rent than should be, which is sure to disturb its beneficial effects on the minds of the tenants.

Let me now follow this outline of the physical working of the system by some remarks on its moral effects.

During the 37 years, in this parish of High Littleton not more than seven or eight of the tenants have been convicted of any crime at the assizes or quarter sessions, nor in the same period failed to pay their rent. Their general demeanour has been improved, and their frank civility strengthened. They feel, as it were, a new interest in the sun and air and the genial shower, and that they have now in their holdings something tangible and continuous to lose. Their estimation of them does not at all diminish. I believe if anything was to occur to terminate their occupations, it would thrill through the whole population, and be grieved over as a vast misfortune.

I would here observe that we have here no committee of management, and that the whole proceedings have been under my own eye, assisted only by one of the trusty tenants.

My rent has always been just that which the farmer pays for grass land for his cattle to feed on. This amounts usually from 3*d.* to 4*d.* per pole.

G. T. Scobell,
Feb. 12, 1868. Kingwell, near Bath.

Letters by the Rev. E. Moore to Mr. Stanhope on Allotments.

The Parsonage, Spalding,
Dear Mr. Stanhope, 26th Jan. 1868.

* * * I have let land in allotments of one rood each to labourers for the last 31 years in the villages near Spalding as well as in Spalding.

* * * * *

I can only now tell you we have about 21 acres in Spalding let in roods generally, but none in half-acres, to the poor at about 16*s.* a rood, and that it is very much prized by the poor.

In Weston St. Mary I let five acres in roods to labourers at 1*l.* a rood, and I pay rates, tithes, and taxes, and it is eagerly sought after.

In Whatlode Drove, another living I held for 30 years, I used to let during that time six acres in roods at 17*s.* a rood, which paid rates, tithes, and taxes, leaving the net rent about 15*s.* a rood. One of the tenants told me he cleared 7*l.* one year on one rood of this land by growing cabbage plants for sale.

Yours very truly,
Hon. E. Stanhope. Edwd. Moore.

The Parsonage, Spalding,
My dear Sir, 28th Jan. 1868.

In Spalding there are 25A. 3R. 36P. let to 91 poor men for averaging 15*s.* a rood each, seven of them occupy half an acre.

It so happens that I am one of the trustees in each case where land is let to the poor. They are most thankful for it. If we had as much more land to let in the same way it would be gladly taken by the poor.

The advantages to the poor are that they can grow their own vegetables and feed a pig. It employs their leisure hours—keeps them out of idle company and beer-shops. Gives them an interest in their Sunday walk, makes them thoughtful in the cultivation of their gardens, and is profitable to them. They teach their children too to work on the land.

I do not allow my tenants to work on their allotments on Sundays, except to gather vegetables before 9 o'clock a.m., nor on Good Friday, Ascension Day, nor Christmas Day, nor when they can obtain work elsewhere; nor do I allow the children to work on the allotments during school hours.

I require the rent to be paid punctually the first Monday in August for the current year, ending 6th April following; and the crop is not to be removed before the rent is paid.

These rules appear stringent, but I have found them work well for the last 30 years, during which time, in addition to this land, I have let more than five acres in Whatlode Drove, and and five acres in Weston St. Mary, two parishes of which I was incumbent, on similar terms and rent rather higher.

I am,
Yours very truly,
Hon. E. Stanhope. Edwd. Moore.

Communication to the Commissioners from F. G. Henley, Esq., on the Allotments at Cumnor, Berkshire.

Two fields are let out in allotments in this parish; the one belonging to a charity, the other to the vicar.

The allotments belonging to the charity are all in 20 pole pieces, and held both by tradesmen and labourers (the tradesmen here being very little better off than labourers).

The rent is 7*s.* each lot = 2*l.* 16*s.* the acre. There has been no difficulty in collecting it since the trustees made the rule of giving notice to leave the land if the rent was not paid to the day.

There is no rule as to the course of crops, it being supposed, that, as the tenants hold generally for life

they will do the best they can for the land; the usual course of cropping is either all potatoes (which some tenants grow year after year) or more often half corn and half potatoes. This will be the course of crops when there is a good garden attached to the cottage; when there is no garden, or only a small one, the land is cropped as a garden. The allotments are not held with the cottages; they are distant from the village about a quarter of a mile; but some of the tenants are one and two miles distant from their land.

The vicar's allotments are let out in lots from 20 poles to an acre. The acre lots are only let to tradesmen, gardeners, and men who have given up farmer's work.

The farmers' men generally hold 20 or 30 pole pieces; the piece-work men a rood or half an acre, The acre and half acre lots are allowed to be ploughed. but generally the acre lots alone are so.

The course of cropping, distance from houses, &c. is the same as in the charity allotments. I believe the value of allotments to the poor to be very great if too much land is not given to them. In this village nearly every family has one, but the families that have not are certainly not so well off.

To the young unmarried man the allotment is of great use, as it gives him employment in the evening, and so keeps him from mischief, and also leads him to be careful of his money. As to the size of allotments, I think that a piece-work man (one who never works, by the day for any regular master) can do half an acre well or even more.

A farmer's man, 30 poles or a rood, certainly not more. I am supposing in both cases that they have good gardens attached to their cottages.

The farmers generally do not wish their men to have more than 20 poles.

They think, if they have more, they will tire themselves, and so not work well in the day time, and also that they will be tempted to steal corn.

F. G. Henley.

Letter to the Commissioners from Sir P. Grey Egerton on the Half-time System.

28B., Albemarle Street,
Sir, July 9th, 1868.

In reply to your communication received this morning with reference to the conversation I had with Mr. Tufnell, the subject of the half-time system. I beg to say that I have tried it on a very small scale, but have found it answer admirably. Finding the boys leaving my school as soon as they could get employment with the farmers, viz., at about 12 years of age, I arranged to take six of them on to the farm and garden for half days at sixpence each, this being about the equivalent of what they would earn from a farmer for the whole day. They are divided into two gangs. One goes to school in the morning and to work after dinner, the other goes to work in the morning and to school in the evening. This arrangement continues for one week, and the next week they change places. I find the system very popular and the result is what I chiefly desired, namely, having the control over them till they are 14 years of age. They thus get a certain amount of schooling, and are also learning the trade they will follow in after life. The work they do is I think equivalent to the wages I pay them, and if they go into service they get higher wages than if they were ignorant of field work. I am about to take one boy into the stables on the same plan, and probably one into the house. I have now had three or four years' experience of the system, and find the results so satisfactory that I should be glad to see it tried on a larger scale. The difficulty of course would be to find persons willing to employ boys for the half days, but I think some of the well-disposed farmers might be willing to help in some districts. My school is too small to supply more boys than I now employ myself. I am not sure that I can give you any further information but shall be happy to answer any queries you may like to put to me.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
(Signed) P. Grey Egerton.

Letter from Mr. Ch. P. Tebbutt on the Half-time System, addressed to Mr. Charles J. Boyle, Assistant Commissioner.

Bluntisham, St. Ives, Huntingdonshire,
My dear Sir, November 26, 1867.

The question of the education of the children of agricultural labourers is no doubt a difficult one, and any measure for promoting it would require great care lest its restrictions should prove very injurious, but I don't think the difficulty is insuperable. Careful examination of the question and consideration of its practical bearings have convinced me that the *half-day*, or as it is sometimes called half-time, system is the true principle upon which to found any measure. By this I mean not the alternate plan, or one day work and one day school, nor half the whole year, but the half of *each day* to be work and the remaining half school.

There are three important points to be kept constantly in mind in considering this question, and although they are not of equal importance a good measure should in the main conform to the three following conditions:

1. It should cause as small a loss as possible of the present earnings of the children sought to be educated. This is very important, and I may add that many of the restrictions as to age, &c. which have been proposed would to my knowledge cause a loss in some cases of from one-fifth to one-fourth of the income of the family. It is of course a common thing to find families consisting of the father, mother, and five or six children, the two eldest children being girls under the age of twelve years. In this case in this neighbourhood the man's earnings will be from twelve to fifteen shillings a week and the two girls will probably add from four to five shillings a week on an average. To destroy this source of income is a most serious step to take, and would probably produce in such families not only physical suffering, but also social degradation.

2. It should interfere as little as possible with the interest of the farmers and employers of labour. This is a point of smaller importance, but still deserves careful consideration, especially as it would be difficult to carry out any measure which caused great and perhaps needless loss in this respect.

3. It should secure a reasonable and *continuous* course of teaching for the young with the smallest exercise of compulsion in relation to the parent consistent with securing the end proposed.

The plan that would in my view most fully solve the problem presented with these conditions would be the following:

To provide that no person shall be allowed to employ in labour any child under the above age beyond one o'clock in the day, except during two months in the year, when all restriction as to labour shall cease.

It will be seen that I make no provision for restraining entirely labour up to a given age. This provision I believe would not be required under a half-day system, and in any case it is a most clumsy and uncertain way of dealing with the matter. Some children at the age of ten years are physically as capable for labour as others at twelve, and broadly I venture to state that no limit would be needed if only half the day is allowed for work. *With this restriction*, the matter may I think be safely left to be settled by the interests of the parent and the employer.

As to the first condition laid down above, I believe the half-day system would cause the least possible loss of earnings. Some loss must be in any case incurred, but the first half of the day is by far the most valuable for children's labour to the employer, and the extra demand for labour which must arise, and the superior power of work in children not wearied out by a full day's labour would reduce the loss to a minimum.

As to the second condition, I think the employer would lose less by this plan than any other. As already stated much more than half a day's work would be done before one o'clock, and in this neighbourhood the work for which boys are specially required in morning and not afternoon work. I once introduced this matter at the St. Ives' board of guardians, when Mr. Bowyer, the inspector of schools, was present, and several large and intelligent farmers present joined me in stating that the afternoon labour of young children, especially boys, is not of great value, except during haytime and harvest, which would be of course provided for by the exemption of two months in the year from all restriction which forms part of my proposal. Of course some inconvenience would arise, and no doubt many farmers would state this if asked; but here again I think the minimum of loss would be attained.

As to the third and most important condition stated, I believe that the half-day plan is ABSOLUTELY the best possible plan for the training of the children of agricultural labourers, and far better even than total stoppage of work, and school all day. The time allowed for school would be sufficient for a fair and, above all, continuous course of education, while the work done, without being too long continued and wearisome, would be, *as it must be remembered it is now*, a most valuable industrial training for children that have to get their living by the use of their hands and the sweat of their brow.

I may add that almost all the difficulties of the gang system, private or public, would disappear under the operation of the half-day system. It would then not pay to take children far from home, and they would only be employed, as they only ought to be, in reasonable proximity with their dwellings. The moral evils of the gang would almost vanish if children were brought home in the middle of the day, and not allowed, as now, a "mixed multitude," oftentimes in the darkness of an early winter's evening, and the habit of cleaning and preparing for school each day would undoubtedly have a tendency to create and maintain those habits of decency and propriety which it is so important to spread and preserve among the children of all classes in the community.

I am quite prepared for many objections, and have often met them in discussing this plan, but I am convinced of its soundness, and twenty years' experience as a farmer has given me confidence in my view as to its practical bearing.

Of course with the above plan, completely unsectarian schools, or schools with a carefully drawn conscience clause must be presumed to exist. This part of the matter however I do not wish to discuss in any detail.

Yours faithfully,

Ch. J. Boyle, Esq. CHAS. P. TEBBUTT.

LETTER from Mr. CHARLES PAGET to the Hon. E. STANHOPE.

Ruddington Grange,
March 6, 1868.

DEAR MR. STANHOPE,

YOU ask if I have any observations to make in addition to my previous statements, respecting the "half-time system of education in Rural Districts." In reply, I would say that in 1858 I took into my employment two boys who could not read, and I found that they made no satisfactory progress at school; I therefore dismissed them, this being the only case of my doing so; and I find no difficulty in carrying out the rule to admit none to the benefit of the system who cannot read tolerably. At that time only 50 per cent. of the children in the village could read to any good purpose at 9 years, but the attention which has been called to their deficiencies has raised the percentage to 80 without any increase of educational machinery, and I look for progressive improvement in this respect.

I also wish to say emphatically that the system costs me nothing; that on the other haud, I believe I gain by it as a farmer, for, on any day when I want more boys to drive carts, I inform the schoolmaster and retain them on the farm, and I only pay them for the time they are at work, and at no higher rate than other employers in the village. I have ascertained that the average attendance at school of my boys is 90.7 days in the year, so that, taking 110 days as the half of the usual 220, I keep them from school (on days fixed for school) an average of 19 days in the year for the purposes of the farm.

I have never any difficulty in replacing the boys when there is a vacancy. Their general success in life is perhaps one reason why parents are anxious to make their children half-timers. Not one has gone wrong, and the parents express themselves much more than satisfied with the plan when they compare those of their children who have enjoyed it with the others who have not. This result does not arise from any exertion of my influence; when applied to I have given a just character, and have done no more.

What you have yourself seen, together with the inclosed letters recently written by the boys, will, I trust, satisfy you of the value of the education, and I am quite convinced that on no other plan can they contribute so much to the labour of the country and to their own support, while they secure for themselves a fair education.

The boys begin to work with me when they enter their 10th year. In that year their labours are very light, but they accustom themselves to horses and out-of-doors employment. They continue to advance in usefulness, and in their twelfth and thirteenth they are worth much more than boys of the same age who have just left school.

Examinations which I have made enable me to say that the education of my boys at 13 years of age is far better on an average than that of boys who have attended school without work up to 12 years, and at 13 my boys have worked for me 840 days, while those leaving school at 12 will only have worked 300.

Assuming that an adequate education is essential, it will be secured by alternate attendance on the school and the farm with short intervals, at the least cost to the parent and the least inconvenience to the farmer, and experience shows me that the boy is well prepared in this way for the battle of life.

I would suggest:—

1st, that, previous to a boy's being permitted to work for a farmer, he should receive a certificate that he can read tolerably, by which I understand that he should read ordinary words of two syllables without hesitation.

2nd, that boys of nine years old and less than 13 should be required to attend 90 days in each year at school.

3rd, that eight days' attendance should be in each of nine months, and that the remaining 18 days should be in any month when the school is open which the farmer may find convenient.

If the time were absolutely fixed by law it would press very hardly upon many districts; for the times at which the work of boys is required vary much in different countries. In the South I hear they think that the boys might go to school in the winter alone, but here the winter is the season in which their services are most required.

Yours truly,

CHARLES PAGET.

NOTE by Mr. EDWARD STANHOPE (Assistant Commissioner).—Ruddington, Jan. 1868.

MR. Paget's farm is one mile from Ruddington and four from Nottingham; labour cannot be obtained from the latter, but is rather attracted there by the high rates of wages.

There are six boys employed; each set of three attends school on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday in one week, and on Tuesday and Thursday in the next, so that they all go through the usual weekly school course once a fortnight. This system is suspended during harvest and at other very busy times.

Mr. Barker, a farmer at Ruddington, has adopted the system and approves it; and as a proof that the labouring class see its advantages, some of the stockingers' families have adopted it, though in a much more irregular way. In these cases the children attend school when they can, but their total attendance is about the same as that of Mr. Paget's boys, viz., 90 days in the year.

As to the amount of education acquired by these children, it appears to me to be amply sufficient; and the work of the half-timers compares very fairly with that of the whole-timers.

BENEFIT SOCIETIES.

EXTRACTS FROM THE "JOURNAL OF THE FARMERS' CLUB." Meeting of November 4th 1867.

The Chairman, Mr. E. Little, said,—

* * * "In former days the more far-seeing of the labouring classes, looking forward with dread to the evening of life, when they would have to rely on the workhouse, or, in other words, public charity, led them to make provision for the necessities of old age; hence the origin of benefit societies. It is highly creditable to the working classes to find, from a recent return, that one out of every nine of the population is a member of such a society." * * *

"But the poor man's sheet anchor, maintenance during illness, coupled with a sum at death, is not yet permitted to secure him in the storms of this life by its hold on the Post Office. Such permission might, and it will not be difficult to show ought, if beneficial legislation is persisted in, to be given. Farm labourers should have the opportunity afforded them of investing their club payments in securing sums during sickness, payable weekly for a term of months, of about three-fourths of their ordinary wages when they are able to work. We may safely leave it to his own option to insure as much as he likes in the way of burial money and annuity, both these last classes being already offered to the public, and not I fear meeting with the attention they deserve, by means of the Post Office. Now every country postmaster knows the common run of farm labourers' earnings in his neighbourhood, and would thus assist the authorities to fix the maximum sickness provision given at his office. To this I add that from knowledge of agency management in a large friendly society the ordinary village postmaster will soon make a most efficient and trustworthy agent. The advantages of such a system of friendly societies throughout the country it would seem difficult to overrate. Every able-bodied farm labourer would slowly but surely discover that, if he pleased, he might go to the nearest post office instead of the nearest public house, and *at a somewhat less cost in money obtain a better provision* than the combined resources of the sharing-out club and the poor rates put together can give him." * * *

Mr. J. Sydney, Islington. "It was plain to him, and he thought it must be clear to all present that no reform of agricultural labourers' friendly societies would ever come from the agricultural labourers themselves; that until the farmers, who were the employers of the labourers, and the resident gentry of the district in which these societies existed thought it worth their while to take an earnest, active interest in them, there was not the least likelihood that uneducated men would change from the agreeable and ruinous principle which was commonly adopted at present to the sounder and more useful, though duller, system on which some of the newer friendly societies were founded. What he wished to impress upon the club in his humble way was, that those who stood on the outside took a very different view from those who stood on the inside; that those who were not farmers, and not employers of labour, and not representatives of those who knew labourers in old times, could not see things quite in the same light as those who seemed to consider it quite natural that the labourer should work as long as he had sufficient strength, and should become a pauper towards the end of his life." * * * Mr. Howard had told them, too, that by far the larger number of societies were so conducted that when the agricultural labourer came to want assistance he was put for a short time on what was called whole pay, then on half pay, then on quarter pay, and that he afterwards became a parish pauper. Now he (Mr. Sydney) wanted to know whether that was a wholesome or healthy state of things. He did not wish to blame any one for it, but it was a notorious fact that the most that could happen at present to the great body of agricultural labourers who belonged to friendly societies was that when they needed help they would get a dole of 5*s.* or 6*s.* a week, to be reduced after a time to 2*s.* 6*d.* If they got such an allowance they thought themselves remarkably well off, and if they did not get it they went to the parish. This was so natural a course of things, that it was made a charge against the board of guardians that they did not assist those who were members of friendly societies."

Mr. C. Howard observed that only a single instance had been mentioned.

Mr. J. Sydney. Well if it were only a single instance, it appeared that, as a general rule, guardians gave relief to those who had subscribed to these societies; and if that were so it proved his case, which was that those who subscribed ultimately went to the parish. (Hear, hear.) Surely it was a most unsatisfactory state of things that one of the most numerous classes of labourers in this kingdom should have to go to the workhouse at the close of their lives. They must all admit that anything which would tend to put an end to such a state of things was well worthy of attention. He was not one of those who imagined that that state of things could be altered by Act of Parliament; but Mr. Charles Howard had sketched good friendly societies in such a way as to afford good reasons for believing that if societies generally held their meetings at schoolrooms instead of public houses, and were supported by different classes of society connected with agriculture, the labourer, instead of getting hardly enough to keep body and soul together, would be entitled at the end of his days to such a sum as would be sufficient to support him comfortably. (Hear, hear.) He knew that he might place himself in an unpleasant position by suggesting that something more might be done for the agricultural labourer than had been done. (Laughter.) He did not indeed expect the evil to be remedied this year or next year; but of this he felt certain, that if the employers of labour would interest themselves in efforts to put friendly societies on a better footing they could be put on a better footing; and he would add that if they were not placed on a better footing it might be an exceedingly dangerous thing that men who had learnt to read and write should read that they had nothing to look forward to in old age but the workhouse. It was the interest of every man who had a shilling invested, that they labourers generally should be raised to a position in which they would be enabled to help themselves; for without that, they might

depend upon it, labourers would prove very dangerous to society." (Hear, hear.)

Mr. John Everitt (Kingswood Lodge, Norwood), said, * * " He thought a declaration should go forth from that club that agricultural labourers were entitled to the countenance, assistance, and co-operation of the farmers and landowners for their protection and benefit in reference to those matters. They must all be delighted if something effectual could be done for the poorer homes of their beloved land. Although he had been chairman of a board of guardians for many years, and felt deeply interested in the condition of the labourers around him, yet he must confess that up to that evening he had no idea of the amount of good which might be done by means of properly managed benefit societies. His mind had never before been so much stirred up on this subject. The facts laid before them were, however, undeniable, and he thought they would all incur a deep responsibility if they did not endeavour to turn them to good account in their respective localities. He thought, indeed, it would be well to pass a resolution, short, pithy, and to the point, impressing upon farmers and landowners generally the desirableness of their energetically endeavouring to bring about, by means of benefit societies a state of things which would tend to make labourers and their families happy and comfortable, and to secure what all must desire to see, an improved state of things for the labourer in old age.

Mr. J. A. Williams (Baydon Hungerford) said that,

* * * " In the Wilts county society the members, by paying a certain sum monthly, could secure the object in view. If they came into that county they would find Mr. Sotheron Estcourt, who could never be sufficiently praised for the good which he had conferred, filling the capacity of father of the club. It had taken years to establish that club, but it now extended throughout the county; and he thought he might safely say that with a fund of 26,000*l.* in hand, and proper management, there was that to which every member might look, to be secured against want to the end of his days. There was no pauperism attached to that society. It was the bringing everything under proper management, and the getting the farmers and gentry to unite with the labourers, which had made the society so successful. Tent meetings were held in the several parishes throughout the summer; there were branch parochial societies throughout the county, and the greatest benefit was conferred at the least possible expense. The clergy, the gentry, the farmers, and the labourers met one day in the year, and after a good dinner of roast beef and plum pudding all went forth for the eveniug to enjoy themselves. That society united all classes together, and there was no danger of the labourer being pauperised by it (hear, hear), as the fund was sufficient to meet every demand. But the farmers had to beat down against the prejudices of the labourers. Many labourers liked to spend the threepence, and they did not mind spending sixpence (laughter), and Mr. Howard very justly described them as drinking till they did not know what they were doing."

The Chairman said that he

* * * " held in his hand the report of the society for the last year. It was entitled the 'Report of the 'Wiltshire Friendly Society for the year 1866,' and the society was stated to have been established in 1828 'for the purpose of relieving and maintaining 'such of its members as may be disabled from work 'by sickness, accident or old age; for providing a 'sum to be paid on the death of a member, and en-'dowing or apprenticing young persons.' The society was instituted and presided over by that excellent man Mr. Sotheron Estcourt, who was obliged to retire from its management, as well as the representation of North Wiltshire in Parliament, in consequence of ill health. The number of members at the time the report was issued was 6,394, and the amount of capital invested 27,726*l.* 19*s.* 3*d.* There were ninety-six branches scattered over the county, and they were supported by the clergy, gentry, and agriculturists of their respective districts. Once a year, as Mr. Williams had intimated, there was a day spent in a happy gathering of the respective branches, and of all who were interested in the object, under the auspices of the president, or in his unavoidable absence of some gentlemen of influence in the locality, who represented him. He would not enter into any details now, but he must add that the contributions of the benefit members for the last year amounted to 4,050*l.* 13*s.*, and the subscriptions of honorary members to 340*l.* Thus, it would be seen something like 15 per cent. of the total income was paid by honorary members, a fact which showed the great interest taken the society by farmers, the clergy, and the gentry. There was no benefit society in the country so well managed. It had its auditors and its local committees throughout the county; the meetings were not held, like those of the old societies, in public houses; and he hoped that ere long no meetings of socities of that kind would be held in public houses." (Hear, hear.)

LABOURERS' COTTAGES.

On Mr. Nicoll's mode of constructing Cottages; see § 336 of Report.

Mr. Samuel Sharp.

(Examined by Mr. Tremenheere, May 11—August 8, 1868.)

1. I am an architect. I have had considerable experience in building cottages for the labouring poor. The great difficulty hitherto in supplying adequate cottage accommodation for the poor has been the expense. Cottages having the amount of accommodation desirable for all the purposes of health and convenience can scarcely ever be built at a cost which will allow of a proper interest for the outlay from the ordinary cottage rents. In rare cases, where materials and labour are very cheap, and where there are other exceptional circumstances, such as where gentlemen make their own bricks and use up their own timber in their own carpenter's yard, it may be done; but in those latter cases the builder's profit is not charged at all, and the real cost is often not strictly calculated; carriage of materials, for instance, is apt to be left out of the account. The cottages erected by speculative builders near towns or villages are not usually designed for single families of agricultural labourers; two families generally occupy them in order to afford the return on the outlay that the speculative builder requires, namely, 15 to 25 per cent., and they are often built of the worst materials and in the worst manner of construction, *i.e.*, with very cramped and insufficient accommodation, and no attempt at satisfying sanitary requirements. I have long desired to meet with some method of construction which would enable cottages to be built on the best known sanitary principles, and to pay to the proprietor a full and fair interest on his outlay from the ordinary cottage rents.

2. With a view to this, I was led to study buildings constructed of concrete. By concrete I mean, wherever I use the term, gravel, broken stone, burnt clay, or any other hard material, mixed in due proportion with the best Portland cement. It is necessary to keep in mind the fact that the concrete I speak of is made solely with Portland cement, which is by far the strongest of all cements, and incomparably stronger than any lime, with which alone concrete used formerly to be made. I found that walls made of concrete formed with the best Portland cement could be built in every part of the country, especially in the great agricultural districts, for one-half the cost of brick or stone, and that the advantages in favour of this concrete

were, much greater strength, greater resistance to damp, and very great facilities for carrying out sanitary measures, *i.e.*, ventilation and the carrying off of water; and that with regard to the floors and the roofs formed of iron joists and concrete slabs, they were made for two-thirds the cost of the ordinary floors and roofs of timber and tiles or slate. Such buildings had the further advantage of being more slow conductors of heat and cold, and also of being fireproof.

3. I prepared some plans of building on this system about two years ago. These plans were laid before the meeting of the Social Science Association at Manchester in 1867.

4. The saving of cost resulting from that mode of construction is exhibited by the following examples. In the neighbourhood of London and other large towns the ordinary cost of cottages is 5½*d.* per cubic foot of contents of building; the cost of this mode of construction is 3*d.* At the Paris Exhibition several plans of modes of construction were exhibited. I went to Paris at Mr. Chadwick's request to examine those plans and modes of construction, and I ascertained that the cost of the plan for labourer's dwellings which got the first prize was 5½*d.* The next one for Paris was 4*d.* The third for artisans in Mulhouse was 3*d.* per foot of cubical contents, but this latter was formed of chalk and lime, and was very porous. The particulars of these plans were given in the report of Mr. Chadwick on labourers' dwellings, made by him as juror to the English Commissioners.

5. In the course of my inquiries as to modes of construction by concrete I heard, about two years ago, of the invention of Mr. Benjamin Nicoll. On investigating this method of construction I found in it principles which were of the utmost importance in reference especially to cottages for agricultural labourers, but it is equally applicable to many other kinds of building; and since that period I have been greatly engaged, in conjunction with Mr. Nicoll, in perfecting his plans, which have been for some months fully complete, and which have been acted upon with the greatest success. There is no doubt that by Mr. Nicoll's mode of building, cottages for the agricultural labourer, and many other species of buildings required for agricultural and other purposes in the country, can be erected in the strongest and most durable manner, at a very reduced cost as compared with the ordinary modes of building.

6. The principle of Mr. Nicoll's invention is this:—

A layer of straw, 8 to 10 feet long by 3 to 4 feet wide and 3 inches thick, is placed upon a long moveable table, attached to a large sewing machine; the table when set in motion brings the straw under pressure, which reduces its thickness to an inch and a half.

7. As the straw comes through the pressing apparatus it is firmly sewn together by the needles of the sewing machine, with stitches about 2 inches apart.

8. The ragged edges of the straw are then cut off, to bring it to correspond with the dimensions of the one-inch angle-iron frame in which it is to be placed,—say to 9 feet by 3 feet.

9. Iron bars, ⅜ of an inch thick by ½ an inch broad, are inserted into the cut edge of one of the sides and passed through, at from 8 to 12 inches apart, and the whole is then laid in the angle-iron frame, which is perforated with holes to receive the ends of the iron bars. These are then cold-welded, by a few blows of a hammer, into the frame.

10. The one-inch angle-iron frame, strengthened at every 8 or 12 inches by the iron bars, and comprising the fabric of compressed straw an inch and a half thick, is then laid in a trough containing a mixture to render the straw fireproof, and with which the straw is saturated in the course of a few minutes. Several of the frames thus treated are laid upon one another until they make a pile of 10 to 20. Hydraulic or other pressure is then brought to bear upon them, and they are each compressed into the thickness of one inch, being that of the angle-iron.

11. The frames are then dried, and this, if done with hot air, would take from 10 to 15 minutes.

12. Each frame is then placed again in a shallow trough, and a boiling mixture, consisting of small gravel or crushed stone and just enough asphalte to hold it together, with a little chalk to destroy the inflammability of the asphalte, is poured upon it,—on one side first and then on the other,—and evenly spread by a small hand machine, adding about a quarter of an inch of thickness to each side. The asphalte we use is either Seyssel or other natural bitumen, the property of which, when mixed as we mix it with gravel, is that it becomes totally unaffected by alternations in temperature. [This is the description given in a report upon it which appeared in the "Building News" of June 12th, 1868, p. 391.]

13. It thus becomes a solid slab about an inch and a half in thickness, composed of the interior layer of straw compressed to one inch (the thickness of the angle iron) and of half an inch of asphalte concrete; and in this state is ready to go to the builder.

14. The process of building is as follows:—The foundation of, say, a cottage, having been dug out, and a wall of cement-concrete raised 6 or 12 inches, or more if required, above the ground line, an iron skeleton frame of the cottage to be built, made of inch and a half to three inch angle iron, according to the size of the intended building, is then laid upon and firmly imbedded in the concrete foundation. This skeleton iron frame consists of uprights at the angles and all the meeting portion of the division walls embedded firmly as just described in the foundation of concrete; of crossties; and of the joists for the upper floors, and the purlins for the roof.

15. The slabs as above described are then placed between the up-rights, on a shoe of concrete resting upon the foundation, and are then screwed to the uprights and to each other. As they are only three feet wide each, there is thus formed a double thickness of angle-iron at every three feet of wall space, giving, with the slab that it encloses, immense strength and firmness. The top portion of the shoe of concrete is lined with a layer of asphalte, so as effectually to prevent any damp rising into the slab.

16. All the frames to compose the building, including the roof, are thus consecutively screwed together.

17. The slabs for the roof are of an uniform size, 8 feet by 2 feet, and the iron bars are inserted across at every 8 inches. The purlins for the support of the slabs of the roof are of rolled angle-iron like the frames, and are only 4 feet apart. The roof is therefore very strong.

18. The next process is to cover the external walls and the roof with a layer of concrete formed of small gravel or crushed stone (of the size of peas or beans), or of burnt clay, whichever may be most conveniently obtained on the spot, and the best Portland cement, in the proportion of one of cement to six of the hard material. The thickness of this external layer is not required for ordinary cottage buildings to be more than one inch for the walls and half an inch for the roof. The heat of the sun does not affect it. We have submitted one of these slabs to a strong fire, resting it on a support of brickwork a foot high, and igniting a quantity of wood placed under it. We placed at the same time a square of bricks in a similar position. The heat very soon penetrated it, and the upper surface became too hot to touch, while the upper surface of the slab was only warm. The slabs are equally unaffected by frost. From the extreme strength of the material, when properly made and mixed, whatever contraction or expansion may take place does not injure it. The proof is seen everywhere in London where thin coatings of Portland cement and sand are used for external surfaces and ornamental work. Builders expose them with perfect confidence both to cold and heat. The small gravel or broken stone which we use for external work with only the proper proportion of the best Portland cement to hold it together presents a still

greater power of resistance to heat or cold. One inch for the walls and half an inch for the roof of this external layer of concrete is sufficient, but it may be increased if desired. When this is dry, which in fine weather it will be in 24 hours, it is washed over with a coat consisting of a magnesian preparation and powdered flint, which gives extreme hardness to the surface, in addition to the well-known hardness and durability of concrete formed of good Portland cement well mixed. Any colouring matter, with the exception of blue which the preparation of magnesium destroys, can be mixed with the wash, to give a tint to both walls and roof.

19. The interior surfaces of the external walls and the partition walls are then covered with a layer either of Portland cement concrete half an inch thick, or, what is cheaper, with "Scott's" cement (which is a preparation of lime) and chalk, where chalk is to be had. This interior surface is also brushed over with the mixture of magnesium and flint above described, and is thus rendered washable—a very material point in reference to the doing away with infection; and also, being capable of being tinted as already stated, it saves the expense of occasional whitewashing or colouring.

20. The floors are formed thus: squares of wood, 6 inches by 6, and $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick, are laid side by side in a frame, composing together a block two feet square; upon this is poured a boiling mixture of asphalte and stone of the same kind as above-mentioned for the slabs (§ 12); they are then squeezed together by screw-bolts passing through the frame, and left to cool, when they are found to adhere perfectly and to form one block. These blocks even when laid, with the asphalte downwards, immediately upon the soil, form a solid and complete floor, as they are entirely damp-proof; but if preferred they can be laid on gravel or a slight layer of cement concrete. The wood used is thoroughly dried or seasoned, so as not to yield to moisture or heat.

21. The squares of wood previously to being used, are placed in a solution of soda, with which the wood becomes saturated in about 12 hours, and is then so nearly fireproof that it will only char.

22. Altogether, therefore, a cottage built in this manner becomes practically fireproof.

23. Of the durability of a building so constructed there can be no doubt.

24. First, with regard to the preservation of the iron and the straw.

25. The iron is effectually protected by a preparation with which every piece is first washed over and which prevents rust. Next all the iron in the slabs and in the skeleton frame is imbedded in the asphalte and concrete so that it is entirely excluded from the damp and wet. Further, felt saturated with the best Stockholm tar is interposed between each piece of angle-iron where they are screwed together. The few portions of the iron which are visible are the lower portions of the rolled iron rafters that support the floors and roof; these are painted, and can be always looked to and cared for like iron-work in any other building.

26. The straw is equally well protected, first, by the solution of lime and silicate of soda, which makes it uninflammable; next by the great compression to which it is subject; and then by its being entirely covered with the coatings of asphalte and concrete, and thus effectually excluded from the external air.

27. Then, as to the durability of the concrete. The concrete used by Mr. Nicoll is formed either of burnt clay, or gravel, or crushed stone, or any other hard material, and of the best Portland cement, in proportions of six of the former to one of the latter. The qualities of Portland cement are well known; it is composed of burnt clay and well calcined lime. Its history and composition are well described by Colonel Scott, of the South Kensington Museum, in two essays, published among the Professional Papers of the Royal Engineers (Vol. XI., 1862), and by Mr. John Grant, in a paper read by him at the Institution of Civil Engineers, in 1866. There are no higher authorities on the subject of Portland cement than those two gentlemen. Both give the results of interesting and careful experiments on the strength of Portland cement, which are very remarkable. The tables in which its powers of resistance to transverse strain, and to tearing and crushing force, are shown, as compared with other cements and with various kinds of stone, exhibit very clearly it immense superiority. The thinness, therefore, of Mr. Nicoll's concrete slabs forms no objection to them in regard to their strength and durability. For cottages and houses two or three stories high the three-inch slabs are amply sufficient. The strength of the thinnest that has yet been erected, namely, that of a small policeman's lodge at the entrance into the grounds of the South Kensington Museum in Prince's Gate, close to the new buildings which are now being erected with an exterior of brick and terra-cotta facings, was shown by the following accident which occurred to it soon after it was erected about two years ago. It is only an inch and a half thick. Just after it was finished a waggon was coming in with a load of iron joists. In taking a turn it drove the iron centre clasp of the folding door of the gate against the wall of the cottage with great force. One of the superintendents who saw it, said that if the lodge had been built of nine-inch brick wall the blow would have brought it all down; as it was it simply indented the slab. The portion displaced was forced back again by the workmen, and the concrete surface was restored, so that the injury was repaired in a few minutes, and at a merely nominal cost. The angle-iron, the cross-iron bars of the frame, and the cement together, form a construction of such solidity that one-inch angle-iron is quite sufficient for all ordinary purposes, especially as, when the frames are screwed together, the inch angle-iron becomes double. The frames are also held together by the uprights at every angle, and by the cross-ties at the foot of the roof. The whole plan of the construction becomes similar to that of an iron ship; the theory of the construction is perfectly the same.

28. The policeman's lodge above mentioned is only referred to as a proof of the structural strength of the slabs. The material of the external and internal surfaces there is sand and cement, which is much inferior to the gravel and cement which we use now; and it was put up by labourers new to the work, and consequently shows several marks of imperfect workmanship in exfoliations and cracks.

29. In regard to the durability of the external surface of the slabs as we now make them, not only is that manifest from the nature and qualities of the Portland cement, but it is further assisted by our giving it a wash of the magnesian preparation and flint already mentioned, which we have adopted mainly for the sake of applying agreeable tints and to make the surface washable, and not with especial reference to increasing the durability. This, however, it does by its power of resisting frost and heat, which we have tested by experiments; and it throws off wet like glass. The first account of this solution was given in a paper read to the Académie des Sciences by M. Sorel during the Exhibition at Paris last autumn. A washable internal surface can also be produced at a reasonable cost, and quite durable, by a mixture of three parts of chalk, well dried in a kiln, with two parts of "Scott's" cement, very recently suggested by Colonel Scott, as the result of experiments made several years ago. Such a mixture, although washable, is not open to the objection that it would precipitate moisture. The wall is never cold enough to cause condensation, the layer of straw keeping it at an even temperature; also our mode of supplying warm air to the rooms would in itself prevent the walls ever getting cold enough to precipitate moisture.

30. In using concrete it is a matter of the first importance that the Portland cement and the burnt clay, or other material used should be properly mixed toge-

ther. The neglect of this has often led to objections to the use of concrete. It is indispensable to the proper formation of concrete that every particle of the hard material used should be brought into contact with and coated by the cement. The ordinary mode of mixing it is by hand. The proportions required are usually given to the labourers under the superintendence of a trustworthy person; but notwithstanding all ordinary care, the exact mixture of six to one, or eight or more to one, as the case may be, can hardly ever be thoroughly obtained. Since many bushels are mixed together at once by turning the mass over with a shovel, some portions are very apt to have more than their due share of the cement and others less; thence inequality in the strength, and liability to crumbling or crushing. The only security for producing cement-concrete that can be depended on for our purposes is that the mixing should be done by machinery. Mr. Nicoll has perfected machinery by which the hard materials are crushed to the desired size; from the crusher it passes into a lower box, and the cement is at the same time effectually mixed with it in the required proportion; also the necessary quantity of water is added and no more, which is a matter of considerable importance. The machinery can be adjusted to crush to any size required,—the larger sizes being for the external coats, and the finer for the internal. The machinery is easily transportable, the whole, together with the moulds for fire-places, flues, &c., which are made of concrete, not more than filling a conveyance capable of being drawn by one horse. For the moving power of the machinery one man is required, and another is wanted to attend upon the boxes in which the materials are placed in their right proportions.

31. Although the slabs are only three inches thick, it is remarkable that a building made of them is both warmer in winter and cooler in summer to a very great extent than ordinary brick buildings This arises from the slow conduction of heat by the layer of compressed straw. These points have been fully proved at the lodge at South Kensington, and also at the houses erected on Mr. Nicoll's plan at New Hampton and Twickenham.

32. The great object in the construction of cottages being to reduce the expense consistently with all due regard to health and comfort, Mr. Nicoll and I have turned our attention to several of the minor details in the fitting up of a cottage.

33. First, in regard to the doors and windows. In the interior fittings generally we have sought to avoid as much as possible the necessity of carpentering and joinering. The little woodwork which will be required in Mr. Nicoll's houses will be completed in his own factory, and sent down at the same time with the slabs and the machinery to the locality where houses or cottages on his plan are ordered, unless the landowner wishes to use his own wood or to employ his own men, or doors and windows can be bought cheaper.

34. The doors are constructed of a frame of angle-iron, the panels being formed of small slabs of wood set diagonally and bolted to the angle-iron. This produces a door both light and strong and of pleasing appearance, the bolt heads affording a species of ornament round the door. The casing to the door is also of angle-iron. This construction does away with all mortice and tenon work and dovetailing, effecting a saving in the cost of each door.

35. The window casings are made of angle-iron, similarly to the door frames. The interior portion of the frame of the window, to hold the glass, is made also of angle-iron; the exterior portion will be of zinc. A thin layer of felt is interposed between the outer portion of the frame and the glass; these are attached to the inner frame by screws. The felt allows for any expansion or contraction of the glass or iron, and does away with all necessity for the use of putty. We shall also have little need for any glazier's work. It is proposed that the glass should be manufactured in sizes—panes of about a foot square; so that if a pane should be broken it can be unscrewed, and the occupant can replace it with a new pane. It is proposed also that the glass should be at least a quarter of an inch thick. Such glass would be difficult to break, and being of such thickness would greatly lessen the radiation of warmth from within and obstruct the entrance of cold from without. It will probably cost about 6*d.* a foot square. We propose also that the upper panes should be tinted or ground. We have reason to believe that we shall be able to obtain this glass, when manufactured on a large scale, at a very reasonable rate; and taking into account the diminution of breakage, and the smaller cost of replacing any broken pane, the result would be in favour of the thick glass, even if its first cost was somewhat more.

36. The mode of hanging which we adopt is either by the open casemate on the French plan, or by sliding sashes, so that we get rid of the sash cords (which are a frequent cause of expense and trouble), and produce a very great saving of carpenters' and joiners' work in the construction of the windows.

37. There is also another important reason why we use iron as much as possible instead of wood. When wood is in juxtaposition with cement it is apt, unless unusually well seasoned, to crack the cement by expanding with wet or damp, as is seen in the concrete lodges on the south side of the South Kensington Museum. If we used wood at all in our doors or windows we interpose a strip of metal between it and the cement.

38. The fire-places or flues are constructed of concrete. We do not build them of concrete blocks, as is the common way, but we prepare a wooden frame into which the concrete is poured. When it is set the framework is taken out, and the main work is done. It is a rapid and effectual way of making both the fire-places and the chimney flues. The exposed surfaces of the fire-places are then covered with a thin coating of finer concrete to give it a face, which, like the walls, can be coloured to any tint with our magnesian preparation. The chimney pieces are also of concrete.

39. Our mode of constructing the flues gives us a great facility for adopting the fire-grate and double flue invented by Mr. Douglas Galton, C.B., for warming and ventilating purposes, and improved upon by General Morin, of the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers, Paris, and which not only causes the most satisfactory ventilation of a room, but effects a great economy of fuel.

40. It is described by Mr. Galton in a paper published in the "Journal of the Society of Arts," May 8th, 1868.

41. "It was designed in 1859–60 to meet the con-
" ditions laid down by the Barrack and Hospital Im-
" provement Committee, presided over by the late Lord
" Herbert of Lea." The grate "is manufactured for
" the War Department by Messrs. Kennard, of Upper
" Thames Street, but is not patented." The fire-place has a lining of fire lumps in five places, so moulded and arranged, with the cast-iron fire grating at the bottom, that "whilst the draft is checked, and
" the consumption of fuel reduced," a sufficient supply of air for combustion is admittted at the bottom to secure a cheerful fire. "A small space is left
" between the back lump and the iron back to re-
" ceive a supply of air through the ash-pit under
" the grate. This air passes through a slit in the
" fire lump immediately above the fire. In passing
" through the heated fire lump it is raised to a high
" temperature, and in that state is brought into con-
" tact with the heated coal. A piece of the fire lump
" which projects over the fire at the back of the grate
" forces the air into contact with the gases from the
" coal, and thus a more perfect combustion is effected
" than with an ordinary grate; in fact, with care,
" almost perfect combustion of the fuel and conse-
" quent utilization of the heat can be obtained."

42. Air taken directly from the outer air is admitted into an air chamber behind the grate, and being

made to impinge on the large heating surface of the smoke flue, which, by an improvement suggested by General Morin, is carried up inside the air flue, subtracts as much heat as possible out of the products of combustion in their passage up the chimney. Numerous experiments both in this country and in France have proved that the giving-off surface behind the grate and in the smoke flue is so great as to preclude the possibility of the fire in the grate ever rendering the back so hot as to burn the air (as was the case with a stove on a somewhat similar construction described in Vol. 17 of the Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society, p. 494); and it is shown that the air is admitted into the room at a temperature of from 20° to 30° above that of the outer air.

43. The careful experiments of General Morin, the results of which were published in the "Annales des "Conservatoires" for the year 1864–5, describe the mode of introducing the air through a louvred opening above the chimney near the ceiling, the direction it takes and its effect in changing the air of the room.

44. The general results prove that "whilst with an "ordinary fire-place the heat which is utilized in a "room is only one-eighth of the heat given off by the coal," in General Morin's experiments the heat utilized in the room was one-third of that given off by the coal, and therefore "to produce the same "degree of warmth in a room this grate requires "but little more than one-third the quantity of coal "required by an ordinary grate. The ventilation is "effected by passing a volume of air through the "room in one hour equal to five times the cubic "contents of the room."

45. Mr. Galton states (p. 461 of his paper) that the principle of these grates has been adopted for barracks in the case of grates for married soldiers which have a small oven attached, and are suitable to cottages. "It was designed for the purpose of combining a "power of cooking for a cottage with great compul-"sory economy of fuel."

46. The general merits of this combined invention of Mr. Galton's fire-place and General Morin's air flue surrounding and enveloping the smoke flue are thus summarily described by Mr. Galton:—

"1. That it ventilates the room.

"2. That it maintains an equable temperature in all parts of the room, and prevents all draughts.

"3. That the heat from radiation is thrown into the room better than from other grates.

"4. That the fire-brick lining prevents the fire from going out, even when left untouched for a long time, and prevents the rapid changes of temperature which occur in rooms in cold weather from that cause.

"5. That it economizes fuel by making use of the spare heat, which otherwise would all pass up the chimney, and partly by ensuring by its construction a more complete combustion, and thereby diminishing smoke.

"6. That it prevents smoky chimneys, by the ample supply of warmed air to the room, and by the draught created in the neck of the chimney."

47. Our use of concrete in forming these flues enables us, with very great ease, to form a hot-air cupboard in each room, which would be of great value to an agricultural labourer's family in giving him a ready mode of effectually drying wet clothes, &c.

48. The heat of the fire would not affect pure Portland cement. In the discussion which followed the reading of Mr. Grant's paper on Concrete at the Institution of Civil Engineers, in December 1865, Mr. Joseph Jennings, C.E., said (p. 67), "As far as his own expe-"rience went, he thought Portland cement would "stand in furnace work better than Roman cement." But inasmuch as our concrete is formed of five-sixths of stone or other hard material, we should place fire-clay bricks or lumps between it and any ironwork in the grates.

49. It is also a matter of great satisfaction that the cost of the stoves and flues is so moderate as not to add in any material degree to the total cost of a cottage.

50. I have said above that cottages on Mr. Nicoll's mode of construction can be erected at a very reduced cost as compared with the ordinary modes of building.

51. The plans which I now lay before you have been drawn in accordance with the suggestions made in your letter, addressed in January last to the Central Cottage Improvement Society (37, Arundel Street), of which Mr. Nicoll is a member, and a copy of which letter he placed in my hands.

52. The cost of the Cottage, Plan No. 1, with living-room and three bedrooms, all of ample dimensions; living-room, 12 × 12, bedrooms, 12 × 8, 9 × 9, and 9 × 8, and all averaging 10 feet high; external and internal porch, scullery, pantry, court, dry earth closet, and ash-pit, the whole complete in every respect for occupation, would be 85*l.* anywhere within 50 miles of London. An addition must be made for the cost of transport of the slabs by railway beyond that distance, but it would not amount to much, as the whole weight of the slabs and the few other materials for such a cottage would not exceed a few tons. The ordinary cost of heavy goods by train may be put at about 2*d.* per ton per mile.

53. A rent of 1*s.* 6*d.* a week would yield 78*s.* a year; 78*s.* would pay an interest of 5*l.* per cent. upon an outlay of 78*l.*; a fraction therefore beyond a rent of 1*s.* 6*d.* a week would pay 5 per cent. on an outlay of 85*l.* But 5*l.* per cent. on an outlay for a cottage on Mr. Nicoll's mode of construction would be a more than ample return, as the cost of repairs may be said to be inappreciable. There is nothing capable of being injured by ordinary wear and tear, except the flooring, which will last for many years, and can be replaced at 3*d.* per square foot. A common wood floor on sleeper joists cannot be laid down under 9*d.* per square foot. If any portion of the concrete should by accident sustain damage, or should any crack appear on the external walls by reason of any accidental imperfection of workmanship, which we do not anticipate will happen, it can be remedied by anyone by running in a little Portland cement, which any builder now knows how to use. No insurance is needed, as the construction is fireproof; it is also vermin proof; and the whole of the surfaces within and without can at any time be thoroughly cleansed with a wet mop.

54. It is often said that no cottages ought to be built with less than three bedrooms. I beg leave to differ from that opinion. A certain proportion of cottages on every estate may well have only one bedroom (all the conveniences being as described in the Plan No. 1, for the three-bedroomed cottage). Cottages with one bedroom only are wanted for old couples, and for the newly married, and for couples that have no children. A certain proportion also on every estate may well have only two bedrooms. It is not every family that wants more. And if you oblige a labouring man to live in a cottage larger than he wants, and larger than he can afford furniture for, you put him under the temptation to take in a lodger, and though he may be under agreement or under strict orders not to do so, it is often very difficult, without very stringent supervision, to prevent it. I have therefore brought you two series of plans (Nos. 2, 3, and 4), showing both a one-bedroomed cottage and a pair of such, which Mr. Nicoll can construct at 50*l.* each, upon which a rent of 1*s.* a week will give a full per-centage, and a two-bedroomed cottage and a pair of such, which we can can construct for 65*l.* each, upon which a rent of 1*s.* 3*d.* a week gives a similar return of 5*l.* per cent. A row of such cottages, in the proportion suggested by Dr. Hunter in his report to the Medical Officer of Health to the Privy Council, laid before Parliament in 1865, namely, one with three bedrooms, one with one bedroom, and four with two bedrooms, can be constructed by Mr. Nicoll, of the dimensions and with all the conveniences shown in the above plans, for an average of 65*l.* each.

55. Cottages for the agricultural classes could be manufactured in London and could be sent in a nearly finished form,—if arrangements could be made with railway companies to convey them at a lower rate than is now charged. If this could not be done the building slabs can be sent in a less finished form, reducing the weight about one-half.

56. The position of our future principal factory is proposed to be at the side of rail, water, and road (and shortly another factory in the most central part of England), so that the railway trucks may be loaded on the spot, and unloaded on reaching their destination by our own workpeople. Straw and gravel will sometimes be required to be brought back by the return trucks.

57. All finishing materials would be forwarded from the parts where they were made, direct to the various building spots.

58. The plan proposed is to have a class of workmen for erecting these portable buildings with suitable portable machinery, so that they can move about from one spot to the other, and I fully believe I can undertake to start a class of workers to any part of the United Kingdom, provided gentlemen who give us an order for cottages aid in making our method of building known, and so lead to others wishing to have buildings erected in the same part of the country.

59. We propose to keep the slabs in stock for certain descriptions of approved buildings; the slabs will be in the state described in s. 13, namely, without the external or internal coatings of concrete. These, as mentioned in s. 18, will be applied on the spot when the slabs are placed in position in the building; and the total cost of the cottage will be slightly influenced by whether or not gravel, or clay for burning, can be obtained on the building spot, and whether persons desirous of having cottages erected can render assistance in conveying the materials of our buildings from railways.

60. The application of the invention is so simple that it admits of a number of unskilled persons working in classes at piece work, under the superintendence of a practical foreman, who will have an interest in the undertaking by receiving a per-centage on all buildings done to time. The members of these classes will be allowed to take on boys to assist them, on their undertaking to pay them a certain fixed amount per week.

MEMORANDUM compiled by MR. TREMENHEERE on CONCRETE made with PORTLAND CEMENT, in reference to the above evidence relating to Mr. B. NICOLL'S mode of constructing cottages.

1. The following are some of the leading facts relating to the different kinds of concrete, and more especially to the strongest description of it, namely, that made with Portland cement. The facts are compiled from two elaborate papers by Colonel Scott, Royal Engineers (attached to the South Kensington Museum), in Vol. XI. of the "Professional Papers of the Corps of "Royal Engineers" (A.D. 1862), the first (p. 15) "On the Properties of Lime and Cement," the second (p. 220) "On Concrete as a Substitute for Brick and "Stone Masonry;" and also from a pamphlet by Mr. John Grant, Civil Engineer (in charge of the southern portion of the main drainage of the Metropolis), On the Strength of Cement, published in 1866.

2. The concrete now in use is of two kinds:—

1st. That which is composed of gravel, crushed stone, ballast (burnt clay), or other hard material mixed with lime and water, and turned over together with a shovel or otherwise.

2nd. That in which a cement is used instead of the lime.

3. The lime used with the first kind of concrete is either pure lime (such as the lime made from chalk or from pure limestones,) or hydraulic lime, *i.e.*, lime made from limestones containing a portion of clay.

4. The property of pure limes when slaked and mixed with sand is that their power of resistance to a tearing or crushing force is very weak as compared with that of the hydraulic limes.

5. Their comparative strength is shown by the following table, founded on one given by Colonel Scott, from Vicat (p. 27):—

Description of Limes and Stone.	Per-centage of clay in the limestone.	Comparative resistance per square inch.
Bad mortars - - - -	0 to 6	10·67
Rich limes -	0 to 6	42· 7
Hydraulic limes of medium quality	8 to 12	99·64
Ordinary hydraulic limes -	15 to 18	142·34
The eminently hydraulic limes -	20 to 25	170· 8
Limit of greatest resistance of eminently hydraulic limes	20 to 25	263· 7
Soft stone used at Paris -	—	142·34
Limestone -	—	284· 7
Basalt of Auvergne - -	—	1096·

6. Lime-concrete, in the form both of rough concrete and artificial blocks, was largely employed in ancient times by the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans. Wherever they had the opportunity of using the proper kind of lime, namely, an hydraulic lime, they composed a material of great strength, suitable to the largest constructions, "which are remarkable to this day for "their astonishing solidity." They used it also for aqueducts, and for the water-tight linings of tanks, which still endure (p. 221–227).

7. The Romans brought this mode of building to England, and the Saxons and Normans followed the examples they found, and constructed buildings "which "still appear to defy time."

8. The numerous examples of ancient concrete in France, Spain, and Germany led to the revival of its use in those countries, at a recent date. Concretes made with lime and gravel have been employed for some years in those countries, and it is chiefly the want of the proper kinds of lime which has prevented the general employment of concrete in the north of Europe (p. 227).

9. About 30 years ago the sea-wall at Brighton was constructed of concrete, and although it was "composed "of a weak water-lime" it is still "in a good state of "preservation." About the same time Mr. Ranger introduced his mode of mixing the concrete with hot water. Many large public buildings were in the following years constructed by this process; but it was found that frost had an effect upon his work.

10. The large experience of the use of concrete for public works in France has established the fact that where failure has occurred it was from the use of improper lime, and that if the lime is of the proper sort there is scarcely any description of work that may not be economically and solidly executed with it, "even "air and water-tight tanks and granaries."

11. Accordingly the increased attention given to this species of concrete, namely, lime-concrete, in this country has led to its very extensive use for foundations, and to a greater degree of confidence in it in the form of artificials blocks, or of rough concrete poured into a frame, for walls and other portions of buildings.

12. But although lime-concretes formed of good hydraulic limes possess considerable strength, as exhibited in the table above, they are inferior to the second description of concrete adverted to in par. 2, namely, to the cement-concretes made of the modern cements. These cements, and especially the Portland cement (discoveries made within the last 20 years), have introduced a new and very important building material into common use.

13. In order to appreciate this fact it is necessary to bear in mind the difference between the chemical properties of the concrete made by the aid of common

lime and of the concrete made with hydraulic limes, or with the modern cements.

14. The process of making pure lime and its mode of action are as follows :—

Pure limestone or carbonate of lime, when heated to redness, is reduced to the condition of lime by the expulsion of its carbonic acid. The lime when moistened with water slakes with great violence. By a fresh addition of water a paste is formed. This paste dries by exposure to the air and hardens.

15. "Its hardening is due to the small proportion of "carbonic acid gas which the atmosphere contains, "and which restores the lime to its original condition "of a carbonate. So far as the gas can penetrate, "the pure lime, if used without foreign admixture, will "harden, and no farther" (p. 16); and many proofs are given by Colonel Scott that the depth to which the carbonic acid can penetrate is but slight, not exceeding an average of $\frac{2}{7}$ths of an inch; so that all below that depth has been discovered, in damp situations, to to have remained moist for many years, and consequently without any binding power (p. 17).

16. But by the use of impure limestones, which contain a certain proportion of clay and other substances, or by the use of chalk and clay, cements are produced which have the property of solidifying without the assistance of the atmosphere. These impure limestones "contain a proportion of clay (silicate of iron "and alumina) intimately mingled with the carbonate "of lime." By burning the carbonic acid gas is expelled, as in the pure lime, and a further action takes place. "The silicic acid of the clay and the "lime, at the high temperature of the kiln, react "upon one another, and either form a silicate of lime "or approximate to its formation so far that on the "addition of water the silicate of lime is formed with "more or less rapidity" (p. 19).

17. These silicates of lime, according to the component parts of the limestone and the temperature to which it is subjected, become, on being moistened with water, either ordinary hydraulic cement, or Portland cement.

18. In ordinary hydraulic cements the affinity of the lime for the silicic acid modifies its affinity for water, so that when moistened with water it passes into a hydrate "in a gradual and quiet manner, without any "of that tumultuous action which is so remarkable "in the combination of pure lime with water" (p. 19); and the hydrated silicate which results "is not after-"wards appreciably affected by water; and so much "of the lime as the silicic acid can take up passes "from a soluble to an insoluble condition, thus "forming a cementing material suitable for hydraulic "purposes" (*ibid.*).

19. The greater degree of burning given to Portland cement causes the lime and the silicic acid to enter into more perfect chemical combination than when subjected to a lower temperature, and the compounds so formed, on being moistened with water, pass very gradually into hydrates. The temperature to which the clay and the chalk is subjected is indeed only short of what is necessary to produce vitrification; and it is this high degree of calcination which gives to Portland cement such wonderful strength.

20. The great power of Portland cement began to attract general attention about 20 years ago; and about the year 1859 Colonel (then Captain) Scott produced his cement, which approximates to it in power, and is far lower in price.

21. The following table copied from Colonel Scott's paper (p. 232) shows, from experiments made in 1866, the comparative resistance to transverse strain afforded by prisms of concrete formed of certain proportions of ballast with one of the different kinds of modern cement.

No.	—		No. of Experiments made.	Age in Months.	Age in Days when immersed.	Proportion of Ballast to One of Cement.	Fracturing Weight in lbs.	Remarks.
1	Chalk Lime - -	Pure lime.	6	1 to 15	Not immersed	4 to 5	79·5	From Table VI., Pasley on cements.
2	Do.	Pure lime.	3	15 to 15·5	18 to 33	4 to 5	61·3	Do.
3	Halling lime -	Hydraulic limes.	4	8 to 15	Not immersed	4 to 5	140.4	Do.
4	Do. -	Hydraulic limes.	4	15	18 to 33	4 to 5	142·7	Do.
5	Lias lime - -	Hydraulic limes.	6	—	—	$4\frac{3}{4}$ to 6	136·3	From Table 6 and 7, Pasley on cements.
6	Do. - -	Hydraulic limes.	20	13	17	3	134	Chatham experiments by Capt. Schaw and others.
7	Pasley's hydraulic lime	Hydraulic limes.	1	14	Not immersed	4	97	From Table 6, Pasley on cements.
8	Do. do.	Hydraulic limes.	1	14	18	4	83	Do.
9	Sheppy and Harwich mixed.	Hydraulic limes.	1	13	Not immersed	4	102	Do.
10	Pasley's artificial cement.	Hydraulic limes.	2	15	Do.	4	51·5	Do.
11	Medina -	Cements.	3	13	17	4	335	Chatham experiments by Capt. Schaw and others.
12	Scott's B. quality -	Cements.	21	13	17	5	409	Do.
13	Do. -	Cements.	3	13	Not immersed	5	740 the lowest result	Do., one block not broken with 1,330 lbs.
14	Portland cement -	Cements.	6	13	17	4	862	Do.
15	Do. -	Cements.	6	13	Not immersed	4	914 the lowest result.	Do., four of the six blocks first tried not broken with 1,330 lbs., of which 330 lbs. was allowed to fall from a height of a foot.
16	Inferior brick - -		3	—	—	—	329	From Table VIII., Pasley on cement.
17	Well burned brick - -		9	—	—	—	752	Do.
18	Bath stone - -		3	—	—	—	666	Do.

22. From this table it appears that the weight required to fracture the prisms made with the Portland cement was 914 lbs., and for those made with the Scott cement 740 lbs.; the fracturing weight for those made with the chalk, Halling, and lias lime ranging from only 61 lbs. to 142 lbs., and for those made with the Sheppey and Harwich and Pasley cements from 51 lbs. to 102 lbs.

23. On this table Colonel Scott remarks that Sir Charles Pasley, "who had doubts as to the position "which concrete should hold as a mode of building," was only acquainted with the quick-setting Sheppy

and Harwich cements, and with that of his own manufacture, which was similar in character; and it is evident from the results he obtained that he had no opportunity of judging of the results of which concrete is capable. The wonderful strength of that which has been prepared with cement introduced since his time has indeed quite changed its position as a building material. Instead of merely equalling, or somewhat exceeding the strength of brickwork in mass, it may be now so made as to rival or even surpass that of the individual selected bricks of a structure (p. 233).

24. This is shown by the facts given in the above table, namely, that whereas inferior brick broke with a weight of 329 lbs., well burnt brick with a weight of 752 lbs., and Bath stone with a weight of 666 lbs., the weakest portion of Portland cement out of six trials (column 3 of table), broke at 914 lbs., while the four strongest did not break with a weight of 1,330 lbs. (Remarks, last column of table.)

25. The resistance also of the best cements to tearing force is shown by Colonel Scott in another table (p. 40), to be relatively as conspicuous as their resistance to crushing force. And at p. 233 Colonel Scott, referring summarily to the respective strengths of concrete and brickwork, states that "so far as he can "judge from Sir Charles Pasley's experiments and "conclusions," lime concrete "has ten times the "strength of brickwork" made with the same lime; but lime concrete "has only one-seventh or one-eighth "of the strength of concrete made of the best "cements" in its resistance to a tearing force.

26. The relative powers of lime and cement in resisting blows with a hammer and scratching with sharp tools are also shown by Colonel Scott in a table (p. 62).

27. It has been mentioned above (s. 9) that lime concrete is subject to be affected by frost, unless care is taken to use the proper kind of lime. Concrete made with the best cements is not liable to be injured by frost.

28. Colonel Scott states (p. 134) that it had been estimated from careful experiments that "the quantity "of water free to evaporate from a cubic yard of "green 14-inch of well-built brick-work varies be-"tween 36 and 48 gallons according to the nature of "the lime and brick employed."

29. "To bring cement, sand, and gravel into a suffi-"ciently wet condition for use it is not necessary to "add to the mixture more than 28 gallons of water "per cubic yard, the proportions being one of cement "to six of ballast, and of this quantity between seven "and eight gallons will enter into chemical com-"bination with the cement, leaving 12 or 13 gallons, "or little more than one-third of the water contained "in the brickwork, to be got rid of." It therefore soon dries and hardens; and when hardened, Colonel Scott asks (p. 235), "will it keep the water out?" To this he answers that the great mass of experience upon the subject shows conclusively that it will. It is not therefore capable of being affected by frost. Indeed its great powers of resistance to tearing force of itself places it beyond the power of any frost to affect it. At p. 225 Colonel Scott mentions that the hut workshop at South Kensington composed of the ordinary gravel of the district (containing about one-third sand) and the cement known as Scott's cement in the proportion of ten of gravel to one of cement, "although tried by a hard frost during its construc-"tion," and having been exposed "to the still more "severe frost" of the winter of 1865, did not suffer in the least. And he permits me to add that it has not been injured by frost since that period.

30. The paper of Mr. John Grant above referred to (s. 1), read before the Institution of Civil Engineers in December 1865, entirely confirms the conclusions of Colonel Scott, and gives many interesting particulars relating the introduction of Portland cement into general use in this country, its manufacture, and the tests applied to prove its excellence, and their results.

31. Mr. Grant, who superintends under the Metropolitan Board of Works the southern portion of the main drainage of the metropolis, says (p. 1) that previous to 1859 Roman cement was with few exceptions the only cement used for the inverts of the London sewers; Portland cement had scarcely ever been tried. In the country generally it had chiefly been confined to ordinary building operations, such as external plastering, lining of water tanks, and to some harbour works, where it had been mostly used in the form of concrete blocks. In France it had already been largely employed, the cement being made in England, and the tests to which it had been subjected "had no doubt prepared the principal "manufacturers of the country for the production of "a cement suitable for works like those then con-"templated for the drainage of London."

32. The result was "the insertion of the following "clause in the specification for the southern high "level sewer (1859), being the first contract on the "south side of the River Thames":—

"The whole of the cement to be used in these works, and referred to in this specification, is to be Portland cement of the very best quality ground extremely fine, weighing not less than 110 lbs. to the striked bushel, and capable of maintaining a breaking weight of 400 lbs. on an area $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch square, equal to $2\frac{1}{4}$ square inches, seven days after being made in an iron mould of the form and dimensions shown on drawing No. 1 (plate 1) and immersed six of these days in water."

33. Mechanical modes of applying the test with accuracy were devised, which have since "been adopted "by the manufacterers in their own works."

34. Mr. Grant adds that, "after using during the last "six years more than 70,000 tons of Portland cement, "which has been submitted to about 15,000 tests, it "can be confidently asserted that none of an inferior "or dangerous character has been employed in any "part of the works in question." "Although up to "that time the use of Portland cement had been com-"paratively limited, the extensive adoption of this "material in the construction of the metropolitan "sewers drew the attention of engineers and con-"tractors to its value and importance; and it may "be safely assumed that during the progress of these "works double the quantity of this cement has been "used in London which was ever employed in any "equal period since its first introduction or discovery."

35. With respect to its manufacture, Mr. Grant says (p. 5), "The manufacture of Portland cement is not "one of complex character, although it requires the "exercise of extreme care in the admixture of its two "simple and well-known ingredients, clay and chalk." This cement is largely manufactured on the rivers Thames and Medway, and the clay is obtained from the creeks and bays between Sheerness and Chatham. It is also manufactured in the Isle of Wight, at Hull, and at several other places in the kingdom. "Much "care," Mr. Grant says, "is required in the selection "of the clay so that it shall be as free from sand as "possible; and the proportion in which it is used "depends altogether on the quality of the chalk with "which it is to be incorporated." And Colonel Scott says of it that when properly manufactured it is "the "strongest building calcareous material known" (p. 51).

36. Its manufacture has much improved of late years, as is conclusively shown by the results obtained and by the tests to which the material has been subjected. One of the principal tests is that of its comparative weight per bushel. The high temperature necessary for perfect burning causes great shrinkage in the raw material. A given volume of the material properly burnt should, therefore, give a certain number of pounds weight. The first specification for the London drainage works above quoted required the weight to be 110 lbs. to the imperial bushel. As perfectly burned Portland cement is as hard as vitrified brick (Colonel Scott, p. 76), the manufacturers at first were reluctant, in consequence of the increased wear and

tear of their machinery to burn it to a greater weight than 110 lbs. per bushel; but the average weight, Mr. Grant states (p. 14 of his pamphlet), actually supplied to him by the manufacturers during the six years that the south drainage works had been going on was 114·15 lbs., "being 4·15 per cent. above the specified "standard."

37. But in addition to the test of weight, a common and simple one is by watching its action while setting. Colonel Scott says on this point (p. 76), "If Portland "cement sets very quickly it is to be distrusted, the "quickness in setting depending very much on the "quantity of unburned materials present." Mr. Sharp mentions in his evidence (No. 30) that he is in the habit of applying this test. Mr. Grant also says that experience in the use of Portland cement comes much in aid in discovering its quality. "Experience," he says (p. 6), "in the daily use of Portland cement "has enabled the clerks of the works and others "generally to judge by colour and by weight of the "qualities of the cements; and many of the bricklayers "who were employed on the works, and who had "previously a very imperfect acquaintance with this "cement, or with its peculiar properties, have now "acquired confidence and experience in using it "which will be valuable hereafter on other works "upon which they may be engaged. It is not to be "expected that in ordinary small building operations "the necessary testing (by mechanical power), though "simple and inexpensive (in relation to works on a "large scale), will be maintained. In such cases the "precaution must be taken of employing respectable "manufacturers who have the means of thoroughly "testing the cement made by them and who can "confidently guarantee its quality,"

38. The quality of Portland cement when it first came into use was doubtless, as described by Mr. Grant, apt to be "precarious and irregular," sufficiently accounting for the numerous examples which can be referred to of defective constructions where Portland cement was used at those periods. But Mr. Grant's experiments and tests, as recorded in his pamphlet (pp. 14-15), show that, "while the earlier experiments "made six years ago gave a breaking weight varying "from 75 lbs. to 719 lbs on an area of $2\frac{1}{4}$ square "inches," during the last six years the average strength of 1,369,210 bushels has been 606·8 lbs., being 52 per cent. above the standard first specified, and 21 per cent. above that subsequently adopted, the minimum test which was at first 400 lbs. having been afterwards raised to 500 lbs.

39. Another series of experiments by Mr. Grant is also of great value as showing the vastly increased strength which Portland cement acquires by age. The result of 960 experiments made with Portland cement, "gauged neat," showed that the cement bore after one week 445 lbs., after one month 679 lbs., after six months 978 lbs., after 12 months 1,075 lbs. "Thus "in three months the cement bore about double the "strain it did at the end of a week, and at the end of "12 months 241·70 per cent., or nearly twice and a "half the strain that it bore at the end of a week."

40. Mr. Grant is engaged in experiments, intended to extend over 10 years, with a view of ascertaining, if possible, the age at which Portland cement attains its greatest strength. The results of two years are given (p. 12), from which it appears that cement (burnt to 123 lbs. per bushel) which at the end of one week broke at 817 lbs., at the end of nine months broke at 1,219 lbs., and at the end of two years at 1,324 lbs.

Description of the Requirements for Health, Decency, and Comfort for an Agricultural Labourer's Cottage. Referred to in § 341 of Report.

(*a.*) That the living room should not be less than $12 \times 12 \times 9$, or containing not less than 1,296 cubic feet.

(*b.*) That no bedroom should contain less than 650 cubic feet.

(*c.*) That there should be a scullery with a fire-place in it, in order to prevent the necessity of having a fire in the living room in warm weather.

(*d.*) That the dry earth closet should be beyond the scullery, with covered midden attached on the outside.

(*e.*) That there should be a porch with light on one side, a seat under the light, and pegs for wet coats, &c. on the other side; the door should be divided, the dwarf door below fitting with the larger half above.

(*f.*) That means of ventilation should be provided in every room.

(*g.*) That at least one bedroom should have a fire-place, and where there are three bedrooms that two should have fire-places.

(*h.*) That the windows should be of sufficient size to be light and cheerful, and should be capable of admitting air at their highest point.

(*i.*) That there should be an oven, and that the cooking range should be of a construction to economize fuel, and to render available the waste heat for the purpose of warming the different rooms.

(*j.*) That the drainage should be effectually provided for.

(*k.*) That the water should be collected from the roof, and conveyed into a cistern attached to each cottage.

(*l.*) That the floors should be of wood.

(*m.*) That the elevation should be pleasing to the eye.

Receipts and Expenditure of Labourers.

In a communication addressed to us in July last (and referred to in § 269 of Report,) Mr. Norman sta es—

"My attention having been called to the circumstance that a Scotch labourer in the employ of Mr. James T. Blackburn, North Camp Farm, Aldershot, was in the receipt of higher wages than were usual in that neighbourhood, I begged permission of Mr. Blackburn to obtain some information upon the subject. Mr. Blackburn is an English gentleman who has farmed largely in Scotland, and has now brought into cultivation a considerable tract of the sandy soil at Aldershot by the application of the sewage of the North Camp. He obligingly gave me the opportunity of examining the Scotch labourer, who however, did not desire that his name should appear in print; but I have submitted his evidence to Mr. Blackburn, who permits me to state that it is correct. By way of contrast I have taken an English labourer in Mr. Blackburn's employment in the same position as to buying and selling as the Scotchman.

"Mr. Blackburn says that many if not most Scotchmen are as good labourers and as steady men as this Scotchman is; but he considers that the Englishman (Kicher) is unusually steady.

"Kicher is now a widower and has a daughter living with him. This would have rendered the comparison between his and J. D.'s expenses and income impossible, as I could not separate the daughter's expenses from her father's. I have therefore made these accounts have reference to Kicher's expenses when he had nobody but himself to provide for; but the prices are the prices of the present time, so that the expenditure may be correctly compared with J.D.'s present expenditure.

"Although Kicher says that he saved at one period of his life, he has nothing left now."—F. H. N.

J. D., aged 26.—My father is a gardener; I have two brothers and six sisters; I am fourth in the family. I am a native of Kincardineshire, and always lived there until I came here, which I did two years ago last Michaelmas. I went to school when I was six or seven, and remained there until I was 10; I then went to work for three years; at the end of two years I had saved enough to put myself to school for the summer; I remained at school all the six summer months with the exception of harvest, when I went

to work for one month, and then went to school again for one month; I went to school after that during two other summers. In harvest I earned 5*l.* in a month. When I went to school I lived with my father, and paid him 3*l.* for keeping me during the five months I was at school. My father earned 15*s.* a week without any allowances; the ordinary wages for a day labourer in the district were 12*s.* 6*d.* a week; I always supported myself after I first went to work at the age of 10, and only lived with my father while I was at school. When I left school at the age of 10 I could read and write easily; I used to practise reading and writing to keep up what I knew. It was chiefly to learn arithmetic that I went to school after I had begun to work. My mother earned nothing, and my father had to support the whole family. I paid 10*s.* for my schooling during each summer I went to school. I never went to school after I was 15. I practice the three R.'s now, and I think I know as much as I did when I left school; I take in a weekly newspaper. I have always worked as a farm labourer since I left school. I was in Kincardineshire until I came here. I have worked horses ever since I was 16; I have now the charge of a pair of farm horses. The lowest wages I received in Kincardineshire since I left school were 21*l.* a year, with 6½ "bolls" of oatmeal [=to about 2 lbs. of oatmeal per day—F. H. N.], and 1½ quarts of milk per day, a room to live in, and firing allowed. The total value of the allowances may have been about 15*l.* 10*s.* per annum. The milk and oatmeal were more than sufficient to keep a man without anything else; I used to sell a little oatmeal and buy bread with the money I received. If I used nothing but the oatmeal, there would be about 1½ bolls over at the end of the year. The highest wages I received up to the time I came to England were 25*l.* a year, the other allowances remaining the same as above.

I have been here three years. My wages and expenditure are as follows:—

Weekly Wages.

	s.	d.
Money - - - -	16	0
Allowances:—		
House - - - -	1	0
Firing - - - -	1	0
Lights - - - -	0	7
Milk (1 quart a day) - -	1	2
Total weekly wages and allowances -	19	9

Weekly Expenditure.

	s.	d.
Oatmeal, 5 bolls a year at 23*s.* = 115*s.* = per week *about* - - - -	2	2½
Bread, 1½ loaves (4 lbs.) at 4*d.* -	0	6
Clothes:—		
Working suit, lasts six months and costs, trousers 14*s.*, waistcoat 13*s.*, boots 15*s.*, two shirts 7*s.*, two pairs stockings 5*s.*, total, 2*l.* 14*s.* = per week about -	2	0
Sunday suit, costs 3*l.* 6*s.*, lasts two years, = per week about - - - -	0	7½
Sunday boots, cost 21*s.*, lasts two years, = per week about - - -	0	2½
Tobacco - - - - -	0	7
Tea and sugar - - -	0	1½
Total weekly expenditure - -	6	3

	s.	d.	s.	d.
Total receipts in money - -			16	0
" " in allowances -			3	9
Total receipts - - -			19	9
Total expenditure in money -	6	3		
Allowances - - -	3	9		
			10	0
Total savings per week -			9	9

I have bought a good lever watch, I gave 6*l.* 10*s.* for it. I can save more here than I could do in Scotland, because I am alone here, and can do as I like; in Scotland I should be living with three or four other men and should be led into expense. I send my money down to my brother in Scotland, he puts it into the bank, and the banker allows me a little interest upon it. I have nobody dependent upon me, all my brothers are doing as well as I do. I should like to take a farm if I had money enough, it is quite common for men in my position in Scotland to save money. If I had 500*l.* or 600*l.* I would not fear to start a two-horsed farm of about 50 acres in Scotland. [At his present rate of saving (25*l.* per annum), invested at compound interest at 4 per cent., he will have saved 500*l.* in 15 years. Thus if he began to save at this rate when he came to work at Aldershot at the age of 24 he will have saved this sum before he is 40. I am told however on good authority that men of his class when they have saved 300*l.* or 400*l.* can usually borrow whatever additional sum may be necessary to enable them to take a small farm, and in this manner, if a man began to save at the age of 18 he would probably be able to take a small farm before he was 30 years of age.—F. H. N.] I could not make quite as much as a labourer in Scotland as I can here; I expect to get a little more for coming away from home.

Henry Kicher, labourer, aged 52.—I am a widower, and have six children. I work for Mr. Blackburn, at Aldershot. Two of my children are now dependent upon me; one a girl aged 13, and the other a boy aged 9. The boy lives at Frimley with his aunt, and costs me 2*s.* a week; the girl lives with me. I have lived at Aldershot all my life. My father was a labourer. I never went to school, except to a night school during two winters, when I got big enough to pay for it myself. I went because I thought that if I learnt a bit it would have been of service to me. I cannot write now, and read with difficulty. I had seven brothers and sisters. I was No. 4 in the family. I was 12 or 13 years old when I began to work. I never went out to work at all before that age. My father earned about 12*s.* a week, and used to support the whole family. I earned about 2*s.* or 3*s.* a week when I first went to work. I have been working as a labourer all my life. The highest wages I ever received were 17*s.* 6*d.* a week for four years. I then had the charge of a small farm. I left that place in 1863. I have been a labourer since that time, earning on an average 2*s.* 6*d.* a day. For 12 years I lived in lodgings, and had nobody to support but myself. During those years my income and expenses were as follows:—

Income.

	s.
26 weeks at the day wages of 12*s.* - -	312
6 " harvest at 30*s.* - - -	180
20 " at piece work at 18*s.* - -	360
Total annual wages - -	852

= In money about 16*s.* 10*d.* per week.
In vegetables 17*s.* 10*d.* "

My Expenses were as follows:

Per week.

	s.	d.
Rent for lodging (including supply of vegetables) - - - - -	2	6
Food:—		
2 loaves (at 8*d.*) - - - -	1	4
Flour, ½ gal. at 1*s.* 5*d.* - - -	0	8½
Meat, 3 lbs. at 8*d.* - - - -	2	0
2 oz. tea, 6*d.*; 1½ lbs. sugar, 9*d.* - -	1	3
1 lb. cheese - - - -	0	8
2 quarts beer - - - -	0	8
Tobacco, 2 oz. at 3½*d.* - - -	0	7
Firing (3 bush. coke at 5*d.*) - - -	1	3
Candles - - - - -	0	4
Carried forward - -	11	3½

	s.	d.
Brought forward - -	11	3½
Clothes for working days for 6 months :—		
Trousers, 10*s.*; waistcoat, 3*s.*; jacket (costs 10*s.* and lasts one year), 5*s.*; boots (3 pairs at 12*s.* last two years), 8*s.* 6*d.*; 1 shirt, 2*s.*; 2 pairs stockings, 1*s.* 2*d.*; hat, 1*s.*; slop, 4*s.*; and neckcloth, 1*s.*; 35*s.* 8*d.* for 6 months - - per week (about)	1	4½
Sunday clothes :—		
Coat 20*s.*; trousers, 12*s.*; waistcoat, 8*s.*; boots, 12*s.*; hat, 5*s.*=2*l.* 17*s.*, lasts two years - - per week (about)	0	6½
Club 1*s.* 3*d.* per month - „ „	0	3½
Total weekly expenses - -	13	6

Total weekly income - -	17	10
„ „ expenses - -	13	6
Excess of income per week - -	4	4

If a man pays 2*s.* a week for a cottage and garden he can keep a pig and make a considerable sum (probably enough to pay his cottage rent) by his pig; if he is industrious he might make much more. When I lived alone I always earned more than I spent. Wages are paid on Saturday, and men sometimes have 1*s.* or 2*s.* left on Monday morning, and sometimes not; if they have not, when they want victuals they must go to the shop and pay for it on Saturday night. I think I was always a very careful man. I have never been able to save when I have been working at 12*s.* a week; I have never saved money except when I was working at piece work. I never spent much in beer; those who do must go without victuals. I don't think I could have lived more economically than I did. When I was only earning 12*s.* a week I found I could not live upon my wages, and got into debt, but my debts were all paid off when I worked by the task and at harvest.

[The general result of the different modes of living of these two witnesses is better shown by the following analysis and arrangement, in which the similar items of expenditure are placed opposite to each other.—F. H. N.]

J. D.

Receipts.

	s.	d.	s.	d.
In money per week - -			16	0
In allowances, viz. :—	s.	d.		
House - - -	1	0		
Firing - - -	1	0		
Lights - - -	0	7		
Milk - - -	1	2		
			3	9
			19	9

Expenditure per Week.

	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Ordinary food and luxuries :—								
Oatmeal -	2	2½						
Milk - -	1	2						
Bread - -	0	6						
			3	10½				
Tea and sugar - -			0	1½				
Tobacco - -			0	7				
					4	7		
House rent, fire, and lights -					2	7		
Clothes - - - -					2	10		
Total expenditure per week - -							10	0
Savings per week - - -							9	9
							19	9

H. K.

Receipts.

In money per week - - - -	16	10
In allowances, viz. :—		
Vegetables - - - -	1	0
	17	10

Expenditure per Week.

	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Ordinary food and luxuries :—								
Two loaves at 8*d.*	1	4						
Flour, half gall. at 1*s.* 5*d.* -	0	8½						
Meat, 3 lbs. at 8*d.*	2	0						
Cheese - -	0	8						
Vegetables -	1	0						
			5	8½				
Tea and sugar - -			1	3				
Tobacco - -			0	7				
Beer - - -			0	8				
					8	2½		
House rent, fire, and lights -					3	1		
Clothes - - - -					1	11		
Club - - - -					0	3½		
Total expenditure per week - -							13	6
Savings per week - - -							4	4
							17	10

Mr. Blackburn stated in a letter to Mr. Norman, dated 23rd July last, as the result of his experience of both English and Scotch farm labourers, that "Two "Scotchmen will at any description of work equal "three English labourers, owing partly to their su-"perior physique, and partly to the higher order of "intelligence they bring to bear on their work." He adds, that he has had several labourers through his hands, but has retained those now on the farm as the best and steadiest. His men and horses work ten hours a day so long as daylight permits. He attributes the extra two hours' work gained, beyond that common in the south, to "an acquired habit" sustained by "the amount of wages being sufficient, when pro-"perly spent, to restore the waste of the system."

DOCUMENTS ISSUED BY THE COMMISSIONERS.

Instructions from the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women in Agriculture (1867) to the Assistant Commissioners.

2, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.,
July 8th, 1867.

Gentlemen,

The terms of the Commission which it has pleased Her Majesty to issue to us are, that we should "inquire into and report on the employment of children, young persons, and women in agriculture, for the purpose of ascertaining to what extent and with what modifications the principles of the Factory Acts can be adopted for the regulation of such employment, and especially with a view to the better education of such children."

The leading principles of the Factory Acts as applicable to this inquiry are—

The protection of the young and of females from excessive labour.

The requirement of a certain amount of school attendance for children between the ages of 8 and 13, earning wages; no one under 8 years of age being allowed to be employed.

These principles were kept prominently in view in the course of the recent inquiry into the system of organized labour known by the name of agricultural gangs, and existing exclusively in a few of the eastern counties. You have received a copy of our report to Her Majesty on that subject, which was presented to Parliament on the 5th March of this year.

You will have learnt that there are in those Eastern Counties between 6,000 and 7,000 children, young persons, and women employed in the "public" gangs which were, under our instructions, the objects of that inquiry.

The recommendations which we saw fit to make, as affording, in our opinion, the basis on which legislation might be founded, had necessary reference only to public gangs.

But our inquiry brought to light the fact that a much larger number of children, young persons, and women are employed in those counties in what are there denominated "private" gangs; and that they are employed under such circumstances as to afford a strong presumption that in the interests of the children, young persons, and women there is as much need of legislative regulation for the "private" as for the "public" gangs.

It became obvious also that if legislation should be shown to be required for the protection of children, young persons, and women employed in varying numbers together in what might be denominated a "private" gang, it would be impossible to leave out of view the children, young persons, and women who are employed, not in those counties only but throughout the whole kingdom, individually or with a few others, in all the various processes of agricultural labour.

The entire question was therefore raised as to what legislation, if any, was required and practicable for the protection of juvenile or female labour in agriculture, and for the promotion of the education of the young throughout the agricultural districts.

Her Majesty's Commission directs us to endeavour by our inquiries to solve this question.

Public attention has been already so much directed to this subject in the Eastern Counties by the inquiry into the "public" gangs, that your investigations with a view to afford us the materials on which to form our judgment will be greatly facilitated by your going first over the same ground, and communicating with the gentlemen who gave their valuable testimony to the Assistant Commissioners under that inquiry.

You will be provided with "circulars of inquiry," which you will ask the most competent persons you can meet with to do us the favour to fill up; and you will make use of the "circulars to magistrates" and others to announce your being in readiness to wait upon them, and to ask their assistance in promoting the objects of the inquiry.

You will obtain the best evidence in your power upon all the points demanding investigation from the landed proprietors, clergy, farmers, farm labourers, medical practitioners, officers of health, relieving officers, and other public functionaries or private individuals who are conversant with agricultural life under its various conditions. You will doubtless find many persons thoroughly qualified to give you the results of their experience and observation on the leading points of the inquiry, and of stating to you how far, in their opinion, legislation may be requisite or practicable. You will carefully test the value of varieties of opinion. In receiving the statements of the labouring class you will, as far as possible, record them in their own language; and in case of doubt submit them to their employers, teachers, or others, for explanation or correction.

In drawing up the reports which you will be required to make to us from time to time, bringing into one view the results of the evidence you will have obtained, it will be convenient that the subjects should be arranged as far as possible under separate heads. You will not, however, feel yourselves precluded from adding observations on any other subjects to which you may deem it of importance to direct our attention and that of the public.

The heads of inquiries relating to the "private" gangs are sufficiently specified in the circular of inquiries with which you will be furnished for distribution.

The principal points of the general question are as follows:—

1. Is legislation required for the purpose of fixing the age below which boys should not be allowed to be employed in farm labour?
2. If it is, what is the age below which it would be desirable to enact that no boy should be employed in farm labour?
3. Is legislation required for the purpose of fixing the age below which girls should not be allowed to be employed in farm labour?
4. If it is, what is the age below which it is desirable to enact that no girl should be employed in farm labour?

5. Is there good ground for limiting the hours of work of boys?
6. If there is, what are the limitations proposed?
7. Is there good ground for limiting the hours of work for girls?
8. If there is, what are the limitations proposed?
9. Is there any need that the proper meal times should be secured by legislation to the young and to females engaged in farm labour?
10. Is it necessary to secure by legislation that there should be limitations in proportion to age, of the distance to which it should be lawful to take children, or young persons, or women to work?
11. Is it necessary to provide by legislation that females should be protected from unhealthy or unsuitable employment in agriculture?

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12. The most difficult portion of the inquiry will be that which relates to the education of the young.

The various aspects under which the problem presents itself under the very different circumstances of different parts of the country, and the several possible means of adjusting the periods for education which those different circumstances suggest, are referred to in paragraphs 64 to 84 of our Report on Agricultural Gangs.

You will be supplied with copies of that Report, as the readiest means of directing the attention of any gentlemen who may be disposed to enter into the question with you to the points for consideration, and of inviting their opinions as to the best mode of dealing with them.

The facts which it will be important to illustrate by personal inquiry and examination are—

1. The actual state of education among the young found at work.
2. In cases where the education of the young found at work is discovered to be defective, to what is its defective state attributable?
   (*a.*) To the want of schools readily accessible to the children?
   (*b.*) To the inefficient mode of instruction in such schools as exist?
   (*c.*) To the poverty of the parents?
   (*d.*) To the indisposition of the parents to forego the weekly sum that may be added to the family earnings by the child's labour?
   (*e.*) To the low moral tone of the parents which leads them to be indifferent to the education of their children?
   (*f.*) To the pressure put upon the parents by the employers to induce the parents to allow their children to go to work at too early an age?

If it should appear that the defective state of education arises from a deficiency of schools, you will invite opinions as to the best mode of supplying that deficiency.

The actual amount of earnings by agricultural employment in various parts of the country, and the relative ability of the labouring poor to pay for their children's schooling, will engage your attention.

On the other hand, if the neglect of their children's education is attributable to the low moral tone of the parents, you will endeavour to ascertain if any distinct causes can be assigned for such low moral condition, and whether those causes are capable of being removed.

In particular you will seek for opportunities of inquiring and judging for yourselves how far the overcrowding of cottages may have contributed to such a result.

If the evidence tends to show that deficient cottage accommodation is among the prominent causes of a low state of morals, you will endeavour to ascertain whether any and what progress is being made towards providing better cottage accommodation for the labouring poor; whether there are any and what obstacles in the state of the law to a quicker progress towards supplying such a want; and whether means might be suggested for diminishing such obstacles.

You will find in those portions of the Eastern Counties where agricultural gangs exist, that that system arose from the absence of proper cottage accommodation upon or near the land where the labour is required. The children, young persons, and women therefore have been obliged to go long distances daily to their work.

On the other hand, when the distances are not so long as to be oppressive to the young and to females, there are advantages to both those classes in being in or near the village or the town where the schools are usually found and whence the supplies of the family are drawn.

You will notice and describe any instances you meet with in which the distribution of agricultural labour exists in the manner most favourable both to the adult males, and to the young, and to the females of the family, and where the cottage accommodation is such as to facilitate and promote all the decencies of life, as well as the proper education and moral training of the young.

And you will regard the question of education, not in the restricted sense of the mere ordinary elements of instruction, but in the wider and more important one of the training of the future agricultural labourer in habits of industry, honesty, and fidelity to the trust reposed in him, and of so opening and informing his mind as to make him a more skilful and efficient farm servant. Any instances, therefore, that may fall under your notice of efforts having been made to promote the attainment of these higher results, or in any other manner to raise the physical, mental, or moral condition of the children of the agricultural labourers, and thus ultimately to benefit the whole agricultural population, will doubtless be welcomed by you and recorded in full detail.

We are, &c.,
HUGH SEYMOUR TREMENHEERE.
EDWARD CARLETON TUFNELL.

Royal Commission on the employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women in Agriculture (1867).

2, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.
July 8, 1867.

Her Majesty's Commissioners beg the favour of answers to the questions contained in the following circular.

It may be returned, without payment of postage, to the address printed on the last page.

CIRCULAR OF INQUIRIES AS TO THE EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN,* YOUNG PERSONS,† AND WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE.

1. Parish of in the county of post town.
2. Name of the person filling up this Return,
   Date, . Address,
3. Population of parish according to census of 1861. Acreage
4. Cultivation ; whether chiefly arable, chiefly pastoral, or mixed.
   The cultivation is

I. As to Employment in "Private Gangs."

6. Does any system exist in your parish of employing persons in agriculture in "private gangs?"

[A "private gang" is a group of children, young persons, and women in a farmer's own employ, and superintended by one of his own labourers.
A "public gang" is under the superintendence of an independent person. No further information is required concerning "public gangs."
N.B.—None of the following questions relate to employment in hay or corn harvesting.]

7. If private gangs exist { in your parish / on your farm } state the number of persons so employed.

—	Males.	Females.	Total.
In spring - -			
In summer - - -			
In autumn - -			
In winter - -			

8. Give, as nearly as you can, the following particulars:—Number and age of persons employed { in your parish / on your farm } in private gangs.

Number of Private Gangs.	Males.						Females.						
	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
No. 1.													
*													

* Add slip if more space required.

9. In what kinds of work are they employed during the different seasons of the year?
   In Spring, in
   In Summer, in
   In Autumn, in
   In Winter, in

---

* Children are those under 13 years of age. † Young persons are those between 13 and 18 years of age.

10. To what distances from their homes do they go to their daily work?

11. What are their usual hours of work upon the land?

12. What are their hours, reckoning from the time of leaving home to go to work in the morning to the time when they come back from work?
    (1.) Of those who live near the farm on which they work?
    (2.) Of those who live at a distance?

13. What are the times allowed for meals?

14. Do the sexes work together or apart?

15. If together, have you any observations to make as to the effect of such employment upon morals?

16. Does the demand upon their physical powers injuriously affect their health or constitution?

17. Are the young or the females, whether young or grown up, subject to any ill-treatment?

18. Do any special employments injuriously affect females, or the young generally?

19. What is the state of education among the young of both sexes employed in private gangs?

    Among the labourers, male and female, of adult age employed in private gangs?

20. Have you any observations to make as to its being desirable or practicable to subject "private gangs" to legislative regulations, together with "public gangs," in accordance with the following recommendations, or otherwise?

    [The recommendations for legislation on the subject of the "public" agricultural gangs, contained in the Sixth Report of the Children's Employment Commission (1862), sections 43 to 72, were to the following effect:—
    (I.) That the gangmaster should be licensed.
    (II.) That the age of children employed in a "public" gang should be restricted.
    (III.) That females below a certain age should be excluded from working in a "public" gang.
    (IV.) That the distances to which children and young persons should be allowed to go to work in a "public" gang should be restricted according to age.
    (V.) That the hours of work of children and young persons should be restricted.
    (VI.) That the sexes should be separated.
    (VII.) That where females are employed in a "public" gang there should be a licensed female superintendent.
    (VIII.) That restraint should be placed on the practice of employing females in weeding high wet corn.
    (IX.) That the names of children employed in "public" gangs should be registered.
    (X.) That a certain amount of school attendance should be compulsory on all children from the time of their beginning to earn wages, by working in a "public" gang.]

21. If it should be your opinion that the moral evils and the hardships that have been shown to accompany the employment of children, young persons, and women in "public" gangs exists also to a considerable extent in the "private" gangs, and that "private" gangs ought therefore to be included in any legislative enactment concerning "public" gangs, will you be so good as to state what you think would be a satisfactory definition of a "private" gang in respect of the numbers, age, and sex of the persons composing it?

II. As to the Employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women not in Gangs, either "Public" or "Private," but individually or in company with a few other Persons.

22. Inasmuch as on every farm there will probably be children, young persons, and women both permanently and occasionally employed, not in gangs either "public" or "private," but individually or with a few other persons; and as these could not be omitted from any protective legislation which might be thought desirable and practicable on behalf of those employed in "public" or "private" gangs, if the circumstances of their employment should be found to require it, be kind enough to answer, as fully as you are able, the following questions:—
    (*a.*) What is the number of children, young persons, and women employed in agricultural labour singly or with a few others*
    In your parish?
    On your farm?
    (*b.*) Give as nearly as you can the following particulars as to the number and age of such persons so employed.

Males.					Females.						
Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.		Total Females.
									Married.	Unmarried.	

* If there is no return under the head of Private Gangs (P. 2), please to include in this place and in the following table, all the children, young persons, and women employed.

(*c.*) In what kinds of work are they employed during the different seasons of the year?

In Spring, in

In Summer, in

In Autumn, in

In Winter, in

(*d.*) Do they live on or near the farms on which they work?
If not, how far have they to come from their homes to their daily work?

(*e.*) What are their usual hours of work upon the land?

(*f.*) What are their hours, reckoning from the time of leaving home to go to work in the morning to the time when they come back from work?

(1.) Of those who live near the farm in which they work?
(2.) Of those who live at a distance

(*g.*) What are the times allowed for meals?

(*h.*) Does the demand upon their physical powers injuriously affect their health and constitution?

(*i.*) Are the young or the females, whether young or grown up, subject to any ill-treatment?

(*j.*) Do any special employments injuriously affect females or the young generally?

(*k.*) Have you any observations to make as to the effect of the employment of females in agriculture on morals and on their proper training for domestic duties?

(*l.*) Taking into consideration the demand for labour in your parish and neighbourhood, and the pecuniary resources of the agricultural labourers, are you prepared to recommend that any restriction should be placed on the employment of females in field work?

If so, would you limit the restriction to females of a defined age, or would you prohibit female labour in the fields altogether, excepting at hay and corn harvest?

(*m.*) Taking into consideration the demand for labour in your parish and neighbourhood, and the pecuniary resources of the agricultural labourers, are you prepared to recommend that any restriction should be placed upon the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed in farm labour?

If so, please to state the age below which you would recommend that boys should not be so employed.

(*n.*) Do you see reason for recommending that the distance to which children and young persons should be allowed to go to work in farm labour should be restricted according to age?

If you should think some restriction of distance in reference to age desirable, do you approve of the following, which assumes that boys under eight years of age would not be allowed to be employed at all?

No boy of 8 years of age and under - 10 No girl under the age of - - 13			1 mile.
No boy of	10 years of age and under 11	To be taken to work beyond a distance from his or her home of	2 miles.
	11 „ „ 12		
	12 „ „ 13		
No young person of	13 „ „ 14		3 miles.
	14 „ „ 15		
	15 „ „ 16		4 miles.
	16 „ „ 17		
	17 „ „ 18		

Have you any modification to propose in the above table?

(*o.*) Do you see reason for recommending that any restriction should be placed upon the hours of work of children and young persons employed in agriculture; and if so, what amount of restriction would you propose?

III. As to requiring some Amount of School Attendance in the case of Children earning Wages by Employment in Farm Labour.

23. The Commissioners being instructed to inquire to what extent, and with what modifications the principles of the Factory Acts can be adopted in reference to children employed in agriculture, "especially with a view to the better education of such children," your opinion is invited on the following points:

24. The three modes by which the prescribed amount of school attendance of children employed in trades and manufactures is obtained are—

By the Factory Act (7 Vict. c. 15. ss. 31–9).
1. By half day at school and half day at work.
2. By alternate whole days at school and whole days at work.

By the Print Works Act (10 & 11 Vict. c. 70. ss. 2, 3, 26).
3. By school attendance for a certain number of hours during the preceding six months.

25. Accompaning this circular you will find brief extracts from the above Acts, together with some remarks from the Sixth Report of the Children's Employment Commission (1862), ss. 65 to 74, and ss. 80 to 83, referring to the difficulties to be encountered, and the possible modes of meeting them.

26. You are requested to state which of such modes of enforcing some amount of school attendance would seem most applicable to the circumstances of your parish and neighbourhood; or whether a combination of one or more of them would better meet those circumstances; or whether any other mode that you might wish to suggest appears to you preferable.

27. How far is the school attendance affected by the distance that the children have to go to school?

28. How far is the school attendance affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents?

29. Are any efforts being made for the industrial training of girls, in connexion with elementary education, with especial reference to preparing them for their domestic duties?

30. Have you any remarks to make on the subject of cottage accommodation, in regard to its effect on morality or education; or on the health and comfort of the labouring poor?

31. How many cottages per hundred acres are considered sufficient for the accommodation of the persons employed on the land in your parish?

32. Is there that proportion of cottages in the parish?

33. If not, what is the proportion?

34. Are the cottages conveniently situated with respect to (*i.e.* not more than a mile from) the farms on which the work is to be done?

35. Is there a sufficient number of cottages with two bedrooms, or three bedrooms, and a sitting room, for the larger families?

36. Are the cottages crowded, either with members of the family, or with lodgers?

37. Give a general description of the cottages in your parish in respect of,—1. Construction (including size of rooms, ventilation, and drainage). 2. Accommodation (including number of rooms in proportion to the family, water supply, garden, outhouses, &c.) 3. Ownership; *i.e.*, whether by landowner, or by tradesmen with whom the tenants are obliged to deal, or by other person or persons. 4. Rent.

38. If there is deficient cottage accommodation, is any progress being made towards increasing it?

39. Is the Union Chargeability Act (28 & 29 Vict. c. 79. March 1866) having any effect in causing an increase of cottage accommodation?

40. By the Act 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114., July 1864) the Enclosure Commissioners are authorized to advance public money for the improvement of land, including, by s. 9, "The erection of labourers' cottages, " * * and the improvement of and addition to labourers' cottages."

Have you any remarks to make upon this Act in regard to any additional facilities, or any reduction of cost, that might cause greater progress to be made in supplying the want of good cottages?

41. Can you suggest any mode by which good cottage accommodation could be provided on self-supporting terms, and involving no disadvantage to the tenant?

IV. As to the Numbers of Children at School and the Numbers employed in Farm Labour.

42. It would be of great assistauce towards forming a correct judgment upon the question of requiring some amount of school attendance in the case of children earning wages by employment in farm labour if you could furnish the Commissioners with precise information, or with an approximate estimate, relating to the points embodied in the following tables.

43. Approximate Number of Children of the Agricultural Labouring Class in attendance at Elementary Schools* in the parish of .

In Summer.

On the Register of some School.				In average Attendance.			
Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.	
Under 10 Years of Age.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.
Total Boys - -		Total Girls -		Total Boys - - -		Total Girls - - -	

* Of all denominations, and whether public or private.

In Winter.

On the Register of some School.				In average Attendance.			
Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.	
Under 10 Years of Age.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.
Total Boys - - -		Total Girls - -		Total Boys - - -		Total Girls - - -	

44. Approximate Number of Children of the Agricultural Labouring Class neither at School nor at Work.

In Summer.

Boys.		Girls.	
Between 8 and 10 Years of Age.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.
Total Boys - - - -		Total Girls - - -	

In Winter.

Boys.		Girls.	
Between 8 and 10 years of Age.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.
Total Boys - - - -		Total Girls. - - - -	

45. Approximate Number of Young Persons* of the Agricultural Labouring Class, growing up with insufficient Education.

Remarks on their actual state of Education.

Males
Approximate number - - - - - - -
Females
Approximate number - - - - - - - -

46. Is there an evening school in your parish ?
47. How many weeks in the year is it open ?
At what periods of the year ?
48. How many nights per week ?
49. How many hours per night ?
50. What is the number of scholars ?

On the Register.		In average Attendance.			
		In Winter.		In Summer.	
Under 12.	Above 12.	Under 12.	Above 12.	Under 12.	Above 12.

51. What are the subjects of instruction ?
52. Do you consider that the evening school adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school ?
53. What do you find to be the principal difficulties in the way of maintaining an efficient evening school ?

* *i.e.* Between 13 and 18 years of age.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE EMPLOYMENT OE CHILDREN, YOUNG PERSONS, AND WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE (1867).

2, Victoria Street, Westminster,
July 8, 1867, S.W.

HER Majesty's Commissioners beg the favour of answers to the questions contained in the following circular.

It may be returned, without payment of postage, to the address printed on the last page.

CIRCULAR OF INQUIRIES AS TO THE EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN,* YOUNG PERSONS,† AND WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE.

1. Parish of in the county of post town.
2. Name of the person filling up this return (State whether occupier or owner).
   Date, . Address
3. Population of parish according to census of 1861. Acreage,
4. Cultivation; whether chiefly arable, chiefly pastoral, or mixed.
   The cultivation is

1. At what ages, and at what times of the year, are boys employed in agriculture on your property or farm, and in your parish generally?
2. Are girls so employed? and if so, how many, at what ages, and in what occupation?
3. To what extent are women so employed?
4. To what distances do the children, young persons, and women employed on your farm and in your parish generally go to work?
5. What are their hours of work?
6. Is it desirable to place any restriction on the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land, and if so, at what age would you place the limit?
7. Is it desirable to place any restriction on the employment of females, and especially of the young, in agriculture?
8. What means of education are provided in your parish for the children of the agricultural labouring class? Do they take advantage of them? If not, are there any other causes besides early labour to which you attribute their non-attendance?
9. What is the condition of the cottages in your parish and neighbourhood? Are they sufficient for the supply of the labour required? Are they conveniently situated with respect to the farms? Are they overcrowded, and have any evil results to morality come under your notice in consequence? Are they well supplied with water, and well ventilated?
10. Have all the cottages in your parish and neighbourhood good gardens, or, in default of gardens, have all the cottages allotments of land conveniently situated for the use of the labourers and their families?

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(*a.*)

Royal Commission on the Employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women in Agriculture (1867).

CIRCULAR TO MAGISTRATES, CLERGYMEN, AND OTHERS.

2, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.
1867.

SIR,

ON the 10th of May 1867, Her Majesty was pleased to issue a commission to Mr. Hugh Seymour Tremenheere and Mr. Edward Carleton Tufnell, "to "inquire into and report upon the employment of "children, young persons, and women in agriculture, "for the purpose of ascertaining to what extent, and "with what modifications the principles of the Factory "Acts can be adopted for the regulation of such "employments, and especially with a view to the "better education of such children."

The Commissioners direct me to express to you their hope that you will be disposed to grant to them your aid towards the full elucidation of the subjects of great public interest embraced in the inquiry.

The Assistant Commissioners appointed with the approval of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department are, the Rev. James Fraser, Frederick Henry Norman, Esq., the Hon. Edwin B. Portman, George Culley, Esq., and the Hon. Edward Stanhope.

One of these gentlemen will address himself to you. He will point out to you the manner iu which your co-operation might be most effectual, and will thankfully avail himself of any assistance which it may be in your power to render him.

I have, &c.
PRIDEAUX SELBY,
Secretary.

(*b.*)

Royal Commission on the Employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women in Agriculture (1867).

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The Commissioners direct me to express to you their hope that you will be disposed to grant to them

* Children are those under 13 years of age. † Young persons are those between 13 and 18 years of age.

your aid towards the full elucidation of the subjects of great public interest embraced in the inquiry.

The Assistant Commissioners appointed with the approval of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department are, the Hon. Edward Stanhope, the Hon. Edwin B. Portman, George Culley, Esq., Frederick Henry Norman, Esq., and Robert Frederick Boyle, Esq.

One of these gentlemen will address himself to you. He will point out to you the manner in which your co-operation might be most effectual, and will thankfully avail himself of any assistance which it may be in your power to render him.

The subjects on which the Assistant Commissioner will especially desire to be favoured with such information as it may be in your power to give him, are the following:—

The age at which children are usually employed;

The employment of women and girls in farm work;

The hours of work of women and children, and the distance from their homes to their places of work;

Their health; and the state of their education.

I have, &c.,
PRIDEAUX SELBY,
Secretary.

(*c.*)

Royal Commission on the Employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women in Agriculture (1867).

SIR, 1867.

IN accordance with the instructions of the Commissioners appointed by Her Majesty "to inquire into "and report upon the employment of children, young "persons, and women in agriculture, for the purpose "of ascertaining to what extent, and with what modi-"fications the principles of the Factory Acts can be "adopted for the regulation of such employment, and "especially with a view to the better education of "such children," I beg leave to invite your attention to the enclosed papers.

I purpose doing myself the honour of waiting upon you on next should that day not be inconvenient to you; and I shall be obliged by any aid you may be good enough to afford towards the objects of the commission.

It would greatly facilitate the inquiry with which I am charged if you would kindly supply the information asked for in the circular herewith enclosed.

I have, &c.,

Assistant Commissioner.

(*d.*)

Royal Commission on the Employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women in Agriculture (1867).

GENTLEMEN,

Under the authority of the Royal Commissioners, I am charged with the duty of collecting the facts pertinent to the inquiry which Her Majesty has intrusted to them in this county.

For this purpose, it is my intention to visit the parishes in the Union of , and to apply for information to such persons resident in them who may be able or disposed to give it to me. You will appreciate the importance both of the inquiry itself, and of my deriving the information bearing upon it from the most trustworthy sources.

It has been suggested to me that the object which I have in view would be most easily attained by my having the opportunity of meeting in conference in each parish the persons mainly concerned in the employment of labour, or interested in the condition of the poor—the owners and occupiers of land, the clergy, the magistrates, the overseers and guardians of the poor, the medical and relieving officers, &c.—at which conference questions could be freely interchanged, opinions frankly expressed, and the knowledge and views of one party supplemented, or (if necessary) corrected, by those of another. I need not say that the opportunity of such a conference would be eagerly seized by me.

I have been led to believe that, if I addressed myself, as I now venture to do, to the clergyman and churchwardens of each parish, they would take the trouble in furtherance of so important an inquiry, to call such a meeting, and try to secure the attendance of all persons interested in, or acquainted with, the subject. I wish the evidence I collect to be complete, and the Report which will be founded upon it to represent all classes of opinions.

The time at my disposal is limited, and the area covered by the inquiry is large. I cannot expect to fix a day and hour for visiting which will be convenient to all, but I trust that, if a meeting is called, a sufficient number of gentlemen to represent the parish may be induced to attend.

I propose, therefore, to visit on next, at o'clock, and shall consider myself under a great obligation if you will so far co-operate with me as to call such a meeting as I have described.

I have &c.,

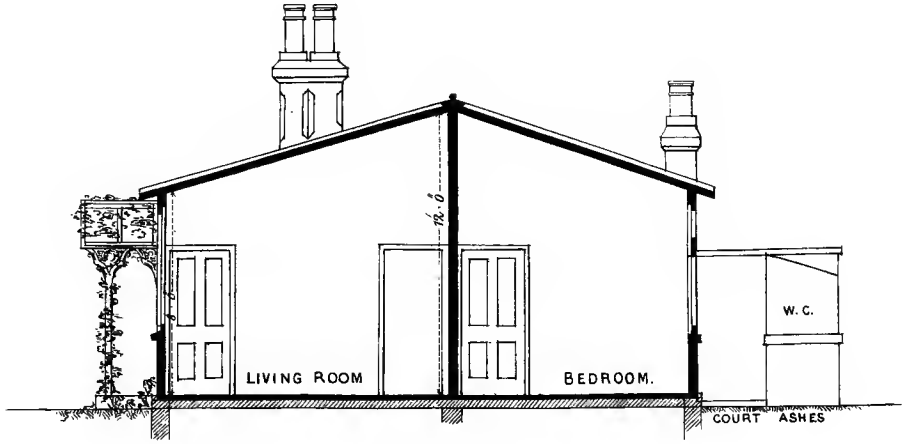
Assistant Commissioner.

P.S.—I enclose some of the Commissioners' Circulars. The papers referred to in one of them I will bring with me. On the day of my visit I should naturally make my way first to the Parsonage, whence I could be directed to the place of meeting.

To the Clergyman and Churchwardens of

LONDON:
Printed by George E. Eyre and William Spottiswoode,
Printers to the Queen's most Excellent Majesty.
For Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

No. 1.



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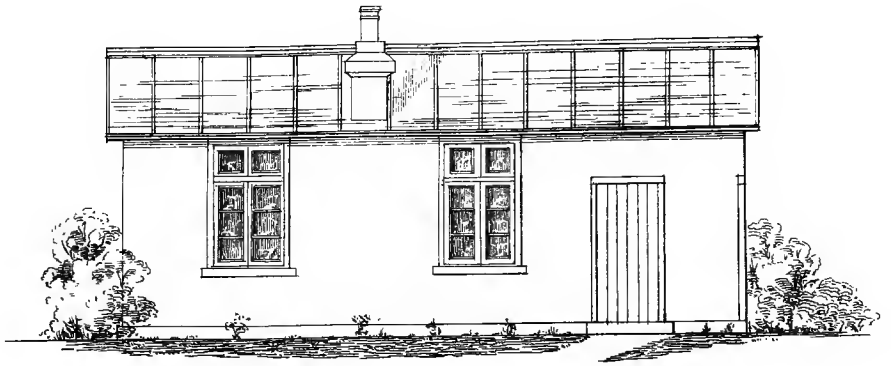

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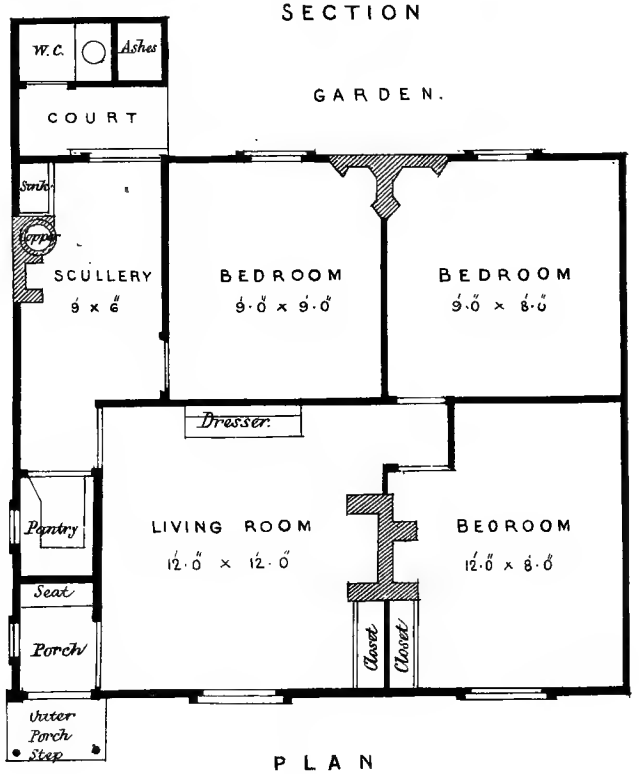
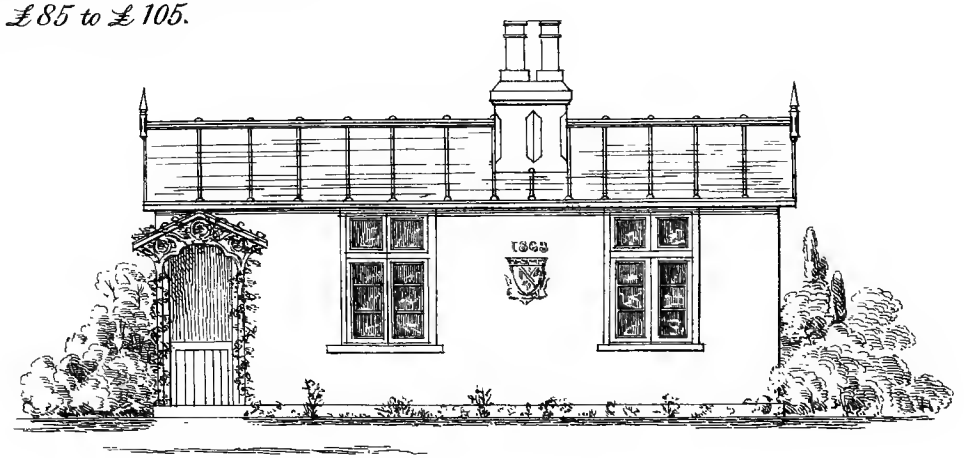


PLAN

Design.
FOR A 3 BEDROOM COTTAGE
with Living Room Scullery Pantry &c.
built with Nicoll's Patent Slabs,
Cost £85 to £105.



FRONT ELEVATION.

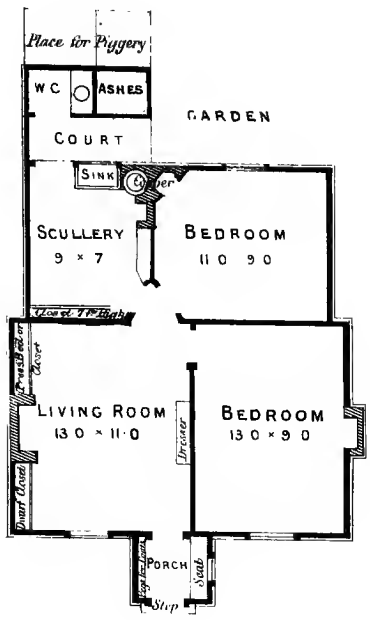
Samuel Sharp.

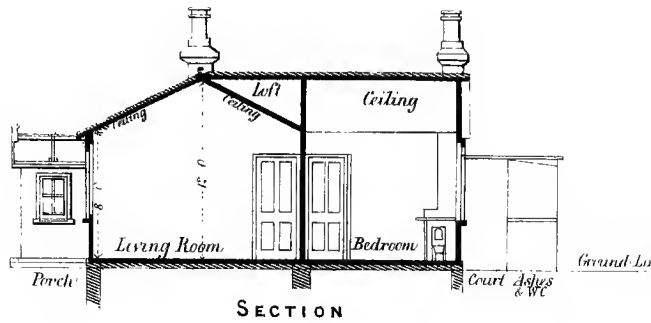
No. 2.

Plan of a Cottage

with 2 Bedrooms Living Room & Scullery; with place for another Bed. built with Nicoll's patent Slabs

Cost £60 to £70.





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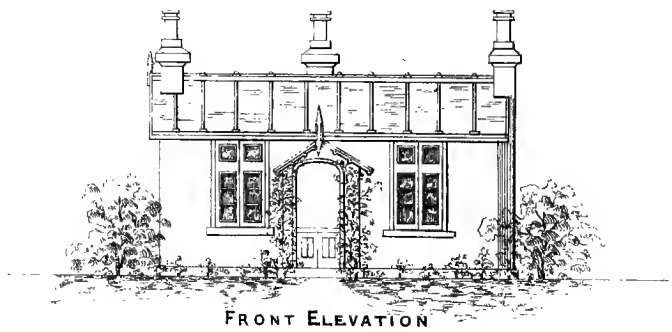


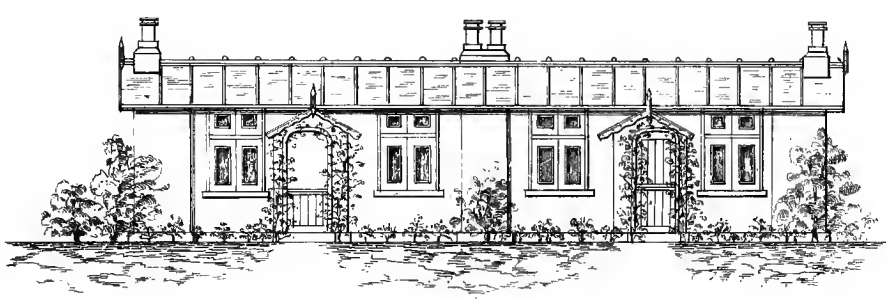
FRONT ELEVATION

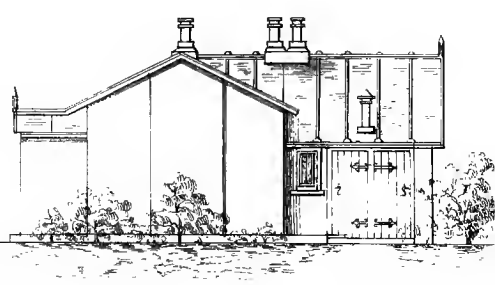
Design

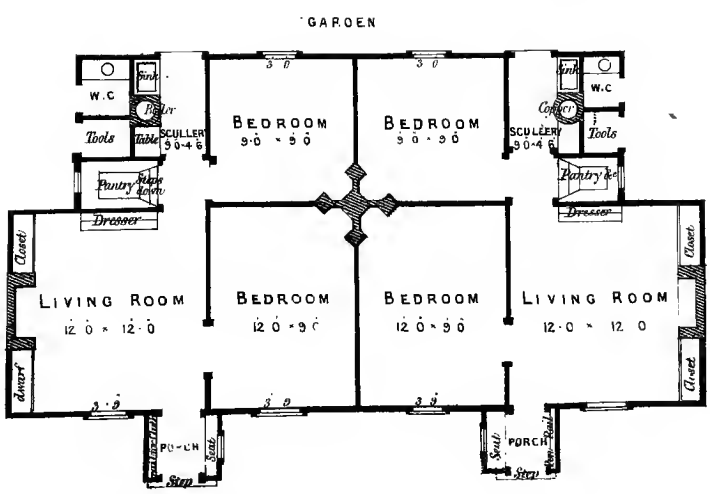
For Two Cottages

with one Living Room Two Bedrooms & Scullery. Pantry Porch W.C & Tool House, built with Nicoll's patent Slabs

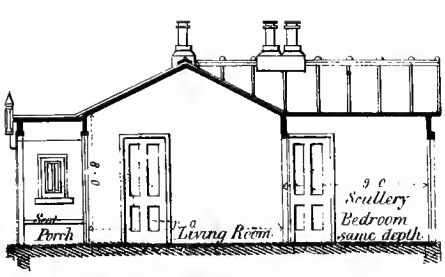
Cost £120.







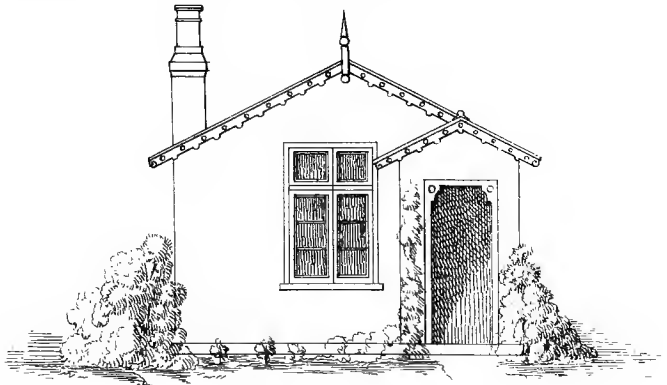
PLAN



SECTION

Samuel Sharp.
Architect.

No. 3.



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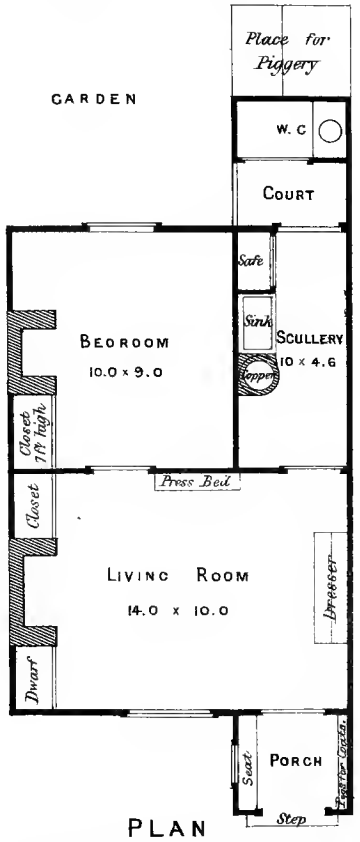
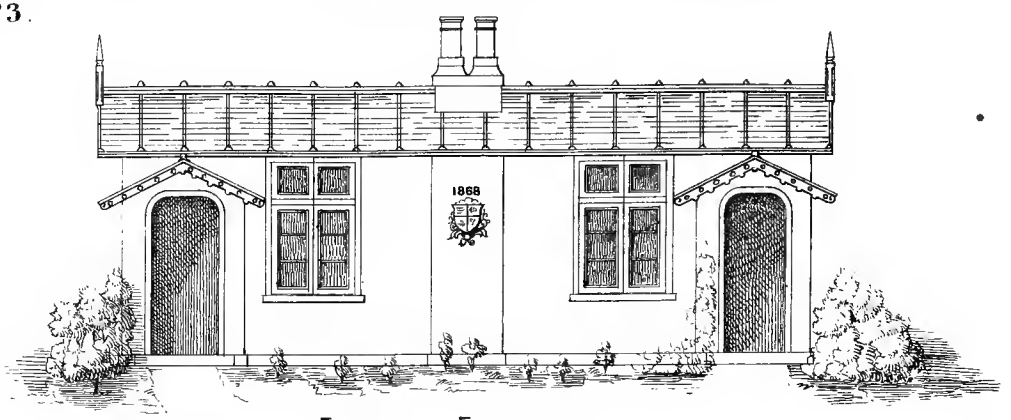


PLAN

FOR A SINGLE BEDROOMED COTTAGE

built with Nicoll's Patent Slabs.
Cost £50 to £55.



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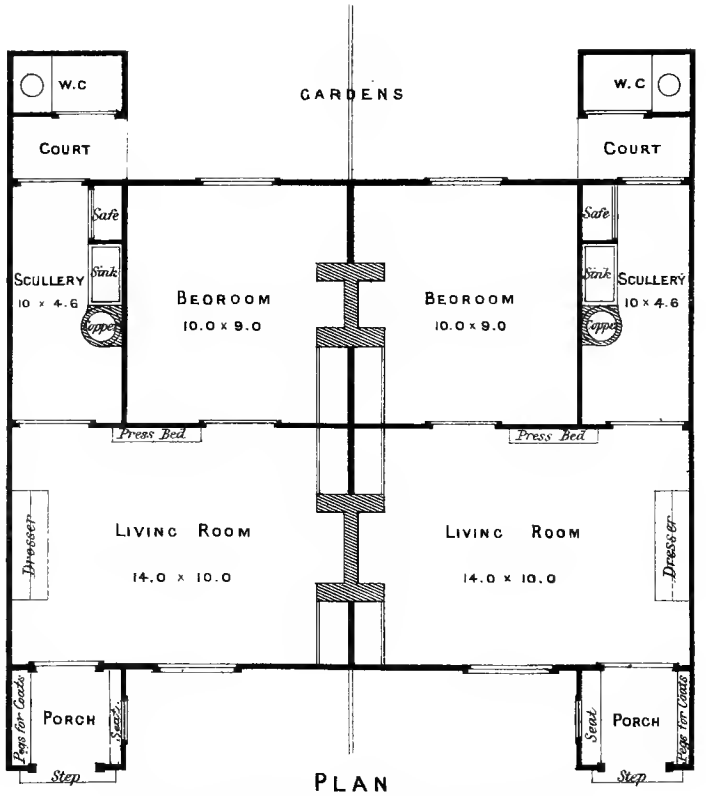

PLAN

FOR A DOUBLE COTTAGE WITH ONE BEDROOM

built with Nicoll's Patent Slabs.
Cost £100.

Samuel Sharp

COMMISSION ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PERSONS, AND WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE (1867).

APPENDIX PART II.

TO

FIRST REPORT.

EVIDENCE

FROM

THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY GEORGE EDWARD EYRE AND WILLIAM SPOTTISWOODE,
PRINTERS TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.
FOR HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.

21157. 1868.

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EVIDENCE

ACCOMPANYING

THE REPORTS OF THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS.

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EVIDENCE.

TABLE showing NUMBER and AGES of CHILDREN, YOUNG PERSONS, and WOMEN employed in AGRICULTURAL LABOUR in the under-mentioned Parishes in NORFOLK, ESSEX, SUSSEX, and GLOUCESTER.

County and Union.	Parish.	Population.	Males. Under 8.	Males. Between 8 and 10.	Males. Between 10 and 13.	Males. Between 13 and 18.	Males. Total Males.	Females. Under 8.	Females. Between 8 and 10.	Females. Between 10 and 13.	Females. Between 13 and 18.	Females. Over 18. Married.	Females. Over 18. Single.	Females. Total Females.
County of Norfolk. Union of St. Faith's.	Alderford cum Attlebridge.	122	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	2	1	7	0	10
	Booton	246	0	0	3	21	24	0	0	2	4	7	3	16
	Crostwick	144	0	2	5	2	9	0	0	0	1	4	1	6
	Drayton	451	2	2	4	4	12	0	0	0	0	8	0	8
	Felthorpe	514	0	1	5	15	21	0	0	0	0	3	3	6
	Frettenham	221	0	3	14	14	31	0	0	0	3	17	5	25
	Haynford	643	0	2	17	11	30	0	0	1	1	21	2	25
	Honingham	328	0	1	6	17	24	0	0	0	3	25	5	33
	Horsford	665	0	6	8	15	29	0	1	4	6	17	1	29
	Horsham and Newton St. Faith's.	1,150	0	4	8	20	32	0	0	0	0	12	1	13
	Morton	149	0	1	4	5	10	0	0	2	0	7	2	9
	Rackheath	271	1	1	7	6	15	0	0	0	2	19	2	23
	Sprowston	1,407	0	1	8	5	14	0	0	2	3	13	0	18
	Gt. Witchingham	642	1	6	7	17	31	0	1	0	5	12	7	25
	Wroxham	409	0	0	2	8	10	0	0	0	0	7	1	8
Depwade Union.	Bunwell	907	0	3	7	20	30	0	0	0	0	20	6	26
	Denton	518	0	1	8	8	17	0	0	0	2	10	3	15
	Morningthorpe	140	2	3	3	9	17	0	0	0	0	9	0	9
	Moulton	442	Ages not given.				4	Ages not given.						8
	Rushall	242	0	0	12	4	16	0	0	0	0	14	8	22
	Starston	481	0	2	6	7	15	0	0	0	2	8	1	11
	Stratton	743	0	0	1	5	6	0	0	0	0	9	1	10
	Thorpe Abbott's	256	0	0	6	10	16	0	5	0	1	4	3	13
	Tibenham	729	0	6	19	22	47	0	0	1	1	32	8	42
	Wacton	243	0	2	8	4	14	0	0	1	5	8	1	15
Docking Union.	Bircham, Great	489	0	0	6	14	20	0	0	0	0	16	4	20
	Brancaster	999	0	9	18	10	37	0	0	20	10	10	5	45
	Burnham Thorpe	437	6	2	5	14	27	0	0	0	6	7	8	25
	Docking	1,625	0	8	22	36	66	No return; but only "a few" said to be employed.						
	Holme	305	0	1	4	13	18	0	1	1	3	5	2	12
	Ingoldisthorpe	372	2	8	7	14	31	0	0	0	1	3	0	4
	Ringstead	522	0	9	12	16	37	0	0	0	0	12 to 20	0	12 to 20
	Shernborne	142	0	0	4	8	12	0	0	3	4	8	2	17
	Syderstone	528	0	0	0	11	11	0	0	0	0	12	6	18
	Titchwell	146	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	4	0	4
	Waterden	40	0	0	4	6	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Swaffham Union.	Ashill	696	0	2	12	24	38	0	0	0	6	34	4	44
	Bradenham, W.	417	0	0	12	0	12	0	0	0	0	6	0	6
	Gooderstone	570	7	13	17	29	66	3	6	5	4	7	15	40
	Holme-Hale	464	0	12	14	7	33	0	0	9	3	22	6	40
	Oxburgh	225	0	0	4	7	11	0	0	2	1	5	1	9
	Saham Toney	1,286	0	0	15	30	45	0	0	0	10	30	20	60
	Stanford	200	0	4	9	14	27	0	0	0	1	0	2	3
	Threxton	80	0	0	4	9	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Totals	21,606	21	116	339	513	993	3	14	55	89	482	139	790
County of Essex. Halstead Union.	Colne, Earl's	1,540	0	2	34	31	67	0	0	0	0	12	2	14
	Colne, Engaine	627	2	4	13	12	31	0	0	0	0	4	2	6
	Colne, White	400	0	7	9	12	28	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Ridgewell	795	4	8	14	32	58	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	*Tilbury	236	0	2	4	5	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Yeldham, Little	307	0	5	5	10	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Witham Union.	Braxted, Little	111	0	1	4	2	7	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Feering	804	0	4	12	30	46	0	0	4	6	16	2	28
	Totals	4,820	6	33	95	134	268	0	0	4	6	34	6	50

* It is stated that in Tilbury about 45 females are employed in the summer, weeding, for not more than from five to ten days in all.

TABLE showing NUMBER of CHILDREN and YOUNG PERSONS under Instruction in DAY and EVENING SCHOOLS of 139 Parishes.

COUNTY OF NORFOLK.

Parish.	Population.	On Register of some School. Boys. Under 10.	Boys. Between 10 and 13.	Girls. Under 10.	Girls. Between 10 and 13.	Average Attendance. Boys.	Average Attendance. Girls.	Centesimal Proportion to Population of. Enrolment.	Centesimal Proportion to Population of. Average Attendance.	Night School. No. of Scholars.	Night School. Remarks.
ST. FAITH'S UNION.											
Alderford	29	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Attlebridge	93	2	0	2	3	2	5	5·7	—	30	Difficulty of classification.
Booton	246	4	0	12	7	4	17	9·3	8·5	—	No evening school.
Catton	646	33		33		20	20	10·3	6·5	—	No return.
Crostwick	144	14	0	10	7	11	14	21·5	17·3	—	No evening school.
Drayton	451	37	5	23	15	30	28	17·7	12·8	30	Indifference; difficulty of discipline.
St. Faith	1,191	56	2	40	0	38	30	8·5	5·7	25	Indifference.
Felthorpe	514	39	7	35	15	34	41	15·7	12·6	—	No evening school.
Frettenham	221	15	1	24	10	15	28	22·1	19·4	—	Do.
Hainford	643	30	0	18	7	18	14	8·5	5·1	—	Do.
Haverland	131	30		30		23	19	45·8	32·0	—	Do.
Hellesdon	496	20	5	24	16	18	30	12·9	9·6	—	Do.
Honingham	328	14	4	17	0	18	17	10·6	10·6	40	No difficulties found.
Horsford	665	34	3	39	18	30	41	14·1	10·6	53	Want of teachers.
Horstead	608	22	0	22	14	19	30	9·5	8·0	—	No evening school.
Morton	149	4	2	2	5	6	7	8·7	—	—	Do.
Rackheath	271	13	5	12	6	12	13	13·2	9·2	16	Distance and late employment.
Ringland	360	14		14		11	7	7·7	5·0	—	No evening school.
Sprowston	1,407	30	20	35	25	—	—	7·7	—	—	Do.
Swannington	385	14	1	21	10	7	19	11·9	6·7	30	—
Weston	471	40		40		30	30	16·9	12·7	—	No return.
Witchingham	675	20	17	29	9	30	30	11·1	8·8	16	—
Wroxham	409	30	8	28	12	29	29	19·0	14·1	36	—
UNION OF DEPWADE.											
Aslacton	656	19	1	22	3	11	14	11·3	7·0	18	Want of teachers.
Bunwell	907	65		45		60	35	12·0	10·4	25	Do.
Denton	518	41	10	38	24	38	46	21·8	16·2	16	Do.
Dickleburgh	895	46	20	28	20	45	35	12·0	8·9	25	No difficulty.
Hempnall	1,094	30	19	28	17	30	26	8·5	5·1	—	No volunteer teachers.
Morningthorpe	140	4	0	8	4	4	11	11·4	10·7	6	—
Moulton	442	13	3	18	16	—	—	11·3	—	—	No night school.
Needham	380	Neither day or night school in this parish.									
Pulham Magd.	1,056	55	15	25	10	50	26	9·9	7·2	20	Want of interest in the scholars.
Rushall	242	6	1	7	3	6	9	7·0	6·2	—	No night school.
Shimpling	219	No school; children attend in other parishes.									
Starston	481	23	4	20	8	23	24	11·4	9·7	10	Want of teachers; distance.
Stratton, Long	743	15	2	15	10	14	20	5·6	4·5	21	Want of teachers.
Tharston	351	No return of day school				—	—	—	—	7	Want of funds; indisposition.
Thorpe Abbotts	256	12	1	9	9	10	14	12·1	9·3	16	Want of funds, and so of teacher.
Tibenham	729	34	6	29	5	32	25	10·1	7·8	30	Sufficient voluntary help, but expense falls on clergyman.
Wacton	243	16	2	16	6	14	16	16·4	12·3	19	Want of funds.
UNION OF DOCKING.											
Bircham, Great	489	68	10	49	25	70	—	31·0	—	43	Successful.
Brancaster	999	98	9	64	45	82	76	21·0	15·8	29	Want of funds.
Burnham Thorpe	437	27	15	24	16	31	29	18·7	13·7	19	Results not altogether satisfactory.
Docking	1,625	60	30	70	36	—	—	12·0	—	52	Want of volunteer teachers.
Heacham	990	41	0	39	10	35	42	9·0	7·7	21	Superintended by clergyman.
Holme-by-Sea	305	14	2	17	2	11	13	11·4	7·8	—	No return.
Hunstanton	485	45	9	40	26	40	48	24·7	18·1	25	Want of teachers.
Ingoldisthorpe	372	11	3	9	13	12	17	9·7	7·7	16	Do.
Ringstead	522	33	8	50	10	—	—	19·3	—	17	Do.
Sedgeford	742	38	3	38	9	32	35	11·8	9·0	No night school.	Do.
Shernbourne	142	4	5	6	8	3	13	16·2	11·2	10	Indifference of scholars.
Syderstone	528	No return of numbers.				—	—	—	—	12	Irregular attendance.
Thornham	728	60	3	51	16	42	55	17·8	13·3	22	Want of interest.
UNION OF SWAFFHAM.											
Ashill	696	40	10	39	22	33	42	15·9	10·8	30	Insufficient influence of parents.
Bodney	117	A school, but no return.				—	—	—	—	—	—
Bradenham, East	399	22	5	22	6	13	17	13·7	7·5	19	Want of desire of self-improvement.
Bradenham, West	417	20	0	30		15	20	11·9	8·3	12	Only the Vicar to teach.
Cressingham, Great	531	38	4	50	9	32	48	19·0	15·0	15	Indifference of parents and children.
Cressingham, Little	243	22	7	19	8	17	16	23·0	13·6	No night school.	Indifference of scholars.
Gooderstone	570	22	17	16	18	29	23	12·8	9·1	16	No interest taken by farmers.
Hillborough	366	27	4	21	10	—	—	16·9	—	13	Want of proficiency.
Holme Hale	464	27	5	35	7	27	32	15·9	12·7	No return	Unwillingness to attend.
Oxburgh	225	29	3	47	16	26	47	42·2	32·4	18	Difficulty in finding fit teachers.
Saham Toney	1,286	40	40	43	22	60	50	11·2	8·5	30	Distance; fatigue; want of interest.
Sporle	806	—	—	—	—	32	47	—	9·8	25	Want of funds.
Stanford	180	11	0	12	1	9	9	13·3	10·0	11	Weariness and dislike of control.

Norfolk, &c.

Rev. J. Fraser.

a.

TABLE showing Number of Children and Young Persons under Instructiou in Day and Evening Schools of 139 Parishes—*continued.*

COUNTY OF ESSEX.

Parish.	Population.	On Register of some School. Boys. Under 10.	Boys. Between 10 and 13.	Girls. Under 10.	Girls. Between 10 and 13.	Average Attendance. Boys.	Girls.	Centesimal Proportion to Population of Enrolment.	Average Attendance.	Night School. No. of Scholars.	Remarks.
UNION OF HALSTEAD.											
*Colne, Earl's -	1,540	57	9	68	7	53	60	9·1	6·0	25	School open 24 weeks.
Colne, Engaine -	627	27	8	29	11	21	26	11·9	7·5	20	—
Colne, White -	400	31	0	20	2	—	—	13·2	—	30	Want of teachers.
Maplestead, Great	462	24	0	23	6	23	18	11·4	8·8	20	To be thoroughly efficient should be open for a longer period.
Ridgewell - -	715	42	3	47	9	27	38	14·1	9·0	21	Unwillingness to attend after work.
†Stambourne - -	537	7	5	15	15	10	20	7·8	5·5	20	Indifference, poverty, and ignorance of parents.
Tilbury	232	15	2	11	8	10	17	15·5	12·0	18	—
Yeldham, Little -	307	12	2	20	6	12	23	13·0	11·4	10	Open all the year.
Braxted, Little	111	16	0	13	4	14	15	29·7	26·1	0	Can't provide for supervision.
Fairstead - -	351	24	0	30	10	15	25	18·2	11·1	13	Distance and fatigue.
Feering -	804	34	2	34	11	24	30	10·0	6·7	34	The expense.

COUNTY OF SUSSEX.

Parish.	Population.	Boys. Under 10.	Boys. Between 10 and 13.	Girls. Under 10.	Girls. Between 10 and 13.	Average Attendance. Boys.	Girls.	Enrolment.	Average Attendance.	No. of Scholars.	Remarks.
UNION OF HORSHAM.											
Beeding, Lower -	1,149	78	19	63	39	76	72	17·3	12·7	54	Scattered character of population.
Ifield - - -	1,307	68	35	102	55	74	100	19·8	13·3	—	No evening school.
Itchingfield -	377	20	5	10	10	22	16	11·9	10·0	—	Do.
Rusper -	590	20	10	35	10	22	30	12·7	8·8	—	Do.; want of teacher.
Slinfold -	755	32	3	27	5	23	22	8·8	5·9	—	Want of efficient teachers.
Southwater - -	600	27	6	26	18	21	31	12·8	8·6	27	Distance.
UNION OF HAILSHAM.											
Bodle Street Green	800	47	3	51	4	31	40	13·1	8·8	—	No evening school.
Chiddingly - -	992	41	2	30	1	—	—	7·4	—	20	Distance.
Hooe -	496	No return.		—	—	—	—	—	—	11	—
Hurstmonceux	1,180	53	1	69	4	34	46	10·7	6·7	16	Want of funds.
Laughton -	742	29	2	29	2	20	20	8·3	5·3	—	Given up.
Ninfield -	587	31	4	30	15	25	35	13·6	10·2	—	Do.
Warbleton -	958	40	8	37	7	30	30	9·6	6·2	25	Unwillingness to attend.
Wartling -	733	27	9	33	11	26	30	10·9	7·6	18	Want of teachers.
UNION OF WESTHAMPNETT.											
Aldingbourne	772	23	6	26	9	23	27	8·2	6·4	—	—
Appledram -	129	3	0	4	0	—	—	5·4	—	—	No evening school; no accommodation.
Birdham -	436	25	5	27	6	23	19	14·4	9·6	—	No evening school.
Boxgrove - -	666	31	12	76	29	35	82	22·2	17·2	25	—
Donnington -	183	16	1	23	10	13	32	27·3	24·5	—	No evening school.
Fishbourne, New	341	9	0	10	2	6	10	6·1	4·6	6	—
Lavant, East and Mid.	678	39	5	45	13	37	47	15·0	12·3	25	—
Mundham, North	426	35	5	43	17	24	25	23·4	11·5	—	No evening school.
Oving -	949	51	15	56	15	61	66	14·4	12·3	—	Do.
Singleton	556	40	15	30	20	52	48	18·8	17·8	15	Want of teachers.
Tangmere	201	13	0	13	2	11	13	13·9	11·9	—	No evening school.
Walberton - -	588	62	4	88	5	50	72	26·7	20·7	—	Do.
Wittering, East -	223	25	0	15	10	—	—	22·4	—	—	Do.
Yapton -	589	33	15	29	7	42	29	14·2	12·0	—	Do.

COUNTY OF GLOUCESTER.

Parish.	Population.	Boys. Under 10.	Boys. Between 10 and 13.	Girls. Under 10.	Girls. Between 10 and 13.	Average Attendance. Boys.	Girls.	Enrolment.	Average Attendance.	No. of Scholars.	Remarks.
UNION OF CIRENCESTER.											
Amney Crucis	648	29	4	33	8	—	—	11·4	—	—	No evening school.
Barnsley	327	17	0	8	6	—	—	10·0	—	20	—
Baunton	122	13	0	15	2	8	11	24·5	15·5	7	Want of funds.
Brimpsfield -	392	27	0	27	0	10	10	13·7	5·1	—	No evening school.
Cerney, North	692	28	7	45	10	24	39	13·0	9·1	—	Given up.
Cerney, South -	1,006	50	12	35	30	47	49	12·6	9·6	41	Want of interest.
Coates	417	30	10	33	13	38	39	20·6	16·0	—	None this year.
Colesbourne -	261	8	5	19	4	10	20	13·7	11·1	9	—
Kemble - -	466	22	2	23	6	15	19	11·3	7·2	20	A straggling village.
Meysey Hampton	352	27	2	24	6	—	—	16·3	—	21	—
Poole Keynes	180	15	2	13	2	14	10	17·7	13·3	14	Want of appreciation.
Rendcombe	241	8	0	11	2	7	9	8·7	6·6	—	No evening school.
Somerford Keynes -	386	33	4	27	11	27	23	19·4	12·9	—	Do.
Stratton -	596	29	6	28	15	29	24	13·0	8·8	11	—
Winston -	230	10		17		6	10	11·7	6·9	—	No evening school.

* This return is strictly of those who are children of agricultural labourers. The total numbers on the registers of the several schools for the poor are: boys, 120; girls, 144. About half of these are children of small tradesmen and of persons working at an iron foundry.

† There are two plaiting schools at Stambourne not included in this return, at which some little elementary instruction in reading and repeating hymns is said to be given, at each of which 40 children, or more, may be in training.

TABLE showing Number of Children and Young Persons under Instruction in Day and Evening Schools of 139 Parishes—*continued.*

County of Gloucester—*continued.*

Parish.	Population.	On Register of some School.				Average Attendance.		Centesimal Proportion to Population of		Night School.	
		Boys.		Girls.							
		Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Boys.	Girls.	Enrolment.	Average Attendance.	No. of Scholars.	Remarks.
UNION OF THORNBURY.											
Aust - -	180	17	10	11	10	17	10	26·6	15·0	—	Given up.
Cromhall - -	681	32	0	24	16	20	36	10·2	8·2	14	——
Hill - - ..	216	8	4	12	6	7	16	13·8	10·6	—	No evening school.
Olveston -	1,699	92	32	90	18	80	81	13·6	9·1	46	——
Rockhampton	248	9	2	15	6	8	12	12·9	8·0	—	——
Thornbury - -	2,544	108	49	106	31	110	90	11·1	7·8	18	No interest taken.
UNION OF NEWENT.											
Aston Ingham -	568	22	7	24	6	—	—	10·3	—	25	Want of money.
Corse -	700	No return.		—	—	14	14	—	4·0	—	No evening school.
Preston -	78	5	0	3	0	—	—	10·2	—	—	Do.
Taynton -	689	29	5	28	15	18	22	11·1	5·8	—	Do.

In estimating the state of education exhibited in the above table, the following considerations must be borne in mind. It is usual to take the Prussian standard as that at which we ought to endeavour to aim. That standard, at the date of the report of the Duke of Newcastle's Commission, was 1 in 6·27 of the population, at school (vol. i. p. 573). That is the same thing as a centesimal proportion of 15·9. But before making comparison, two things, very important in their bearing, have to be remembered; viz. (1) that the Prussian school age is from 5 to 14; and (2) that, owing to education being compulsory, the number of children in average attendance approaches the number of children enrolled much more closely than it does with us, where the former number is rarely more than 75 per cent. of the latter. Again, the difference between 1 in 6·27 of the population at school between the ages of 5 and 14, and the same proportion at school between the ages of 3 and 12, would have a very important influence on the educational results of the two systems. Speaking roundly, it may be said that in those parishes where the average attendance is *not below* 12 *per cent. of the population*, the school attendance may be deemed satisfactory. Turning the eye back to the tables, it will be observed how very few schools there are that reach this proportion; and when it is attained it would often be found, upon further inquiry, that the proportion is rather apparent than real, and that the school (as at Haverland), perhaps draws its supply of children from an area containing a considerably larger population than the parish in which it stands, and to which it is supposed to belong. Conclusions, however, must not be pressed too hard either way, partly in consequence of no returns having been received from fully half the parishes in the district, and partly from the loose, untrustworthy way in which the registers of uninspected schools are too commonly kept, so that the return, particularly of average attendance, is sometimes nothing better than an estimate or guess.

RESOLUTION OF THE NORFOLK CHAMBER OF AGRICULTURE.

At a meeting of the Norfolk Chamber of Agriculture held on the 12th October 1867, Clare Sewell Read, Esq., M.P., in the chair.

It was unanimously agreed,—

That the Norfolk Chamber of Agriculture having heard the nature of this inquiry fully and ably explained by the Assistant Commissioner, record in the following statement the conclusions at which they have arrived.

They would preface these observations by saying that they have entirely excluded from their consideration the gang system as practised in some parts of Norfolk; they cordially approve of the Agricultural Gangs Act of last session, and believe that it will be found sufficient to cure what is certainly an exceptional but still a great and perhaps the chief evil in the employment of women and children in agriculture.

Farm work, on which women and children are usually employed, is certainly healthy, and is by no means excessive or laborious. With the exception of hay and corn harvests, and in the case of small boys keeping birds or herding stock, the time women and young children are employed on a farm does not exceed eight hours a day. This Chamber, therefore, considers any restriction of the hours of labour quite unnecessary, and that there is not the slightest cause for limiting the agricultural operations on which women and children should be employed.

The amount and quality of education in the rural districts of Norfolk have greatly increased during the last twenty years. There is now, for the most part, a school in every parish, in which the children of the agricultural labourers can be educated at the trifling cost of one penny a week. But still there are many small parishes without schools, and in the sparsely populated part of the county there is and must ever be the difficulty of placing school-houses within a reasonable distance of many cottages. Norfolk, however, has good cause to complain of the small encouragement and support her schools receive from Government, as only 147 out of the 757 parishes receive any portion of the educational grant.

Notwithstanding, however, the great increase of schools, the moral and social improvement of the labouring population has not been such as the friends of education hoped, and had a right to expect. No doubt children, especially boys, are taken from school much too young, but the lack of sufficient cottage accommodation and the absence of parental authority in the homes of the labourers have done much to destroy any good effects of such improved education.

This Chamber would offer no objection to an Act prohibiting the employment of any child in agriculture under 9 years of age, but if such a restriction is imposed means must be taken that the child should attend school and not be kept at home in idleness. It has been stated that children are but of little use upon a farm till they are 11 or 12 years old. It is certainly during the summer months that the labour of women and children in any numbers is chiefly needed, and without such labour it would be difficult, if not impossible, for the Norfolk farmer to cultivate his land in a neat and husbandlike manner. It is during this busy portion of the year that the rural schools are now shut up and the teachers take their holidays. As the successful performance of almost all farm work depends on the seasons and the weather, it is

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expedient, in a national point of view, that every facility should be given to the farmer to employ all the labour at his commend during the busy season of the year; therefore, if any legislation is attempted, certain dispensing powers should be granted during the summer and autumn months.

Should attendance at school be insisted upon after the boy has commenced labour, school on alternate days or weeks would render the boy almost useless to the farmer. He had much better attend the school for a certain number of consecutive days during the leisure part of the year.

As restrictions on the employment of juvenile labour will fall heavily upon the parents, and in the case of large young families with crushing severity, it will be more than ever necessary that good schools should be provided. Compulsory education in the mildest form will most probably lead to an education rate, and this Chamber protests most earnestly against such a rate being levied exclusively upon the *real property* of the kingdom.

In conclusion this Chamber would express its opinion that any further restriction on the employment of women and children in agriculture, and any regulations respecting the education of the children of the labouring classes, are not required, and should they be attempted must utterly fail to produce any good result until reasonable and sufficient cottage accommodation is provided.

CHARLES N. GILMAN,
Secretary of the Norfolk
Chamber of Agriculture.

The subject of this inquiry was very fully discussed by the Chamber at two meetings attended by several leading landowners, and many of the largest and most intelligent tenant-farmers in Norfolk. At the first meeting held on September 28, I attended, at the invitation of the committee, and made a general statement of the nature and scope of the Commission, and of the principles that it was sought to apply to the regulation of the employment of women and children in agriculture.

At the conclusion of my address, the chairman called upon various influential gentlemen present to express their sentiments; and after a discussion of upwards of two hours, the meeting was adjourned for a fortnight, during which interval the committee prepared the resolution which was proposed and adopted at the second meeting. As many of the speeches delivered at both meetings not only indicate remarkable liberality of sentiment in those who uttered them, but also throw considerable light on more than one branch of this inquiry, the more important ones are here transferred (with the simple omission of a few irrelevancies) from the columns of the *Norwich Mercury*.

Mr. Oldfield, at the request of the president, first addressed the chamber. He hoped there would be an improvement made in the present cottage system, for that such an improvement was needed in Norfolk was shown by the return he had handed to Mr. Fraser. It was his intention to have a return made of the number of cottages in each parish in his Union, and the number of living or sleeping rooms in each cottage for the information of the Commissioners, and he hoped the chairmen of other Boards of Guardians would have similar documents prepared, as they would be worth having in the board rooms, and would enable the board to call the attention of owners of property to the necessity of providing proper cottage accommodation. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Jas. Everitt said he had for many years taken an interest in the education of the poorer class, and he was sure the farmers would not be discharging their duty in the station in which they had been placed by Providence, if they neglected to cultivate the minds of the children of the labouring population. Would they, as fathers of sons and daughters, think they had performed their duty to their children if they neglected to give them such training, or to improve their minds so as to place them far above the brute creation? Mr. Everitt mentioned the case of a highly respectable labourer in his employ, unfortunately neglected in his education when young, whom he recommended to a gentleman for a certain situation, but who did not succeed in obtaining it, as it was indispensable that he should read and write. It was his firm belief, therefore, that they would not be exercising their proper duty if they did not contribute towards the advancement of the education of the labourer. Mr. Everitt quoted a passage from a publication, arguing that there was as much need for the cultivation of the mind to make it bright or to bear fruit, as to polish a diamond or to prune our trees, and went on to say that when our future historians shall record in the brighter pages of England's career the advancement made in this century in the sciences and arts, there will be one dark spot to stain those pages; the fact that tens of thousands of the sons and daughters of toil were brought up in entire ignorance, and could neither read nor write. (Hear, hear.)

Dr. Dalrymple.—Might I put a question to Mr. Fraser upon what appears to be an important point with regard to the education of the labouring classes? I have listened with very great pleasure and much instruction to what has fallen from him; but I want to know, as a piece of information from a mind that has thought so much, what his views are? How he proposes to keep up a certain amount of that education, which he proposes to give up to the age of ten? because, so far as my experience of the working classes has gone—I am speaking now of the boys between the ages of ten and fifteen or sixteen, when they come to appreciate the real value of education—I have seen nearly the whole of the advantages which they have received up to that period almost, if not entirely, obliterated from their minds. (Hear, hear.) I have seen that those who were fair and reasonable scholars in elementary knowledge, at all events by the time they are fifteen or sixteen, have lost the art of putting their letters together, have lost very much the art of writing, and I fear still more the desire to read. It is not sufficient to say that there are many instances to the contrary, because in all classes we have bright examples of those who have endeavoured, through the greatest difficulties, to raise themselves, and keep up their education to the level of those around them. They are to be found everywhere, and they are not wanting amongst the labouring class. The great object appears to me to keep those you have once educated in a tolerable state of polish. I do not think it possible boys can keep up their writing and arithmetic as accurately as when they left school; but they should be able to keep up a useful modicum of it. The other point is upon the question of what Mr. Fraser calls either direct or indirect compulsion in sending children to school. In one or two of the States of America, Massachusetts more especially, the compulsory principle has entirely failed. The law which existed there was, I believe, that every parent should send his child to school, that school being provided upon the easiest possible terms—what is termed the common school—and if children were found running loose in the streets, becoming an annoyance in villages or towns, the police had power to put them somewhere until the school hours had elapsed, and then take them back to their parents, saying, "Why was not this child sent to school?" That system has entirely broken down, but, curiously enough, that portion which now exists is that of apprehending the unfortunate little ones in the street. I should, therefore, be glad to learn a little more of what the indirect compulsion might be. I can understand, if I followed Mr. Fraser correctly, that he would not allow any child to be admitted to labour at a certain age without he brought a certificate of having the required education; but how about getting them to school if the parents will not send them? My own experience in this county has been, when several years ago I was associated

with a deceased beneficent gentleman, the late Mr. Geary, for the purpose of getting the lower classes—the scum of the gutters, literally—to go to school, that it was found absolutely impossible to get parents to send their children where they might get a common education, and where they would be comfortable and kindly treated. At that time, and up to this moment, you have no means of reaching those who are so far steeped in their own ignorant condition that they will not recognize the advantage of education. How we are to reach those at present I do not see, and it is that I hope something has occurred to Mr. Fraser which has induced me to put these few questions.

The Rev. J. Fraser.—With regard to the idea that is in my own mind of how we are to keep up the learning—the littte stock of learning—the child may have acquired up to the age of ten years, and which, in too many cases, is found to be obliterated at present, I would only remark that the real school age at present is so different from the nominal school age, and I do not like to draw any very general conclusions from present experience. I have been furnished with statistics from several schools, showing that children who had been nominally at one school for four or five years, have really attended school for less than half that period of time, and in the diminished period at such intermittent intervals that it is quite impossible that anything like systematic education could have been communicated to them. I hope, if we could secure the regular daily attendance for five years of our children at a fairly efficient school, we should put into them, so solidly and so permanently that they would not be likely to lose it, what I have ventured to call the "keys of knowledge." If it could in any way be managed that they should be kept at school to a higher age than ten, I, for one, should be glad to see it, for I do not wish to restrict the school age to any certain limit. I confess that, in rural districts, my great hope lies in night schools—or partly in night schools, and partly in that increased desire that is growing up in parents on all hands to see their children educated. I believe we must not judge the generation of the future from the generation of the past, or even the generation of the present. I hope, and I see signs for hoping, that the class of thoughtless parents who do not value the education of their children because they have none themselves is fast passing away, and that in their places there is growing up a class more educated, who see the value of education, and will be glad to avail themselves of any opportunity for educating their children that may be placed in their way. A woman, to whom I was speaking last night, gave me this as her opinion: She said she had no schooling herself, that she knows the want of learning, and that is what makes her so anxious her children should have a good education. If we had in every parish, as a part of the regular organization of that parish, a night school for the four or five winter months, I think we should have in that the instrument which would supply the place of those provisions of the Factory Acts which require a certain period of education for the child between eight and thirteen. I am not at all ignorant of the difficulties surrounding the establishment of night schools. They in most cases succeed when the clergyman himself takes the management of them. The village schoolmaster is rarely found competent to conduct a night school. He brings into it his notion of day school discipline—discipline that may act very well with little imps of children between the age of five and ten, but would be unsuitable to young men of 18, 19, 20, or 25. Therefore, I quite feel the difficulty surrounding the organization of anything like a system of night schools, but I also feel that without them the educational condition of our labourers will never be as satisfactory as it should be. With regard to the operation of any compulsory enactment, I am quite aware that the compulsory enactments of Massachusetts have failed. I was sent, in 1865, to report upon the common school system in that country, and I found it admitted generally throughout America, that the compulsory system of education, as it has been hitherto applied, has failed. In that country it is not wanted. There is, speaking generally, such a desire on the part of the people to be educated that they really do not want compulsion, and it is the rarest thing possible in America to find an American born citizen unable to read and write. Compulsion also took a form in America that was singularly disagreeable to the republican mind. It took the form of a fine—the parent who did not send his child to school was liable to a fine which might amount to 20 dollars. Public sentiment did not support the law, and, consequently, it became utterly inoperative. As Dr. Dalrymple has said, there are truant officers, yet it is not a satisfactory arrangement. The Americans do not like their children being brought up before the magistrates, in company, perhaps, with the lowest criminal; therefore the truant officer cannot be made to do his work, because public sentiment is against him. Last night I read an article in the *Nation* newspaper, a leader of public opinion in America, upon this very subject of public education, and there it was said most distinctly they must have a compulsory system, and the statement was based upon this ground:—"That if the State compels me "to pay for the education of my neighbour's child, I "have a right to require from the State that that "neighbour's child should be receiving the benefits "of the system to which I am contributing." (Hear, hear.) And the last paragraph of this article of the *Nation* was, "That every State must see to it that "it brings into effective operation a compulsory sys-"tem of education." My own indirect system of compulsion is simply based upon this idea: that I believe the parents, even the most thoughtless ones, are getting to be more alive to the advantages of education, and that the thoughtless ones will feel that if the law says, "You shall not send your child to "labour, or get anything from his earnings until he "can pass this elementary examination," that alone will act as a most direct encouragement to them to send them to school. (Applause.)

Mr. R. England thought the standard of education Mr. Fraser had raised for the agricultural labourer was certainly not too high. It was his opinion, and he thought his brother farmers would agree with him, that the labouring child under ten years of age was of slight advantage to the farmer. (Hear, hear.) But he confessed to having an objection to anything like compulsion in the matter of education. (Hear, hear.) As with the Americans, he thought they would find the system would fail. He believed the agricultural labourer had already a very keen perception of the advantage of education; that he was anxiously striving to have his children educated; and that he took every opportunity of doing so. The day for legislative interference, he thought, was passing away. He was very glad to find the night school system was generally approved. In his parish the system had worked wonders. He could produce children under thirteen years of age, working on his farm, who could read and write, who were earning their families 4*s.* or 5*s.* a week, and who kept up what slight amount of learning they acquired in their early days by attending the night school, which was principally under the supervision of the clergyman and one or two other residents, and was generally conducted by the village schoolmaster, whose salary was regulated by his attendance thereat. Again entering his protest against compulsory education, he said Government had no more right to dictate to the labouring man how he should dispose of his child's time than it had to dictate to him or any other member of society. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. C. C. Hardy was pleased to see the friendly manner in which Mr. Fraser's remarks had been received by the chamber. After stating that he concurred with the recommendations of Mr. Fraser, Mr. Hardy confessed that he did not believe that, as

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a rule, the ignorance of the children arose so much in consequence of their employment by the farmers as from the indifference of the parents upon the subject of education. Mr. Fraser had fixed the limit below which children should not be employed on the land at ten, but he would gladly go further and say twelve. (Cries of "No, no.") He did not think it would cause the slightest inconvenience to agriculture if boys under twelve were prohibited being employed. In his parish (Letheringsett) of 800 inhabitants, he did not believe there were four children who were employed by the farmers under twelve years of age. Hence, he did not think that by making that penal there would be the slightest inconvenience to agriculture in that district. With regard to the half-time system, he failed to see that it could be applied to the agricultural labourer, and the same with regard to sending the children to school ten hours per week. The main cause of the bad state of education he believed arose from irregular attendance at school, and as the ten hours a week system would amount to bad attendance, he thought it would be better to stipulate that the child should not be sent to work for a certain age, provided that up to a certain age he should be taught. He did not think the farmers as a class were so friendly to education. Boards of Guardians, too, were more anxious as to the expenses of the Union than for the education of the children, else why was not Denison's Act carried into force in more Unions? That Act enabled guardians to pay for the education of the out-door pauper children, but he believed it was almost a dead letter. After the last discussion in the Chamber upon this subject he took the trouble to inquire how many out-door pauper children in the Erpingham Union between three and twelve were sent to school by the guardians; and he found there were 200 children, for whom no national provision for their education was made. Why the education of the children of the out-door pauper should be neglected he could not see; he thought those children ought to receive instruction as well as those of the in-door poor. (Hear, hear.) As to what Dr. Dalrymple had said about children forgetting what they had learnt, the fact was there were three-quarters of a million of children in this country who attended school only 100 days in the year, and who, consequently were most imperfectly educated. In the next place, half a million children belonging to the working classes attended private schools, many of which were worthless, and were kept by persons who had failed in almost every other profession. These private schools were often nurseries of laziness, idleness, and immorality; and hence the children sent to those schools got on so slowly that the parents became perfectly disgusted with the name of education. By carrying out the recommendation of Mr. Fraser, that children under ten should not be sent to work, the result would be that children would be sent to school at an early age. Statistics proved that children attending a good infant school, at the age of ten, would know far more, would be able to read better, than a child who did not go to school before he was six, and kept there until he was twelve. The early training was most important for the agricultural population. The objection as regarded the cottages was put forward, partially to check education; whereas there was no reason why the one should be antagonistic to the other. Much was due to the Norfolk press for effecting improvements in cottages in this county. Landlords were urged to build cottages upon an estate, for the benefit of the labourer; but that was open to grave objection, for there was generally the stipulation that the tenants of those cottages should be weekly tenants, liable to be turned out at a week's notice. (Cries of "No, no.") That, very frequently, was the case; indeed, but few landlords would like to build cottages for the benefit of the tenant farmers unless they could exercise that power. It might be necessary for the landlord to have that power, but it was against all feeling that the labourer should be turned out at a week's notice. It was bad enough to be sent adrift at a day's notice from one farm to another, but it was worse to be driven away from home, and all the social advantages of a house, at a week's notice. No doubt the night schools, where the children could be induced to attend, were good; but they ought not to be made the excuse for the absence of good day schools. The fact was, when lads had been at work all day, they came home hungry and rather sleepy. He was of opinion that it would be best to take steps to educate the children when young in the day school, then they could attend the night schools if they pleased, whilst they would also have the opportunity of obtaining a certain amount of instruction at the Sunday schools now established in all parts of the country.

The Rev. P. Gurdon thought it only due to the Guardians of the Union in which he had acted for a term of 16 years to state that he never found any disinclination amongst the gentlemen composing the board to allow a certain portion of the relief-money given to the out-door poor to go towards defraying the cost of the education of their children, provided that the money was paid to the schoolmaster by the relieving officer. (Hear, hear.) With regard to education generally, the rev. gentleman said, when he attended his churches on the Sabbath he was sorry to see that, out of some 60 labourers sitting before him, only about three or four had prayer-books in their hands. He knew that the remainder were very good scholars at the parish schools up to the age of 10, and perhaps 11, but they had subsequently entirely lost what they had acquired, in consequence of there being no means of carrying it on after they had left the school. He agreed with what had fallen from Mr. Hardy in reference to the boys attending night schools. When lads came home at night, tired and hungry, to a good supper, nature told them to lie down and sleep. The education of girls, though it needed to be considered, was not in such an unfortunate condition as that of boys. When girls went out to service they improved their education through the instrumentality of their master or mistress, who placed books, &c. in their hands. If girls went into the fields—he cared not whether in gangs—after they left school, then they contracted a species of immorality, of looseness of language and conduct, very rarely to be overcome. To that evil he attributed the unfortunate circumstance that this county had so many bastard children. At a meeting held in one Union there was a very general opinion that single young women should not work in the fields; and certain observations had been made in Parliament to the effect that they should not go to work until they reached the age of 16—the very age when the danger began. If he were a parent of such children he should keep them at home to do needlework, or send them to service; for so long as girls were sent to work in the fields, so long would there be a want of good domestic servants. (Hear, hear.) There was a sort of liberty felt by girls working in the fields, so that they would not settle down to be servants in comfortable houses, where their education and well-being would both be considered. (Hear.)

Mr. Pell, Chairman of the Central Chamber of Agriculture, addressed the meeting at the request of the president. He said it was with great pleasure he had attended that meeting and heard the statements made, because they had been so much in opposition to what he had understood to be the general feeling of the farmers and those interested in land in this county. He would add nothing to what Mr. Fraser had said as regarded the principles of the question before them. But there were one or two facts which Mr. Fraser had brought forward, upon which he might be able to assist in giving some information, especially with regard to the education of bailiffs and upper servants. He believed it to be very generally the case, if England were canvassed and the state of education examined, that many of the best bailiffs employed in this country were really uneducated. He was sure it was so in his own case,

and he could call to mind two men in his employ —one had been with him almost from a child—whose instruction had been very imperfect. Yet that had not prevented those men acquiring what he had not yet heard one word about—namely, information. Now a very strong distinction must be drawn between education and instruction which he would class together, and information. Education and instruction were a means by which information was to be obtained. There was no doubt that in the calling in which he was very much engaged, and in which almost every one in that room was concerned, a vast amount of information—more so than in any branch of business carried on in this kingdom—almost all that was essential, if not all that was essential—might be acquired without reading or without writing. That he ventured to assert as a practical man, but that did not for one moment remove the imputation he should be under, as an employer of labour, if he withheld instruction, and so restricted the children growing up into young persons to the humble employment of agriculture. There was such a yearning for instruction that they would not succeed in that effort if they attempted to make it; and, therefore, what they had to do was to direct it, to limit it, to show how far they would give it their hearty support, by putting it upon a footing suitable to the child of the agricultural labourer. He would not do too much at once, so as to complicate the question when compulsory education came to be considered. Ten was not too early an age to say that up to that period all children, rich and poor, should stand alike, as far as they had hours and time at their disposal, for receiving instruction. Then came the question, "Are those children not to be "permitted to work unless they bring a certificate that "they have spent a portion of their time in obtaining "some regular instruction?" He should be very glad if we could come to such a state of things, but he thought even that was surrounded with difficulties. It would be observed if it were insisted that the child should not work when it was 10, unless it had passed an examination satisfactorily to some inspector, that there was at once laid down the necessity of schools and teachers. If the law were to say to parents, "Your children shall not work until they can "produce some evidence that at 10 years of age "they have been at the school," the answer would be, "Where are the schools or teachers from "whom our children are to obtain this pass?" Mr. Fraser would admit that the number of certificated teachers was diminishing; that at the present moment there was a want of trained teachers fitted to give the sort of education the Government of the country considered indispensable. Therefore he should not be in too great a hurry to proceed to the second part, into which the subject of discussion had been divided. One word with regard to the cottages. There, again, they must be a little careful how they attempted to introduce the system of inspecting the buildings. The cottages at present were no doubt in a deplorable state; but he thought the principle that had been carried out in the metropolis to a great extent, with considerable success, might be extended to the country. It might be fairly said that no man should put up a building professing to be a home or residence of human beings, unless it complied with certain conditions, which should be laid down by statutory enactments,—that it should be well drained, or put in such a position that it could be well drained; that it should be of a certain material; the walls of a certain thickness; and the rooms contain a certain number of cubical feet. With regard to the employment of girls in the fields, he would only give his opinion that he should be sorry to see that employment totally forbidden. (Hear, hear.) After remarking that there were no gangs in the county in which he resided, he said there was work that could be done by females in the field, such as feeding poultry and cattle, and "spudding," which work was positively good for them, provided they had their instructions and were kept separate. As to immorality, as much of that would be found inside as outside the walls of houses. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Oldfield.—Would you consider your yardman to be a better man if he could read?

Mr. Pell.—All other qualities being equal, I should.

Mr. Oldfield.—I was away from home about turnip sowing time, when a good man of mine made a mistake because he could neither read nor write, he sowed me green round turnips instead of swedes. (Laughter.)

At the adjourned meeting, on October 12th, the president, C. S. Read, Esq., M.P., re-opened the discussion by stating that a fortnight previous the Chamber had the advantage of hearing a long and able statement from the Rev. J. Fraser, the Assistant Commissioner appointed to inquire into the employment of women, young persons, and children in agriculture, who, he believed, took in the whole of East Anglia, and though they were desirous of coming to some resolution in answer to his able address, yet it was found to be impossible in two or three small resolutions to embrace all the topics to which they particularly wished to reply, therefore the Council had drawn up a report, which he would request the secretary to read.

Mr. Gilman then read the report. (*See above, p. 5.*)

The *President*, in moving its adoption, said he was sure that all those who had the advantage of hearing or reading the statements made by Mr. Fraser at the different Union meetings must have felt that more reasonable and more truly Christian addresses were hardly ever delivered by any person. (Hear.) Mr. Fraser first of all told them that agriculturists could not long expect to be exempt from legislative interference; that all industries, with the exception of farming, had now come under the control of an Act of Parliament; and that even agriculture had the thin end of the wedge introduced into it last year by the passing of the Agricultural Gangs Act. He also told them the nature of those Acts, and explained to them some of the principles on which they were passed. He told them the main principles of the Factory Acts' Extension Act and the Workshops' Act. That the Acts involved three principles—first of all the physical principle; secondly, the moral principle; and thirdly, the educational principle. As far as regarded the physical principle, as applied to agriculture, they had said this, and he thought they had said it very justly, "the employment in which "women and children are engaged is certainly light, "and the hours in which they are employed are "short." Therefore they at once dismissed that part of the question. The second principle was the moral. Here, if they excluded the gangs—and that had been purposely done—he did not think there was quite so much in it as the majority of people in towns—and especially in London—seemed to think. It was, he thought, very right that if agricultural gangs were allowed to continue, the sexes should be separated. (Hear, hear.) As to the total separation of the sexes in all farming, there, he thought, the chamber would join with him in saying that it was impossible. They could not have the men carting barley in one field and the women raking it in another; nor could they have the men reaping hay in one piece and the women cocking it in another. (Hear, hear.) His opinion was that it was rather during play than work that any evil arose. (Hear, hear.) Supposing farmers could keep the sexes separate upon their farms, how could they stop the young people from assembling together at the dinner hour—how could they prevent them mixing as they went home from their work? It was a well-known fact that, if one went into a village street at nine or ten o'clock at night, he would see great boys and girls there, and, in all probability—for it was quite possible, as many knew—some of those great boys and girls slept in the very same room. Consequently, the idea of decency entertained by those whom he addressed could not by any possibility have the same effect upon people thus herded together as upon

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themselves. He must say, as to the employment of women in agriculture, that there had been a great deal of what he might term—and he would not say it disrespectfully—sentimental twaddle on the subject. (Hear, hear.) It had been said, "It is repugnant to "the refinement and delicacy of females to be em-"ployed in agriculture." They knew very well that the "refinement and delicacy" of their dairy maids would not allow them to milk—(hear and laughter)—and he supposed that in a few years they would tell them that trussing a fowl or dressing a hare was so extremely disgusting that they must have a man or some other person to superintend that operation. (Laughter.) Then women employed in agriculture were sometimes the objects of pity and sometimes of reprobation. Their dress even did not pass without comment. A lady the other day was asked what she thought of the dress of the female agricultural labourer as common in the west of Norfolk, and she replied in the fashionable and vigorous language of the present day, "It's "awfully disgusting." Now what was it? A woman wore a strong pair of laced highlows, good woollen gaiters, and skirts that, instead of being 18 inches on the ground, were 18 inches off the ground. He did not mean to say that was an elegant or by any means a becoming dress, but he was sure it was a useful one, and he believed if they met the same woman on Sunday, they would find that she had her parasol, her veil, her bugles, her crinoline, and all those other adornments which he supposed were the true index to the refinement of the English females (Hear and laughter.) Now he thought that field labour had been unduly blamed. It was not the field labour that did the harm, but the persons who were employed in it. Though gentlemen got up in that room and said, "When a poor girl goes to work "then she is contaminated, then she is spoiled;" yet, he contended, that, in all probability, she was spoiled and contaminated before she went. It was not the nature of the work that was the cause of evil, for they might as well say that gaols made people bad or workhouses made them poor. He contended that if there was a girl more troublesome than the rest, more independent, or more thoroughly good for nothing, she was the girl who went to farm work. He did not think the observation was at all applicable to the case of older women. If a woman had ever so small a family, and that family was young, she was very much better at home; but as there was a great number of women who had very little employment in their homes, field labour to them was both healthy and by no means objectionable. (Hear, hear.) He might give an instance. There happened to be two women living in a double cottage on his farm. One of them had formerly been a dairy servant, and accustomed to a great deal of hard work. She could not find a sufficient quantity of in-door employment, consequently she got fat and out of health. The other woman had only one child, and since its death she had been of a melancholy turn of mind. Those women asked him what they should do, and he told them they had better by half go out to field labour. They did so, and had continued to labour in the field ever since, and were now pefectly well. Those women were most respectable people, and he was sure the 4*s.* per week they each brought home was a very pleasant addition to their husband's twelve. As to the age that girls ought to be sent to work, he had always found that the girl of 11 or 12 years old was almost as strong as the boy of the same age, yet it was proposed that no girl should go to work until she was 15 or 16, just the time, as it was truly said, when her morals and health required the greatest protection. He contended there was no good neat farming without the assistance of this juvenile and female labour. (Hear.) He had lived in Wales, travelled in different counties in England, and been in Scotland, and he could say that he never saw a well-cultivated farm in his life but some women and children were employed upon it. If they went to Scotland they would be perfectly astonished to find in that forward and advanced country, where agriculture had always been considered in its greatest perfection, that the women were there employed in very much larger numbers than in Norfolk, performing almost the whole of the field work upon the farm. He maintained there were certain fiddling operations of husbandry, as he might call them, such as picking couch grass, singling turnips, weeding in the drills of corn after the horse hoe had gone through, that could not be said to be very laborious, to which the nimble hands and lithesome fingers of the children, with their short backs, were particularly adapted, and in which they could hardly expect men to be engaged. (Hear, hear.) Then they came to the last subject—the educational principle. They had said that they should have no objection whatever to limiting the age of children to be employed in agriculture at nine years. Some people might differ from them and say ten; some people might go so far as to say 12; but he was sure of this, that unless a boy went to work young, in nine cases out of ten he would not make a good labourer. (Hear, hear.) The Assistant Commissioner remarked that surely a boy's muscles at twelve were not so rigid as to be incapable of adapting themselves to their work. Be that as it might, he had always found—and he had no doubt they could bear him out—that if a boy did not go to work until he was 11 or 12 years old, in all probability he would be so stupid and so utterly unused to the labour set before him, he would be so disgusted to find smaller and younger boys better men than himself, that, unless he was a superior lad, he would get into a shuffling sort of way, which he would never get out of. If the employment of children in agriculture were continuous, then it might be that they might put the age at a higher limit. There were certain seasons of the year when women and children were employed, and must be employed in a farm, and there were some months in the year when they could readily dispense with a very great portion of them. It must be remembered that those restrictions, if imposed, would fall very heavily on the parents of the children. As farmers, they would hardly feel them at all, although, perhaps, it might be a certain amount of trouble to see that the child had the certificate, or was of the prescribed age. They might even get into trouble if a man hoeing turnips had his son picking after him, for the policeman might summon them for having a child they knew nothing about upon the farm. In vindication of the farmers, he must say they were not opposed to education. (Hear, hear.) They wished their labourers to be educated; and he would say this without fear of contradiction; if they had two men, one educated and the other uneducated, all things else being equal, the educated man would certainly be the best. (Hear, hear.) Nor did he think the charge brought against the Guardians of Norfolk was altogether right, as to their not encouraging education. What was the charge for education? The charge of a penny a week was really so trifling that it did not often enter into the calculation of the Guardians, but as he was acquainted with two or three different Unions, he could say that in all of them the Guardians, to a great extent, encouraged the education of the children of the out-door poor, for it was frequently the case, as was said at the last meeting by the Rev. P. Gurdon, that the school bill was brought in by the relieving officer, and of course, allowed by the Board; whilst in other Unions, where that was not the practice, the invariable rule was, "Is the child properly brought up? does it go to "school? If it goes to school, and is properly brought "up, we will allow you the fullest relief we can." With regard to that unfortunate bailiff who could not read and write, he thought the observation made relatively to him must be taken in a sort of general sense. They knew very well what were the sort of bailiffs a man got now-a-days. He got some fine young gentleman who would not work, or some broken-down farmer who could not manage his own business; so that, in all probability, those wanting working farm

bailiffs would rather have those who could not read or write, because they thought they would work. With regard to the schooling after the child went to work, Mr. Read contended that the system of sending the children to school on alternate days, or for alternate weeks, would be utterly useless to the farmer—(hear, hear)—it had better be something like so many hours in the year—and they must still look to the night and Sunday schools for perfecting and keeping up the education of our young rustics. He was sure this country owed a deep debt of gratitude to all those clergymen and gentlemen who undertook the management of those schools. But with regard to night schools, he thought a different class of teachers was required, for a man who might be useful in a good national school, would not, perhaps, have sufficient moral superiority to keep a lot of great boys and young men in order; therefore it was necessary the schoolmaster should be relieved from those duties, and that some other person should step in his place. (Hear, hear.) He considered that night schools had done a great amount of good, and that they ought to receive more encouragement and support from the Government. (Hear, hear.) He, for one, thought compulsory education was not needed. (Hear, hear.) He quite agreed with Mr. England, that the great evil of lack of education was in a great measure curing itself. (Hear, hear.) If they had compulsory education they must very soon have an educational rate, and then, as a matter of course, they would undo all the work that had already been done. But he would say this, as the country as well as the towns paid taxes to the Imperial revenue, so it was the duty of the Government not to allow educational votes to go only to our towns and large villages, but that those in the country should receive their fair and just proportion. (Hear, hear.) These were his views upon the subject. He did not mean to say that was all he wished to say, or all he could say upon the subject, but he thought he had answered some of the chief statements which had been made, and he hoped, although the report could not be passed unanimously as to every paragraph in it, that the majority of the Chamber would give it their support.

Mr. Bond seconded the adoption of the report.

Mr. Leamon spoke in support of the report, which he thought expressed what was the general feeling of the county. He was of opinion that some gentleman residing in the Western division should have moved and seconded the adoption of the report, inasmuch as it was to that division they were indebted even to the very fact of requiring it. (Hear, and laughter.) The Eastern division, being in the hands of a larger number of occupiers, was in a very different position to the Western, but he hoped the efforts of the former would, when occasion offered, not be lost upon the latter. On comparing the number of cottages in the Western division with those in the Eastern it would be seen—he would not furnish a report like that presented to the Assistant Commissioner by Mr. Oldfield, for such a one was never furnished before—that in the Eastern much greater care was taken of the people than in the Western. (A laugh.) Mr. Leamon said during the last few years comments had been made upon the cottage question so as to elicit the opinions of large proprietors, as at Docking the other day; consequently the friends of the poor had only to bestir themselves, and the proprietors would be compelled to do what they had not hitherto done, for he attributed it to them, and them only, that the agriculturalists were indebted for the Commission that had just been sent down. As landlords had not done what they knew and admitted to be necessary, it was useless educating the people, and asking them to be moral without giving them the things to make them moral. (Hear, hear.) By taking Mr. Oldfield's figures, and calculating how many persons would be allotted to each cottage, there would at once be seen what was the requirement in West Norfolk. He agreed with Mr. Read as to education. No compulsory education was wanted, for then all voluntary efforts would die away. In his own parish there had been spent, including the Government grant, collections, and children's pence, the sum of 160*l.* in a population of 1,300 upon education, and yet some of the parents were not content with what was done by Government, but had established a school of their own. This fact showed that the people desired and would have education. (Hear, hear.) Still the efforts hitherto made for them, as well as the schools provided, were amply sufficient to afford all the education the people required. To strengthen this statement, he would remark that the tradesmen in the villages actually sent their children to the parish schools, agreeing to pay an additional sum, because their children would receive a better education there than they would under the tuition of some broken-down schoolmaster. (Hear, hear.) Therefore, if that class thought it right to send their children to the parish school to get an education, surely the same school afforded ample means to the labourer of educating his family if he thought fit. Some families were so large that it was, no doubt, incumbent upon the parents to put their children to work at a much earlier age than they would otherwise have done; whilst, in other cases, where families were small, parents were desirous of keeping their children at school as long as possible, and he had no doubt that this would be the case with the parents of larger families if they could spare the little pittance the child brought home. Anything that would curb or restrict the farmer in the production of the article he has to produce, or in the cultivation of the soil, would in this free trade country he hoped be so opposed by the body of the middle class as never to be attempted by any legislature. All might rest assured that in the next session no member would move anything of the sort, because it would be looked upon as their "last "dying speech and confession;" and as they were, in the year 1869, to have an extension of the franchise, and consequently an election, he hoped to see the House of Commons different from what it is, and from what it had been, and that the landed interest would be far better represented than heretofore. (Hear, hear.) When that was the case then he was certain the agriculturalists would not be put down and looked upon as an uneducated, careless, and wanton class of people, ignorant and idle, without respect for those who lived under them. As a middle class they had to bear the burdens of all. They had to cultivate the land, to find the rent for the landlord, to provide for the labourer and his children, and in fact, to pay the taxes of the nation. Therefore they ought and must send such members to Parliament as would secure to them that share of patronage and support they were so well entitled to and so richly deserved. (Hear, hear.)

The Earl of Kimberley next addressed the Chamber. He said he was not about to speak directly against the report, because it contained much with which he entirely concurred. Still, at the same time, there were several points in it with which he could not agree. He listened with great attention—and with deserved attention—to the speech which his hon. friend in the chair had made—a speech that was characterized with great good sense in treating such an exceedingly difficult question—though he thought in one respect his hon. friend rather answered himself, because after telling the Chamber that he did not see any evils arising from the employment of female labour in the field, he said yet, after all, they were the most good-for-nothing women who found their way to the fields. That seemed to him (the noble lord) to imply that the agricultural labourer would not send his girls into the fields if he could help it; and he was confident, as was stated by his hon. friend, that it was the worst kind of women who found their way to the fields. He was sorry he could not agree with his hon. friend in his eulogy upon the employment of female labour in the fields, though he quite concurred with him in his practical conclusion that it would be out of the question to prohibit female labour in a county like this, because there were too many people dependent

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upon it, and the habits of the people had been so long used to it that such a measure would be quite out of the question. Nor could he agree with his hon. friend in regard to field labour being a desirable occupation for women, or an occupation which they must all look upon as one that must necessarily continue. He believed that labour in the fields was, on the whole, not suitable to women, and that it was not desirable for them to be so employed. He quite agreed that any such restrictions as would entirely prevent the employment of women in the fields in this or other counties would be altogether impracticable, and not such as that Chamber would recommend. With respect to gang labour, he concurred in the recommendation contained in a paragraph of the report. During the last session he ventured to take some part in the question in strongly recommending that some legislation should take place upon the subject, and he had a great deal of communication with his noble friend the Earl of Shaftesbury, who proposed the measure respecting it. The noble lord was entirely of opinion, and he agreed with him, that it was not desirable to go too far in preparing the first measure, and he thought that the Government, and those who supported it, had acted wisely in being satisfied with the measure that had been passed. Probably that measure might be found sufficient to effect all that was desirable; if not, it would be time to propose something further, though he hoped the measure would be found sufficient for the purpose. Another very important question, in which, as far as his knowledge enabled him to express an opinion, he concurred with the report, was as to the age at which labour in the fields should be prohibited—at least so far as concerned boys; as regarded girls he was doubtful. He was of opinion that nine was a reasonable age to fix as the limit for the employment of boys. Speaking rather from what he had heard from those who had practical knowledge than from his own special knowledge, he quite agreed with what his hon. friend the chairman had said as to the desirability of boys commencing agricultural employment at an early age. It was not desirable boys should work under the age of nine, because their years were too tender, and because some boys might be employed who were not physically able to bear the hardship and exposure to the weather. Still he thought nine was a reasonable age for boys to commence learning their work, because the boy who went into the fields and became acquainted with the occupation in which he was to be engaged in after life was far more likely to be a contented and efficient labourer than the boy who was kept at home and went into the field at a later age. With regard to girls, he must confess that the subject was difficult, and in their case he should prefer a higher limit. The matter was one of great difficulty, because, if girls went into the fields at all, even if they went at a later age, they were exposed to greater temptations; on the other hand, if they went at an early age they were exposed to hardship to which is was not desirable to expose young girls. Therefore, he must confess that he should like a higher limit than nine years for girls. Before leaving the question of labour he must say that there was one point in which he did not entirely concur with the report. As he understood the report, it said the Chamber were not of opinion that any restriction of length of time during which children should be employed would be necessary. The report stated, and he believed truly, that it was the habit and custom in this county that children should not be employed for a greater time than eight hours a day, and then it went on to say that no legislative restriction was therefore necessary. He somewhat doubted that. He thought, on the contrary, it was possible that in individual cases there might be a worse habit, so that too long hours might be imposed on children of tender yerrs, and that it would be better to sanction by legislation the good habit, namely, that under a certain age no child could be employed more than eight hours a day. In passing, he would make one or two observations upon the remarks Mr. Leamon addressed to the Chamber. He really thought Mr. Leamon hardly could have remembered what had been the whole course of legislation in this country when he spoke so strongly of the impropriety of England, a free trade country, interfering with the labour and the full discretion of the employers. Mr. Leamon must have forgotten that there were a variety of Acts, known as the Factory Acts, which did interfere in the most stringent manner between employers and employed; that for many years Parliament had been legislating in that direction; that that legislation had met with great success, and the general approval of the nation; and that there was not the slightest doubt that legislation would be extended further by the reformed Parliament to which Mr. Leamon looked with so much hope. He (the noble lord) sincerely hoped it would be so. He saw no reason why the agricultural labourer should in that respect be an exception. It must, however, be dealt with with careful reference to the particular condition of the labourers. Much of the legislation that would be applicable to other labour might not be applicable to agricultural labour; but, in principle, he saw no distinction whatever between the two cases. Gentlemen who remembered a portion of the discussion which took place in Parliament with respect to the Factory Act would be aware that the most vigorous opposition was offered by the employers of factory artisans to that legislation; but the landed interest, at that time seeing the evils so plainly, and not feeling the pinch of the interference, were most strong and ardent advocates for imposing those restrictions upon the manufacturers. (Hear, hear.) Now, he begegd to be allowed to state, the tables were turned. The landed interest had most wisely imposed legislative restrictions on factory labour, in which there were far greater and more crying evils than ever existed in agricultural labour —(hear, hear)—and having imposed those restrictions upon factory labour, having passed Acts which had been signally successful, and having introduced the principle into our legislation of interference between employer and labourer, they could scarcely be surprised to find that that good principle would be applied to the labour that they themselves employed, and that, within certain limits, there should be a desire on the part of those who were not employers of agricultural labour to see the same principle introduced with regard to it as with regard to the artisans under the Factory Acts. He would now say a word or two with respect to the very difficult question of the education of the agricultural labourer, and in anything he might say, though he might dissent partly from his hon. friend in the chair, or from other gentlemen, he wished to be understood as speaking with the greatest caution and hesitation on the subject, because, being so difficult, it would task a very wise man to deal with it properly. In the first place he perfectly agreed with his hon. friend in the chair when he said, "If you have compulsory education, "you must have a compulsory rate for education" —the two things clearly hang together. He wished to take this opportunity of saying—and he did not suppose he should meet with much support in that room—that he was unquestionably in favour of an educational rate. (Hear, hear.) He by no means dissented from the observation made in the last paragraph of the report, that it would not be just for an educational rate to fall exclusively upon the real property of the country. He saw no reason why it should, because clearly if there was one subject in which the whole nation and property of all kinds was more concerned than another, it was in the education of the people. (Hear.) Therefore he thought that the chamber, representing as it did persons specially interested in real property, were fully justified in saying that they hoped, if such a system were introduced, it would be made to fall fairly upon the general wealth of the nation. (Hear, hear.) He certainly looked forward with hope to the establishment some day of such a rate and without going further into

the subject, which would be much too large to deal with incidentally upon this occasion, his feeling was that, good as the voluntary principle might be, it could not, and never would, reach all parts of the country, because there always would be exceptions where such a system prevailed. He did not think it fair that real property alone should bear the burden of such an educational rate if it should be imposed; neither did he think it fair that the burden of supporting schools should fall principally upon the clergy and those people alone who possessed feelings of benevolence, but that it should be borne equally and fairly by all interested in having the general population of the country educated. He did not wish to be understood as valuing education too highly. He thought that very often advocates of education laid themselves open to a very telling reply, by putting too high the advantages of such education as could be given by us. His hon. friend the chairman said truly that, other things being the same, the educated labourer was better than the uneducated one. There could not be a doubt that many an uneducated man was better than an educated one. Many people might point to examples in which education had failed in great results; but great results could not be expected from the elementary education given to the agricultural population. Those who knew the condition of the agricultural labourer in countries where they had been better educated—in Prussia and the United States, for instance,—would say that the condition of the labourer was improved by education. But they should not expect immediate results from any educacational system. Gentlemen saw education improved and established, and could not observe any immediate change in the condition of the population, nor had they the slightest right to expect it. No considerable change could be expected in the habits of the population under a generation—it was impossible. The influence of those who had been brought up under the better system must be brought to bear, as parents and persons interested, upon the whole population before that effect could be produced. It was just the same with cottage accommodation. He had often heard gentlemen say, "I am very much disappointed. "I have built better cottages, and yet I do not find "the labourers improved in their general appearance." He thought they expected the improvement too soon. People said, "We have given a very good cottage "to the labourer, and we find he does not appreciate "it at all. He puts his apples into one room, "does not inhabit another, and would put his pig "into another if we would let him." (Hear, and laughter.) The fact was when a man, unaccustomed to good accommodation, had been brought up to dirty habits, he could not change those habits, though his children underwent an improvement in that direction. He could not help mentioning a remark once made to him by an old woman, whose cottage he happened to enter. He said to her, "This is a very "small cottage, and it must be uncomfortable." The old lady replied, "Well, I brought up 12 children in "it; it did very well for me. Lawk-a-mercy, now-"a-days it won't suit 'em. They won't have a cottage "like this; it must be something better." Thus, the people have been brought up to require something better, and where they had been taught to feel that education and good cottages were necessary, it would be found that the whole population would take a lift upwards. (Hear, hear.) But that would not take place in a moment. With regard to education in principle, he hoped to see the new Parliament deal with the question largely. With regard to the special questions alluded to in the report, he thought there was one point upon which his hon. friend would himself admit that some amendment might be made. At the commencement of the report it was said if they had the prohibition which the chamber recommended of employing children under nine years of age, there must be some guarantee that they would be educated.

The President.—We do not recommend anything; we simply say we should not object.

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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The Earl of Kimberley said, still, if there was a restriction, to which they would not object, against the employment of children under the age of nine years, the report said that some guarantee must be taken for their education. Now, that same guarantee must involve some kind of interference, compelling the children to be educated; and, for his own part, he could not help thinking that, up to a certain age, it would be found practicable, as his hon. friend indicated, to require that children should pass their time in schools for a certain number of hours during the year. He was sure the alternate day system was wholly out of the question, and that it would not be found possible to work so many hours per week. He, however, thought it might be possible that a certain number of hours in the six months should be required for children under a certain age, which he should be inclined to fix at 12 or 13. He would make one other remark as to the suggestion of Mr. Fraser in the admirable speech he made there on the last occasion—he had not the opportunity of hearing the speech, but he carefully read the report, which he had no doubt was accurate—namely, that no child should be employed until he had passed through a certain examination. He (the noble lord) thought it was rating the necessity of education too high, because he did not see why a boy might not be a very stupid boy and yet a very tolerable agricultural labourer. Such a system as that would press very hard indeed upon the population, to say that in every case children must pass through an examination to the satisfaction of an examiner. Mr. Fraser was himself sensible of the difficulty, and he met it in a certain way, though not satisfactorily, because he said if the child was a dunce he was to have a certificate that he was a dunce.* (A laugh.) Would it be fair to put a fool's cap upon a child's head, and send him out amongst his fellows, and say to him "You are allowed to work; you could "not pass this examination; but we have given you a "certificate which will liberate you from the necessity "of passing it?" He did not think that would be practicable; in point of fact, it would result in everybody taking a dunce's certificate, so that the thing would soon cease to be of any value as a stigma. He really thought the only way of meeting the difficulty, if it were to be met at all, was to require a certain attendance at school; if a certain attendance at school were required, schools must be provided; if schools were provided, it must be by some compulsory rate; and if there were an education rate—and he was free to admit it would open one of the greatest questions that could be opened in this country—it would task the wisdom of any Government to deal with it.

The report was then adopted, and the Chamber adjourned.

Gloucester.

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE CIRENCESTER FARMERS' CLUB.

AT a meeting of the Cirencester Farmers' Club, held at the Ram Hotel, Cirencester, on the 9th day of December 1867, to discuss the subject of "the "education of children employed in agriculture," (President, the Rev. Thomas Maurice; subject introduced by Sir Michael E. Hicks Beach, Bart, M.P.,) the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:—

1. That in the opinion of this meeting the State aid afforded to education is not, under the present

* Lord Kimberley met my suggestion humorously; but, taken seriously, its significance was this:—I was asked to meet the case of the "hopeless dunce," a supposed boy, so stupid by nature as never to be likely to pass any examination, with whatever amount of school attendance. In reply, I stated that I believed such cases in practice would be very rare; but if one should occur here and there, it might be met by a certificate that such child had at any rate fulfilled the condition of school attendance, which would at least guarantee that the parents had tried to do their part in giving him the opportunity of education.

Gloucester.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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conditions of such aid, fairly distributed between the schools of the town districts and of agricultural districts, and that the advancement of education in rural districts is thereby retarded.

2. That this meeting, whilst it is of opinion that the extent of education in the agricultural districts compares favourably with that in town districts, is still of opinion that much remains to be done to render the system of education of the children of the agricultural poor efficient, particularly with respect to the attendance at school of young children; it being the opinion of this meeting that children should not be generally employed in farm labour under the age of 10 years, but that the half-time system is not applicable to farm labour.

On behalf of the Club,
T. Maurice,
President at such meeting.

The following is a summary of the opinions expressed and the arguments used in the course of the discussion which preceded the passing of the above resolutions.

Sir Michael Hicks Beach, in introducing the subject, states that there are 8,761 parishes with a population under 500, of which only 981 receive annual grants for the support of their schools. Advocates the principle of payment for results independently of the possession of a certificate by the teacher. Desires to see night schools encouraged in every way. Suggests an itinerating teacher, who might possibly suffice for three parishes, taking the night school in each twice a week. Is opposed to both Mr. Bruce's and Mr. Fawcett's plans for supporting schools by local rates. Thinks it unfair to throw the whole cost on real property. Admits that children attend school too irregularly and leave too early. Only seven children out of every hundred attend school five years. But parents want the money, farmers want the labour, and the children must begin betimes to learn their business. Does not think that the half-day system could be in any way applied to agriculture; nor the alternate whole day. Thinks children may be sent to school for a certain number of hours in the winter up to the age 13. Believes that education will improve the value of the labourer. Does not think that girls should be employed in agriculture at all. The secular education of an agricultural school should be mainly confined to reading, writing, and ciphering, and should not exceed that which would be required by the position in which they are likely to be placed. Recognizes the duty of all classes to co-operate in the work of education, and particularly the duty of the landowners to supply better cottages. Thinks that employers also may contribute to the desired result more than they now do by adapting the hours of labour more cheerfully to the requirements of the school.

Mr. W. Smith, of Bibury, farmer, would give a plain education up to 10. If children are kept away from work much later than 10, they will never be of much use to the farmer. Thinks that very few children in agricultural districts are not receiving *some* education. There are many good schools in the country besides the Government schools. Things are going on very well, if people would only let well alone. A flourishing night school in the parish in which he lived, in which both himself and several other farmers took an interest, was knocked on the head by the clergyman's claiming the exclusive management of it. Children should be admitted to school at 5, and kept there till 10; and after that he would advise their attending a night school. They would thus obtain as much education as they needed without depriving either their parents of their earnings or the farmer of his labour supply.

Mr. R. A. Iles. of Kempsford, vice-chairman of the Cirencester Board of Guardians, was not afraid of education raising an agricultural labourer above his station. Education hitherto has not produced the satisfactory results that were expected from it, because it has been too partial. It wants to be more generally diffused, and then every one would find his proper level. The age for the day school should be from 5 to 10; after ten is the proper place for the night school. This plan would not only be the most practicable, but would involve least loss both to the employer and the parent. He would, however, rather adopt a standard of proficiency than a limit of age, and would allow a boy to go to work, irrespective of age, when he could produce a certificate of having passed a certain examination. He would not often be able to do this before 10; nor would his labour be of much value either to his parents or to the farmer before that age. The half-time system, whether by half days or alternate whole days, could not be worked by the farmer; his circumstances are so different from those of the manufacturer. Would be sorry to resort to compulsion, if education can be attained without it. It is the parent's duty to educate his child; but if he cannot do it, some means must be devised to assist him. Differs from Sir M. Beach as regards the absolute prohibition of girls from field labour; under proper supervision can see no harm, but rather the reverse, in it. He would rather have a servant who had been so employed than one who had been left at home to look after the children and run about at her will and pleasure.

Mr. Henry Ruck, of Eisey, one of the largest farmers on the Cotswolds, thought that machinery was now improving so rapidly, and coming into use so extensively, that an educated labourer would become a necessity to the farmer; and this same fact would also operate as an incentive to the labouring class to get the best education within their reach. The introduction of steam will very much diminish the need for the labour of boys.

Mr. Anderson, agent to Earl Bathust, thought it impossible to over-estimate the advantages of education, though he would wish to see it somewhat more practical than it often is. He would not, however, wish to see the agricultural boy kept at school after the age of 10, unless it were at a night school, for he did not see how his parents could support him. The sooner the boy is educated in field work the better labourer he will make. The object of school education should be to make children think, not merely to store their memory with facts. Make a boy think and you make him intelligent.

Mr. Edmund Ruck, another of the largest occupiers in the neighbourhood, thought that education has a money value now, enabling the educated man to obtain the more remunerative employments, that it will not have when it is more generally diffused. It was strange that with all the advantages which education was said to bring with it, parents were not more interested in securing it for their children. Children may fairly be restrained from work up to 10; but to continue the restraint beyond that age would in many cases inflict great hardship upon the parents. He would be glad to be informed whether in counties like Northumberland and Yorkshire, where a higher wage rate was stated to prevail, parents were found to keep their children for a longer period or more regularly at school.

Resolution of the Gloucester Chamber of Agriculture.

Resolution passed at a meeting of the Gloucestershire Chamber of Agriculture, held at the Spread Eagle Hotel, Gloucester, on Saturday the 18th January 1868; Ed. Holland, Esq., M.P., in the chair.

Proposed by Sir George Jenkinson, Bart., and seconded by Mr. D. Long.

"That preferring voluntary action to compulsory legislation on the subject of the employment of children in agriculture (always excepting the gang system), as such legislation would be regarded by them as an undue interference between parents and children

and between farmers and their agricultural labourers, this Chamber expresses a strong opinion that children should not be employed generally in agricultural labour before 10 years old, or unless they can read and write efficiently, which should be certified by a certificate from the clergyman of the parish where the child lives; and this Chamber pledges itself to use its influence in all legitimate ways to secure this rule being adopted and acted upon."

Carried unanimously.

(Signed) A. C. Wheeler,
Hon. Sec.

In the discussion which preceded the adoption of this resolution, the following is a summary of the most noteworthy sentiments and opinions that were expressed.

Ed. Holland, Esq., M.P., Chairman of the Chamber, believed low wages resulted from the fact that the agricultural labourer is too much "adscriptus glebæ." He cannot transport his labour to the market so freely as the artisan. Improvement in the homes of the people is also a first step in the elevation of their character, and would probably indirectly affect wages. The steam plough may be expected to produce great results, not material only but moral and intellectual. His own large employment of machinery had largely developed intelligence; when he began eight years ago he had hardly a man with whom he could do anything. The average wages of the chief men he employs about his steam plough are 16*s.* a week. It is thoroughly false economy to employ a child of very tender age. More labour and more intelligent labour will eventually be obtained out of children by keeping them for a proper time at school; the more education you give the boy the more labour you get out of the man. At the same time he believed that the half-time system is inapplicable to widely-spread sparse populations, such as generally prevail in agricultural districts.

Capt. de Winton, magistrate and landowner, did not require the labour of a boy before 11, and would be quite willing before employing one at all to obtain a certificate from the clergyman or schoolmaster that he could read intelligently and write sufficiently. Could do without a bird-keeping boy; would very often sooner see the crows picking up his wheat than see a poor lad wet and shivering under a hedge such a day as this. Quite felt the difficulty of raising the funds necessary to maintain an efficient school. If the voluntary system can't or won't do what is required of it we must come to an education rate; but he would try the voluntary system first. If a boy under instruction from 8 till 11 could not then read and write sufficiently well, there must be something wrong about the school. Would wish to see the night school part of the educational organization of each parish, and if a little instruction in practical mechanics and the best way of performing agricultural operations and handling agricultural tools could be introduced into the day school, he should consider it valuable training. Labourers tell him they can't afford to send their children to school, and no doubt the agricultural labourer's low rate of wages is the great difficulty in attempting to solve this problem. The cottage question is another that must be dealt with ere long; go into the majority of cottages throughout the country, and say if they are fit habitations for any labourers. Would like to see the man who didn't put up two decent cottages for every 100 acres of land he owns taxed for the omission. There is no occasion to interfere with the employment of women on the land; if they are demoralized by it, it is their own fault.

Capt. de Winton concluded by proposing a resolution, which was seconded by the Earl of Ducie, that, "in the opinion of this meeting no child should "be employed in agriculture at an earlier age "than 11."

Mr. D. Long said that if this resolution were pressed he should move an amendment to the effect that interference by the legislature between parents and children, either with regard to their education or to their employment on the land, is contrary to the freedom of Englishmen, and in the highest degree undesirable and improper. The effect of such legislation would be to put parishes under the power of the schoolmaster. He had known parishes governed by the gamekeeper, and, of the two, he would rather be governed by the gamekeeper than by the village schoolmaster. The agricultural boy isn't overworked, and there is therefore no need to restrict his labour. The state of things that called for the Factory Acts was different altogether.

Mr. E. W. Halliwell, magistrate, regarded restraint as likely to produce improved intellectual, moral, and social results, and therefore could not consider it either as undesirable or improper. At the same time he felt the difficulty of interfering legistively between the parent and child.

Mr. T. Cadle, farmer, did not see the good of passing such a resolution as Capt. de Winton's, which professed to remedy an evil which did not exist. The first great difficulty would be found to arise with the parents. The experience of farmers certainly was that, of their younger labourers, the best educated were the best workmen. It was not so, however, with the old labourers. He was satisfied that if they did not improve education voluntarily they would have to submit to a rate.

Mr. T. L. C. B. Baker, magistrate and landowner, could not see that such a restriction as had been proposed involved, as had been alleged, a principle unknown to the British constitution. One-half of our population has been interfered with in this way by the Factory Acts for the last 20 years. Perhaps the same good results which had certainly followed the introduction of these measures into the manufacturing districts might follow the introduction of similar principles, modified so as to suit the circumstances of the case, into agricultural employment.

Sir George Jenkinson, Bart., wished the resolution come to by the meeting that day to be unanimous, he had therefore drawn up one rather less trenchant and peremptory in its terms than that proposed by Capt. de Winton. Feared himself that an absolute prohibition of labour under the age of 11 would rear a generation of mischievous idlers. The desired result will be arrived at more surely and more pleasantly by moral suasion than by compulsory enactments. Would wish to see all classes subscribe more liberally to the schools, and use all their influence to induce the children to attend them. Government ought to withdraw the protection they now give to certificated masters, and pay simply for results. It would be a gross hardship to levy an education rate solely on real property, on people who are too heavily taxed already. Did not think there was any need to place restrictions on the number of hours of labour in the case of children. In the Vale of Berkeley children are not employed for more than 12 hours a day, and out of that they have two hours for meals, with an extra half-hour for rest and refreshment when the work, as in harvest time, extends beyond six o'clock.

Mr. Barwick Baker remarked that general usage did not disprove the necessity of a compulsory enactment, for though nineteen-twentieths of the farmers might not overwork their boys, here and there you would find out one who did.*

Sir George Jenkinson (continuing) fully agreed with all that had been said respecting the need of improvement in cottages. But it was an improvement surrounded with difficulties. The worst cottages are those which people have erected on little strips of waste, and which they consider as their own free-

* This remark of Mr. Baker's is illustrated by the statement of Mr. Douglas (*Miscell. Evid. No.* 33) showing a number of cases in which Sir George Jenkinson's extreme limit of 12 hours is exceeded in Mr. Baker's own parish of Hardwicke.

Gloucester.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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holds. If you built a palace and furnished it to match, you would scarcely induce them to leave these places, into which you would hardly put a pig to live. He had many such holdings round him, and he bought them, often at ten times their value, when their owners would sell them. He had also at that moment cottages unoccupied through the refusal of labourers to leave their own hovels.

In conclusion, Sir George Jenkinson proposed the resolution which, after a few verbal alterations, was finally adopted by the Chamber, Captain de Winton consenting to withdraw his own.

The discussion lasted upwards of three hours.

Middlesex.

Resolutions passed at the Central Chamber of Agriculture.

At a meeting held in London, on Tuesday, March 3, 1868, the chair was taken by the President, Jasper R. More, Esq., M.P., and there was a large attendance of representatives from local Chambers empowered to express the opinions of their constituents. The Rev. James Fraser, Assistant Commissioner, attended the meeting, by invitation of the Council, and stated the general objects and scope of the Commission, and the results of his inquiries, under it, in the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Sussex, and Gloucester.

The chairman said he hoped the meeting would come to some decisive resolutions upon the subject of the employment of women and children in agricultural pursuits. The provincial Chambers had fully discussed the question, and the resolutions which they had passed had rebutted the charge that farmers were indifferent to the education of their labouring people, had expressed satisfaction at the suggestion to make a grant for districts where the population was scanty, and had pointed out the desirableness of eliciting notions as to the age below which farmers ought not to employ labourers' children. One of the most important questions was whether it would be an act of injustice to the labourer to limit the age at which his children should be employed, and he hoped the Central Chamber would express a decided opinion on this subject. He requested the Assistant Commissioner who was present to open the discussion.

Upon the conclusion of the Assistant Commissioner's address,—

Mr. Albert Pell said he came prepared to move a resolution on the subject, and it was the one which had been adopted by the Leicester Chamber of Agriculture. He admitted, however, that he did not entirely concur with it himself, because he would have carried it a little further than it went. Still, it had received the full and general acceptance of the chamber at a meeting which comprised men of all classes interested in agriculture, large landowners, considerable employers of labour, a fair sprinkling of the clergy, and of others interested in the abstract question of education. In Leicestershire, then, deferring other considerations for the present, they had arrived at this point, as expressed in the resolution. and it was very much the same as had been enacted by the Norfolk Chamber, and he presumed that it would be pretty generally endorsed by the agricultural community generally: "That it is expedient "that children under the age of nine years be re-"stricted from employment in agriculture." But he would have gone further and said, that above that age the employment of young persons be wholly unrestricted by legislation. (Hear, hear.) He thought there were certain reasons which went against their accepting or consenting to any legislation in respect to the employment in agriculture of young persons above nine years of age, because the circumstances of those children were not identical with those of children employed in manufactures. If a longer period of life were devoted to the education of a child engaged in agriculture than to that of a child employed in manufactures, where the limit was eight years of age, the last year—namely, the year between eight and nine, which would be the most valuable year—would very nearly, if not quite, make up for the deficiences and disadvantages which might arise from the child having no intermittent or periodic education after he left school. Of course, he was excepting all those parts of the year when education would be entirely suspended; and it was understood by the Chamber that during the harvest months and other busy seasons education would be suspended entirely. If, then, they consented to children being prohibited from working until they were nine years of age, they would have made a grand step in the direction of education for the poor, and perhaps the most feasible one that could be entertained at that meeting; whilst it would only create embarrassment to proceed to legislate respecting the years which followed the ninth year of age. (Hear, hear.) But here occurred this difficulty—the Factory Acts stopped at eight years of age; and let them take the case of a parish where the children were partly employed in manufactures and partly employed in agriculture, of which numerous instances were to be found in Leicestershire; what would the child do if there were one system in operation which stopped him working until he was eight years of age and another which stopped him at nine? (Hear, hear.) In such cases he supposed it must be left to the parent or others interested in the child to make election whether the future life of the child be devoted to manufactures or to the more simple operations of husbandry; and he could not say that the child would suffer if the latter were chosen. To anything like compulsory education, and to anything in the nature of a rate for education he (Mr. Pell) was directly opposed (cheers). In conclusion, Mr. Pell moved—"That it is expedient "that children under the age of nine years be re-"stricted from employment in agriculture."

Mr. Wilson (Leicestershire) seconded the motion.

Mr. Duckham (Herefordshire) proposed, as an amendment to the motion of Mr. Pell,—"That in the "opinion of this chamber, no child should be em-"ployed in agricultural pursuits who is below the "age of ten years; and that beyond that no "necessity exists for legislative interference with "women and children employed in agriculture." In doing so, Mr. Duckham said he felt that the age of ten years was certainly quite early enough to exact labour from young children; and the only difficulty was how the labourer was to support a large family up to that age. Mr. Fraser had gone at considerable length into that; but there were one or two points on which he dwelt respecting which he (Mr. Duckham) would like to say a few words. One of these was, that in Mr. Fraser's opinion boys had no need to be kept to scare crows. Now, in his (Mr. Duckham's) part of the country they were eaten up with crows, and in many districts did not know what to do with them; nevertheless he could point out game farms where the tenant dared not fire off a gun, and where nothing must be laid to destroy the crows. Unless, therefore, small children were employed to frighten away the birds on such estates, a very serious national loss might ensue. When Mr. Fraser spoke of children being so occupied for 14 to even 16 hours a day, he (Mr. Duckham) ventured to say, "No;" and he was prepared to maintain that the statement was an exaggeration, and obviously so, because in the months of March and April, when the necessity for thus employing children was greatest, the sun did not rise so early or set so late as to admit of their seeing the birds for so many hours. He was pleased at hearing Mr. Fraser dwell so strongly upon the need which existed for better cottage accommodation. With regard to the question of a rate in aid, the education of the people was not a local but a national question, and ought to be so treated. He was at a loss to understand therefore why one portion of the wealth of the country should contribute to it, and the rest be left comparatively free. The occupiers of the soil and their landlords in the mansions all paid to the Consolidated Fund; why not not use that fund then as the means of providing for such a great

national need? (Hear, hear.) As a farmer himself he did not hesitate to say that it was a disgrace to the country that any portion of the community should stand up in the face of God and be unable to read his word. (Hear, hear.) Still, he contended that the whole wealth of the nation, and not one-half, should be available for relieving us from that reproach. The rate in aid was a half-and-half affair. He was confident it would not work well; and he recommended that the charge should be met from one source only. It was suggested by Mr. Fraser that the rate should be raised as a union rate; but how would that operate in his (Mr. Duckham's) Union, where there were many persons who employed labour upon a much larger scale than he did, and were consequently more deeply interested in the mental cultivation of that labour than himself, the labour he employed being of a simpler character than that engaged in manufactures; yet these people were rated at one-tenth of his assessment. Feeling that ten years of age was early enough for the tender limbs of young children to be called upon to earn wages, and that before that time a child had better be employed in learning to read and write and acquiring the first four rules of arithmetic, he begged to submit his amendment.

Mr. Hodsell (Maidstone) seconded the amendment of Mr. Duckham, and spoke briefly against the adoption of any system of compulsory education as repugnant to the feelings alike of the ratepayers and the labouring classes. He also denounced an education rate, and argued in favour of the view enunciated by Sir G. Jenkinson on that point.

Mr. Brandram (Hertfordshire) did not believe that the merely nominal attendance of the agricultural children at school referred to by Mr. Fraser was the result of their labour being absorbed by the farmer.

Mr. Fraser. Not wholly, but partially.

Mr. Brandram said he lived in a hamlet where there were a good many poor people, and which was excellently provided with schools. Yet he knew there were families amongst them who kept their children away from school without any excuse whatever. Instead of going to school, the children were all day long on the village green, where they were an intolerable nuisance. He granted that they would be of little use to the farmer under ten years of age; but nothing short of compulsion would make them attend school, and such a measure as that he was not prepared to support. The wages of the labourer in his neighbourhood were now about 13*s.* a week in the great majority of instances. Carters were paid 14*s.* This was supplemented heavily in kind at the hay and corn harvests. And, taking the year round, he did not believe the agricultural labourer was one whit worse off than the mechanic in the same district. Payment in kind he would do away with altogether, and for it substitute a single money payment; for there was nothing like a man knowing what were his real earnings. He could not concede that farmers as a rule were responsible for the distances which the boys in their employment might have to travel. His boys lived close to his yard gates, but it was no business of his if they lived further off, and if they had to walk two or three miles every day to their work, that was rather the fault of the landlord in not providing suitable cottage accommodation. (Hear, hear.)

Lieut.-Col. Brise observed that the opinion of the Essex Chamber, which he represented, was very similar to that of the Gloucestershire Chamber already mentioned. He understood Mr. Pell to be opposed to compulsory education. ("Hear, hear," from Mr. Pell.) What, then, was the use of declaring by resolution that it was inexpedient that a child should be employed in agriculture while under nine years of age? Was the child to remain idle, or be kept from school up to that age? (Mr. Pell, "No, "no.") He took it for granted that the adoption of such a resolution as Mr. Pell's would have some effect upon legislation. Personally he agreed with those who thought that it was inexpedient that children should be employed in agriculture under ten; but the objection to prohibition was that 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* a week earned by a boy in many cases made all the difference between happiness and misery in a labourer's cottage. (Hear hear.) It would be a great satisfaction to their minds if all boys up to the age of eight had the benefit of the education and discipline of school; and he thought that should be supplemented by attendance at evening schools in after years, and that certificates should be required of attendance for the number of hours suggested by Mr. Fraser during the winter months. The great difficulty in the agricultural districts was to get children to attend school at all. As regarded the employment of young boys in agriculture, he thought Mr. Fraser had rather overdrawn the picture. It was no doubt true that boys were employed at a very early age in scaring rooks and crows, and other occupations of a light nature; but if the matter were looked into, it would no doubt be found that the little boys described as ill-fed and ill-clad, and as watching for so many hours in bad weather, were often to be seen sheltered comfortably under a hedge during rainy weather, or eating their bread and cheese in some snug and secure position. In conclusion, the gallant colonel deprecated the disturbance of the present system by amalgamating it with a system of rating, and referred to the progress of education during the last 30 years as showing that voluntary action worked satisfactorily.

Mr. Whitaker (Worcestershire Chamber) said there could be no doubt that the farmers throughout the kingdom desired the improvement of the education of the labouring classes, the only question being whether a compulsory system should be adopted.

Capt. Horsell, of the Swindon Chamber, said that chamber had adopted a resolution similar to the amendment of Mr. Duckham. That view was very strongly expressed by many of the members. It was strengthened by the statement of Mr. John Williams, of Baydon, Hungerford, that he left school at 12; it being felt that if prior to 1820 Mr. Williams, who was an eminent mechanician as well as agriculturist, could obtain sufficient education by the age of 12, boys in these days of improved masters could surely get enough to fit them for their calling. In the picture he drew of the protracted labours of boys, Mr. Fraser forgot to take into account the intervening time used for recreation.

Mr. Neild supposed that if either nine or ten years were adopted as the period for labour to commence, it would be assumed that no Government supervision would be necessary after.

Mr. H. J. Little (Northamptonshire Chamber) had no doubt that that the farmer could dispense with the labour of boys up to the age of ten, but it was quite another question whether the labourer could spare the earnings of his children.

The Earl of Lichfield addressed the chamber, and said that he found himself in the position of being called upon to vote for a resolution which declared that children should not be employed in agricultural labour until they were nine years old, or for an amendment that they should not be so employed until they were ten years old. He candidly confessed that he was unable to make up his mind to vote for either of these propositions, unless he was made distinctly to understand at what age all restrictions whatever upon the employment of children were to cease. If he were told that they were to cease at the age of either nine or ten, then he would say that he should attach very little value indeed to the education that was given before that age. It appeared to him then that some of the speeches to which he had listened went against all education for the children of agricultural labourers. He considered, however, that a great fallacy lay at the root of the objection raised, that if children got something above the ordinary amount of education they were immediately unfitted

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for agricultural labour. Why was that? He maintained that it was simply because it was an exception to the rule that such children obtained an education that fitted them for anything else. The demand for a rather better education than was received by the ordinary class of children turned out of our national schools had of late years been too great for the supply, and the consequence was that wherever a child was somewhat above the common level of intelligence or was better educated than his fellows he would probably be taken away from the parish in which he had been bred and educated, and thus be lost as an agricultural labourer. He maintained, therefore, that there would be a totally different state of things, and one the value of which it was almost impossible to estimate, if an adequate education were given generally to all children employed in any labour whatever. The question before the chamber was really whether there should be legislative interference and restrictions in any shape with the children of the agricultural labourer, rather than what should be the exact age at which restrictions should cease. Once agreed that legislative restrictions were desirable or necessary, the next point to be considered was up to what age these ought to be continued. For himself he could scarcely believe that it was now a question whether legislative interference with the children of the agricultural labourer should or should not be adopted; because the principle had been applied to every other, or nearly every other, description of labour in the country. One speaker, who made some rather pertinent remarks on the subject, so far as they went, had put one side of the question and forgotten the other. He observed that if no child were allowed to be employed in agricultural labour under the age of ten, the manufacturers in the towns would have the advantage of his labour between the age at which he might be employed by the manufacturer and the age of ten, when he might be employed in agriculture. Now, supposing the age were restricted to ten, as proposed by the amendment, and beyond that there was no further legislative interference, how was the case to be put then as between the agriculturist and the manufacturers, for the period between the age of 8 and 13; because up to the age of 13 legislative restrictions were applied to almost all other descriptions of labour than agriculture. He merely wished to point out his difficulty as to both resolution and amendment. He could vote for neither, and could not make up his mind on the subject, until he knew whether this was all the agricultural community were prepared to support in the way of legislative interference with the children of their labourers.

Mr. Pell explained that if the original motion were agreed to, he had another resolution to propose with regard to the employment of children's labour after the ninth year of their age.

The question was then put, and, on a show of hands, Mr. Duckham's amendment in favour of ten years of age was negatived by 17 to 9; and the original motion for nine years of age was carried by 19 to 14.

Mr. Darke (Newbury) moved that the Chamber deprecated any measure which countenanced an education rate; and the proposal was seconded by Mr. Chandler.

To this, *Mr. Whitaker* proposed, as an amendment, "That, in the opinion of the Chamber, the voluntary "system had effected great good, and if supported by "a Government grant on a more liberal scale, it "would be sufficient, and that compulsory education "should be opposed."

Mr. Smythin having seconded this amendment, it was put to the meeting, and lost by a large majority. Mr. Darke's motion was then declared carried.

Sir G. Jenkinson moved, and *Mr. Long*, (Gloucestershire) seconded the following resolution:—

"That this Central Chamber of Agriculture deprecates any compulsory legislation on the subject of "the employment of women and children in agricultural labour, preferring voluntary action, which is "likely to follow the discussion of this subject, and "believing that any compulsory legislation would "defeat the object desired, because it would be an "undue interference between parent and child, and "also because if it involves the penalties of fine "and imprisonment on parents who decline to send "a child to school, it would be practically impossible "to carry out such legislation. That as to the question "of the means to be provided for the education of "children, it is the opinion of this chamber that, as "such education is highly desirable, Government aid "should be granted to existing schools more liberal "in amount and less restricted as to conditions than "under the present system. That such aid should be "given from the Consolidated Fund, and should not "be raised by an additional local rate."

Mr. Pell moved, as an amendment to Sir G. Jenkinson's motion, "That no child be employed "in agriculture unless it be shown that educational provisions analogous to those which are embodied in the Factory Acts have been satisfied "during the first nine years of his life."

Mr. Brandram having seconded the amendment, a short discussion ensued as to the nature of the educational provisions in the Factory Acts, in the course of which Mr. Read, M.P., pointed out, as an objection to the proposal, that those Acts permitted a child to go to work from eight to thirteen years of age for a certain number of hours daily, provided it had received an education.

Mr. Pell accepted this objection as fatal to his resolution in its then form, and consented to strike out the words "provisions analogous to those in the "Factory Acts," which he admitted would not apply to the case of the agricultural child.

Some further conversation followed, and ultimately Mr. Pell withdrew his amendment altogether.

Col. Brise next moved as an amendment, and *Mr. Carrington Smith* seconded it: "That, in the "opinion of the Chamber, the education for the agricultural population would be best carried out by "the present voluntary system, provided the puplic "grants were more liberally administered, and that "in cases where the voluntary system had failed, or "was likely to fail, it was the duty of the State to "provide education for the people."

This amendment was also put and rejected by a decided majority, and the Chamber subsequently adopted the resolution of Sir George Jenkinson almost unanimously.

The result, therefore, of the day's proceedings is represented by the three following resolutions:—

1. "That it is expedient that children under the "age of nine years should be restricted from employment in agriculture."

2. "That this meeting deprecates any measure "which countenances an education rate."

3. "That this Central Chamber of Agriculture "deprecates any compulsory legislation on the employment of women and children in agriculture, "preferring the voluntary action which is likely to "follow the discussion of this subject, and believing "that any compulsory legislation would defeat the "object desired, and this because it would be an undue interference between parent and child, and "because it would be practically impossible to carry "out such legislation if it involved the penalties of "fine or imprisonment on parents declining to send "their children to school. That as to the means to "be provided for education, it is the opinion of this "chamber that to existing schools Government aid "should be granted more liberal in amount and less "restricted as to conditions than under the present "system. That such aid should be given from the "Consolidated Fund, and should not be raised by an "additional local rate."

The discussion occupied upwards of four hours.

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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Report of Proceedings of Ruri-decanal Meeting at Starston, Norfolk.

On Tuesday, 18th September 1866, a ruri-decanal meeting of the clergy of the rural deanery of Redenhall, in the diocese of Norwich, was held at Starston Rectory, to discuss the following subject appointed by the bishop, viz.:—

1. In what way and to what extent is it practicable to regulate the early and associated employment of children in agricultural labour?
2. How may our schools be adapted to meet the difficulties arising from such early employment of children?

The rural dean reported to the bishop the opinion of the assembled clergy in the following terms:—

1. If the first question, as it appears to some, includes two distinct points: 1st, that of the *early* employment of children in field labour; and, 2dly, that of their association in gangs; then with reference to the former we beg to say that, however much we may regret the early withdrawal of children from our schools, yet we cannot regard their employment in field labour suitable to their age as an evil unmixed with good. The boy especially has his task to learn in the field as well as in the school; he must be exercised betimes in muscle, hand, and wit to fit him for the work of his after life. The farmer also, we consider, especially in the present want of hands, has a fair claim upon the services of his own labourers' children for what is *fairly* children's work. We do not think that any general rule can be laid down, much less that any legislative enactment ought to be made, by which the ordinary employment of children on a farm, or the age at which they are put to work, shall be regulated. An appeal must be made to the good sense and good feeling of the employer.

But if the question, as it appears to others, is only *one*, applying to the enlistment of children at an early age in the gang of the labour contractor, our answer must be of a different cast. In view of the wretched evils, both moral and physical, attendant upon the gang system, happily almost unknown in this deanery, we are of opinion, if the system itself cannot be abrogated, that for the protection of the young children employed—yes, and for that of those older, too—the interference of the legislature is absolutely called for. We would fain see an enactment passed containing provisions of this nature: 1st, that in all gang work the sexes shall be kept separate, under separate conductors, male and female; 2dly, that no one shall be permitted to act as conductor without having a license, analogous to that of a publican, to be granted on certificate of good character, and to be forfeited with penalties on misconduct; 3rdly, that a limit shall be imposed as to the *age* of children employed.

2. In answer to the second question, it was suggested by some that the half-time or part-time system now in use in the mining and manufacturing districts might and ought to be applied to our own agricultural labour-field. The majority of us, however, feel that such a system is inapplicable to the circumstances and requirements of farming operations. The times and conditions of mining and manufacturing labour are for the most part fixed and constant; those of agricultural work, on the other hand, are always variable, depending as they do on the season, the weather, and other incidents. Again, the factory school is on the spot, built for the purpose; here the boys would have to walk long distances from the field to school, and few of our schools have either separate class rooms in which they may be received, or separate teachers by which they may be instructed.

We are of opinion that our parochial schools cannot be adapted to meet either the introduction of the half-timers or the casual attendance of occasional pupils without deranging their whole system, and doing injury to the regular scholars. The only remedy that we can suggest is to make the school a *good* one, so that during the few years in which the children remain in it they may be *well* taught; and then to supplement their education by the Sunday school, and in the case of boys by the evening school as well; for girls in rural parishes we consider the evening school to be very objectionable, not so of necessity in towns.

(Signed) A. M. Hopper,
Rural Dean.

Sussex.

Chichester Clerical Association.

Conclusions arrived at at a meeting of the Clerical Association, held at Chichester, February 4th, 1868.

[N.B.—This meeting was held after I had left the county of Sussex; but the Rev. C. B. Wollaston, a diocesan inspector of schools, requested me to furnish him with a statement of the precise objects of this inquiry, that it might be laid before the meeting as a guide to discussion. I did so, and in return he sent me the following letter, containing an account of what passed.]

"My dear Sir,

I attended the meeting at Chichester yesterday, a large one, of our Clerical Association, and we discussed the subject of the "Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture" for more than two hours. We cannot by our rules come to any resolution, but I can give you shortly the result of our deliberations.

"1. We were unanimously of opinion that the lowest age at which *boys* should be allowed to work should be 10 years; and that women and girls should only be allowed to work at hay and corn harvest.

"2. That the *half* day work for boys, or *alternate* days' school and work is not practicable.

"3. We did not think that evening schools "adequately supply the deficiencies of the day school," but help towards this; and we thought that they should be supported, as day schools are, by Government aid.

"4. We all thought that it was the help that children at work bring to their parents which induces them to forego the benefits of education at the parish schools; not indifference, nor pressure of employers.

"The meeting was a very satisfactory one, very strongly expressing an opinion adverse to the employment of females in the fields on the ground of morality.

"I have thus given you the results of our meeting.

"Believe me, yours sincerely,
"(Signed) C. B. Wollaston.

"Felpham Rectory, Bognor,
"5th February 1868."

Berks.

Paper read at the Newbury Farmers' Club.

[The two papers from which I print the following extracts were not read at meetings in my district, but were addressed to two farmers' clubs in the county in which I reside. They throw light upon several important points in this inquiry, and also indicate the temper in which the more liberal-minded and intelligent farmers are prepared to approach the subject. My extracts are taken from the report in the *Berkshire Chronicle* of April 11th, 1868.]

"Newbury Farmers' Club.

"At the last monthly meeting of this club the following paper, on the subject of "Agricultural Labour," was read by Mr. H. Frampton, of Watership Farm.

"*Mr. Frampton* rose and said: . . . . I am quite sure and convinced that farmers are not averse to paying higher wages provided they can make those wages remunerative. I think there is not a right-minded employer of labour but would quite as soon pay his men 20*s.* per week as 10*s.*, provided they can make themselves worth it. It would be better, as

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the master would not require so many labourers, consequently would have fewer to look after and to find work for in wet and bad weather, when you can make scarcely any return for their labour . . From a most careful calculation I made last year I found that my men's earnings amounted to about 13*s.* or 14*s.* per week, rain or shine.* . . . . We will now consider the practical relations between employer and employed. We shall, I think, find many errors in each of our systems, accompanied, as a rule, with faults on the part of both master and man. We all, I conclude, acknowledge that there is but one grand rule by which we should be guided if we desire a successful issue to our undertakings, viz., that one golden rule given to us by the Master of us all, which I have before quoted, "To do as we would be done unto," and by which our actions with each other should be entirely guided. If it were more deeply implanted in the heart of every master and servant there would then arise a greater reciprocity of feeling, and that mutual interest for the welfare of each which is so absolutely necessary to make all things go pleasantly and beneficially, and which is, indeed, the first and foremost thing required in order for both parties to reap the reward; this accomplished, we have a good foundation to build upon. If education can do it by teaching those in ignorance, what are the duties required of them towards both their heavenly and earthly master, then "Welcome education." For my own part I am not at all adverse to education, provided it is befitting their station, and founded upon religious teaching; for without that I believe any education they may receive will prove disadvantageous to themselves and the country at large. If they are not taught their duty to God, how can we expect them to do their duty to man? If no morality is instilled into them there will be no real moral principle to guide and counteract those evil tendencies of the flesh which make a man who lacks this great principle feel that it is no matter what unjust advantage he takes of others. We all know the effect upon children if no moral religious principle is instilled into them; and what will be the result if the whole country is abandoned in this way? I must, though rather out of place, solemnly protest against the wholesale attempt now being made to secularize everything in this country and bring old Christian England down almost to the level of a heathen land. In bidding adieu to education, I would merely add I should like to see all our labourers able to read, write, and sufficiently taught in arithmetic to be able to calculate the money due to them for any work they may have done. In the two former they will find something to fill up spare time, which might be less profitably employed; and a knowledge of the latter will enable them to know how to get their due, and remove all ill-grounded feeling of being cheated from their minds, which at present men are very apt to entertain. I trust also education will make them feel a greater respect and regard, not only for their superiors, but also for themselves and their own character, a greater feeling of decency and morality in their every day life, in which we often find them sadly lacking. In this district we have three principal systems, namely, day work, piece work, and the hiring system. Day work, so called from the men being paid by the day of from nine to ten hours (less in winter) is the system most carried out with us, because it is available in the generality of cases, but it is one fraught with evils, the greatest in my opinion being that we pay men by the day instead of according to their worth. I call it a degrading system, calculated to reduce the best men to the level of the worst, and to bring these again lower, having a continually degrading effect. For instance we have three men, A., B., C. A. is an able-bodied, industrious, trusty, persevering man with a good head upon his shoulders, able and willing to turn his hand to anything, not given to eye service (by which I mean working hard when the master is in sight, but very different when absent), in short he is a man that tries to do his duty. We pay him, say, 2*s.* per day. B. is a man of equal powers and ability with A., but with an unwilling mind; can do anything, but would as soon not; rather given to eye service, and does not see it necessary to do a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. We pay him also 2*s.* per day. C. is a man with very little ability, in fact requires educating all over and all day long; one that it matters but little to him how he goes through his day, and what he does, whether it is right or wrong. We pay him also 2*s.* per day. Now is this justice? and what are its effects? Naturally to bring down the best gradually to the level of the worst; and what can it be but a degrading system. If A. does not care to see it, B. and C. will soon prove to him that they get as well paid as he does; and if A. at first conscientiously objects, yet the natural bias of his human nature, combined with the taunts of his fellow workmen, will gradually bring him down. This I consider a system the very reverse of the one we want to instil, and one that must have a great tendency to keep down the price of labour, because rendering it of so little worth. We want a system that will cause emulation, a striving each one to do his best, with a knowledge that his efforts will be rewarded. But how is this to be attained? Some, the uninitiated, may say "Turn off B. and C., that is the bad men, and get some more A.'s." But where are they to be found? Are you sure of getting any A.'s. And will the demand for labour allow it? I confess I know not the remedy. Individually, I believe nothing can be done except in exceptional cases, and collectively it must be a great undertaking. Could any kind of class system be introduced? I am fully aware that the opposition to any great change would be great, but I most sincerely wish some system better than the present might be found. Some, perhaps, will say, meet it with piece or task work. But this you cannot entirely do. You may in many cases, but not wholly. There is a good deal of work to which you cannot conveniently apply it, particularly during the winter half of the year, but on the whole I consider it a more equitable and advantageous system than the former. It has the advantage of enabling the master to apply his labour most profitably to himself, and of giving his men the chance to earn what they can, thereby paying them according to their worth, and rewarding the best. It requires no special restriction and surveillance of the hours of labour; each one can work as long as he pleases. It also enables the master to push and get over much more work in the same time and with the same number of hands; but it has the disadvantage of enabling the idle, shirking man oftentimes to skip over his work, both at the expense of the master and the honest, industrious man; and in many cases, particularly thrashing, requires greater and more general attention on the part of the former, and is oftentimes a cause of more trouble to him, sometimes also interfering with the distribution of his labour; but, taken on the whole, when available, I consider it far preferable to the day system. We come now to the hiring system, yearly and monthly. In our own immediate district, where we lack cottages, the former is the only system we can with any safety rely upon, as far as regards carters, shepherds, boys, and all having charge of stock, because without it, when summer comes, we should often be left in the lurch, as we constantly prove; but it is full of evils, one of them being continual change, an almost complete revolution year after year, which would seldom be thought of were it not for Michaelmas. No sooner do the master and servant get into the knowledge of each other's ways, and the latter to understand the master's methods and his land, than Michaelmas comes and unsettles all again, and generally the same thing occurs year after year. But where we lack cottages there is also the greater evil consequent upon lodging six to eight or ten boys and young fellows together, free from all restraint from their parents, and as the law now is

* 13*s.* a week on the average all the year round was the sum at which Mr. Gerard Day, an occupier of 700 acres, estimated the Norfolk labourer's earnings, *See Horsford Meeting, No.* 11.

almost all from their master. You may get the greater proportion of these steady and well intentioned, but the chances are you will get at least one bad one, and as we know that "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump," so we may easily imagine that one bad unprincipled servant among them will have the consequent ill effect upon the others, and this I conceive to to be one reason why the relations between the employer and his hired servants are so often unsatisfactory. Were it practicable with us, and could we feel assured of being treated fairly, I should prefer the monthly hiring system—month's wages, month's warning; but this will not do, the generality who have tried it will find the servant generally does it with the intention of taking an unfair advantage when summer comes. Last Michaelmas I hired a carter on those terms, and as he came from a distance and feared he might not like the country, he came a month on trial, and I placed confidence enough in him to agree to continue on the same terms, there being of course a stipulation with regard to his Michaelmas money. He stayed till the days got out, made some frivolous excuse, and gave me notice. I said "What, throw "yourself out of place, and me out of a servant." "Oh, he said, I have a better place and more money." "Once bitten, twice shy," is my proverb now. Another evil attendant upon the hiring system is, I consider, the way in which we hire; it is a perfect lottery. You go into a fair, and in the course of two or three hours hire several servants of whom you had not the slightest previous knowledge, or they of you. How can the generality of cases be expected to turn out well? Certainly you make an application for character, but how vastly you get deceived even in that. And coming to characters, I wish it were made incumbent upon all masters to give all their hired servants, whether good or bad, upon leaving a just and written character which they must produce upon seeking another situation. We should then have them more mindful of that inestimable thing, a "good character," and should be enabled to choose those likely to suit, added to which those of bad character would be the sufferers. Some, perhaps, will raise the objection that these would not produce their written characters; if not, we could speedily guess the meaning of it. As it is at present their character matters little, seeing the indifference many masters show as to giving and receiving one. Having entered thus far into this question of labour and its faults, let us consider what are likely to be the remedies. First and foremost on the part of the landlords I think it is absolutely necessary that they should provide a sufficient number of good cottages, on or in close proximity to each farm, for the labourers working on it, to be let with the farm. This must, I believe, be the first step. The men would then be near their work instead of having to walk a mile or two every night and morning (one of mine formerly walked seven miles every day to and from his work), and would also feel a greater interest in that farm, being on the spot. The master must endeavour to do justly (kindly and fairly, yet firmly) to all, showing no unjust favour, willing to pay his men their full value, ever remembering "the labourer is worthy of his hire;" be punctual in the hours of labour (as a failure in this respect is not only unjust to his men but also to his neighbours), and take that interest in the welfare and prosperity of his men which is his duty; by so doing he will do his part in endeavouring to establish that good feeling and understanding which is so necessary for the welfare of each. Till this is accomplished things will not be as they ought. The men must also on their part endeavour to do their duty, and make it worth their master's while to pay them well, showing a desire to do their best on all occasions, feeling it their duty to consider their master's interest and welfare in all things—their general indifference to the interests of their masters and distrust of them being, I believe, one of their greatest faults. They must also remember that it is written in Scripture, "If a man will not work neither shall he eat." There appears also to be an entire lack of forethought or any provident spirit in them. Could we only get a better state of things accomplished in this respect, we should then remove one of the greatest drawbacks and blights to farming in the present day.

On resuming his seat Mr. Frampton was much applauded.

Mr. C. P. Darke thought the subject of the paper very important in many ways. . . . The classification of labour, and the suggestion made on the subject by Mr. Frampton, was a very practical one; if they could have three distinct sets of prices for labourers, and place them in three distinct classes, much good might result from it. Piece work, of all others, was most desirable, where it could be carried out (hear, hear). In parts of Norfolk, in one item, that of "dung filling," they would find men did far more work than in this county; they were paid 1½*d.* a load, and earned 2*s.* up to three o'clock in the afternoon, at which time they went to their houses. In respect to the present hiring system, he thought it had a tendency to cheapen labour. If they could by any means introduce a system which would enable them to employ a staff of labourers the whole year round, the farmers' difficulty in regard to hiring would be at once met. That must be done by introducing more capital into the farm, in order to employ a complete staff of labourers during the winter months. He thought the interference which was taking place now with the public, who were touching upon a subject which they did not understand, would have the result of driving capital away from the soil (hear, hear). Those who entered into agricultural pursuits determined to do their duty as far as they possibly could; when they saw those difficulties continually being raised by others, capital would be driven away from the soil (hear, hear).

Mr. F. Everett . . . was averse to the hiring system, and he thought it was in their power to abolish the hiring fair in the town. Of course it was a question for themselves, and they would have to consider the matter seriously, whether it was possible or not to do away with the hiring fair. Many parties were concerned, but he had always thought that it was in the power of the agricultural body in the neighbourhood to say that the hiring fair should not be; inasmuch as Mr. Frampton opened out to them that it was not necessary for them to have a fair in order to supply their labour, he thought the main difficulty was removed. Fair days, although they might be in some measure convenient, especially to holders of large farms, were certainly to all and each of them a disgrace, if nothing more. As to the labour question and classification, Mr. Frampton, when he spoke of the different qualities and abilities of their labouring people, said that it was on the whole a question which he thought, in some measure, might be arranged between themselves and their labourers, just in the same manner that the other question, when he spoke of landlords, was one in which it was possible to arrange as between landlord and tenant. As to the hiring—perhaps he might be more advantageously situated than others—but still, on a whole, he could say he never hired a servant, nor had he discharged one when winter was coming on. He had never regularly hired servants under any circumstances, but with very slight exceptions, which would not at all militate against his rule. He had been fortunate in his labour, and had employed the system which Mr. Frampton had alluded to in a very graphic manner. It was possible to carry it out by discharging the B.'s and C.'s, and endeavouring to retain the A.'s. He did it with great sacrifice to himself, but still it was possible to do it when they got hold of the A.'s, although he knew they were few and far between (applause). He was extremely obliged to the lecturer for his very practical paper, and he was sure very many practical remarks would follow (hear, hear).

The Chairman made a few remarks with reference to the hiring referred to by the last speaker. In his own neighbourhood it more particularly applied to a

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class of young men engaged as under-carters, and boys. Mr. Frampton seemed to think that the system of changing servants at Michaelmas might be done away with in some measure, but he thought that the system acted well for many reasons. Their servants, as it were, often grew out of their places. Many behaved very well; and he certainly thought that a change to them was beneficial and required. At the same time he did not think it was necessary they should hire them in the town at a fair (hear, hear). With regard to the remarks of Mr. Everett, they must remember he resided not very far from the town, and therefore did not experience the same difficulty to get boys and under-carters as some of his friends on the Hampshire hills (hear, hear). For himself, he had not much difficulty, because he resided in a village, but he was certain difficulties did arise where employers resided at long distances from any village or town. He remembered that at one time he was one of a party who tried to do away with those fairs, but still there was very much to be said for them in reference to their benefit to the poor people themselves (hear, hear). They might meet at Newbury after perhaps an absence of two or three years, and it was but natural they liked to meet and greet each other with a kindly shake of the hand. There was no reason why the thing should be done away with because it was abused; for if it came to that they might look higher (hear, hear). No one could pretend for a single moment to say that the scenes at a horse race were not quite as bad as at their hiring fairs, and before they did away with the fairs, the vices of the racecourse and some of those places should be looked to (hear, hear).

Mr. Samuel Wentworth considered that the subject was worthy the attention of every farmer in the neighbourhood. . . . If farmers would unite among themselves, but the worst of it was they would not, the hiring system might be done away with, and registry offices take their place (hear, hear); and by establishing such offices they would be able to get a character with their servants (hear, hear). If they took the men by the month it would be possible to regulate their wages, because they could afford to give them more in the summer time. Instead of the unions proposed to be formed, if farmers' labourers could be taught to invest their savings in some friendly society, so that they might be able to fall back on that society when they were old, instead of coming back upon the parishes, farmers would be able to pay 2*s.* a week in advance of the present scale, taking into consideration the lessening of the poor rates that would ensue. As to unions, they would be the greatest curse that could possibly happen to the agricultural labourer (hear, hear). Let Manchester and Sheffield, and other large towns, tell the working of these unions; the late exposures were a blot upon England. He did not fear that the system would be introduced into agricultural districts. In classifying labour they must remember that there would be some difficulty in doing it, more than in the manufacturing department of labour, by reason that the work of farm labourers was so often changed. The mechanic generally was at one work all the year round, but with the other his work was scarcely two days alike, with the exception of mowing and harvest work. If their work was continuous in one capacity they might pay them on the piece, and that was the best way, there was no doubt about it. Mr. Darke had said that the raising of agriculturists' wages would have the result of driving capital from the land. He agreed with him, and if people who were trying to make the labourers dissatisfied with their lives would take the matter in hand themselves, they would find that they were paid now more than they earned. The raising of wages would have the effect of laying more land down to grass, keeping less stock, and growing less corn, and when that was done it would be a bad day for England (hear, hear).

Paper read at Hungerford Farmers' Club.

Hungerford Farmers' Club.

The following members were present at the meeting on Wednesday afternoon:—Mr. Hewitt (Chairman), Messrs. Patter, Freeguard, A. Neate, Frampton, Pinniger, L. Cundell, Godwin, Platt, Chandler, H. A. Cundell, Gibbons, Hellard, Hissey, Joseph Cundell, Mackrell, Bryant, Booker, Kimber, Brown, Taylor, Dredge, Hodson, &c. The following paper was read on "The Education of Labourers in Agricultural "Districts," by Mr. Spearing, of Kennet.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—When a month since your chairman invited me to introduce this subject to your notice, I was fully conscious of my inability to do justice to it, therefore I must beg your indulgence for the many shortcomings which will be apparent in bringing it before you. There have been so many discussions, and so many different views taken of the question, that one naturally feels greater difficulty at arriving at a conclusion. I dare say there are some here who heard the subject discussed on Monday in another place, and I trust we may hear the views that were there expressed. The way in which almost every Chamber of agriculture and farmers' club have manifested their interest in it is, I consider, a conclusive proof that those who assert that landed proprietors, and tenant farmers especially, are averse to any improvement in the education of the labouring classes are stating that which certainly has little foundation in fact. It nevertheless cannot be denied that amongst tenant farmers there are many who are opposed to any extended system of education. They affirm, and perhaps with some truth, that education has tended to make farm labour more expensive, and that it is frequently not so well performed. That there have been many excellent servants who could neither read nor write I am not prepared to deny, but I have invariably found, where such has been the case, the men and women themselves have been the first to regret the disadvantages they have been subjected to in consequence. I think we must take a higher view of the matter than looking at a man as the mere performer of labour, and if from what may be termed the mere accident of his birth he does not occupy the same position in society as ourselves, it is not less a duty to make that position as little irksome and unpleasant as lies in our power. If I wanted a reason for a more extended system of education, or that education should be brought within the reach of every one, I would not omit to notice the very different state of British agriculture from what it was not many years since. Steam thrashing has superseded the flail, steam ploughing is a powerful auxiliary to horse and ox labour, and other branches have advanced in proportion. The difference in the particular kind of labour the labouring classes have to perform requires a greater amount of head knowledge than they formerly possessed. And it is not merely as regards the work they have to perform; every legislative change is gradually placing a vast deal more power in their hands; so much greater then the necessity of endeavouring to educate them rightly for these changes. I do not believe that the mere education of a man will make him good, but crime has generally lessened as education has advanced. Let us not then be drags on the wheels of progress, but let us, by our discussion this evening, lend our aid in endeavouring to arrive at the right solution of this one of the most difficult problems of the day. I would not have it inferred that any amount of mere book-learning is going to make our agricultural labourers better servants or better men, unless they have good home training and instruction. A child's education for weal or woe begins with his growth and strengthens with his strength, and from the impressions received in his own home the man's character is often moulded, and the real love of his home, with no higher motive, has in many instances kept him a faithful and devoted servant and an honest and useful member of the community.

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Previous to noticing the plans proposed for an extension of education, it will I have no doubt be stated that farm labourers will be more scarce, and labour consequently dearer. That alterations will be required and difficulties arise I do not doubt, but whether there is a more extended education or not, difficulties will be sure to exist. The state of the labour market is such that with the great means of communication, what may be, or are termed low-priced labour districts, must (when trade again revives) expect a considerable rise in the price of labour, and I am one of those who think that many gentlemen who profess to take an interest in this subject, and generally show that interest by—if not abusing—at least by depreciating everything which is done by a tenant farmer for his labourers' benefit, forget that they themselves belong to the school who were always preaching up labour as a marketable commodity, to be bought in the cheapest market. Not content to ignore the doctrine they formerly held, they are fond of quoting the minimum amount of payment made for labour, ignoring the much higher rate in the summer months, and also forgetting that a farm labourer loses, I may say, less time than any other class, his employer frequently paying him when his services are of little value, and forgetting also that an agricultural labourer moves less than any other persons in the same position, the cause of which may have been the system of parochial settlements. I am far from considering an advance in the price of labour would be a disadvantage to farmers, because I believe it will be attended with a great improvement in the performance of labour. Our present race of labourers in many districts, although honest and well conducted, it cannot be denied, nevertheless, that there is a slowness in their movements and a seeming indifference in the performance of their work which you do not meet with in other classes; and this is not to be wondered at when you consider that boys of from eight to nine years drive plough during the winter months seven to nine miles per day, through wet and dirt; the almost natural consequence of such a system of training is that they acquire habits which many hardly ever lose. I am convinced that alterations may be made in this respect without loss, although with inconvenience to ourselves. I should not dwell on this, but in any change or improvement that may be required, we must look well at the difficulties that lie in our way, and I think also, as a body, we very frequently let prejudice prevent our following plans which may be both useful and beneficial. One effect of an extended system of elementary education will necessarily be, in my opinion, a shortening of the hours of labour, and I believe eventually this will not merely apply to boys, more especially in the winter months. And now, if I may be allowed to make a remark to my young brother farmers, it would be to impress upon them the necessity of thoroughly making themselves acquainted with what is a fair day's work; for frequently their so-called education for their business has little fitted them for knowing the amount of work to be done by others; and if I appear here to digress a little from my subject, it is because I believe we shall have to educate ourselves, from the advance in the education of the labouring classes which is sure to ensue. I think it cannot be denied that in every parish of any size there should be a school. These have been built in most parishes by local enterprise and Government. Where this plan has failed in parishes from failure of subscriptions, I certainly think that the owners of property should be compelled to build schools, the Government assisting by a grant. I am of opinion that for the school the owners of real property ought to pay, as tenants or owners of personal property may not have so permanent an interest in the building, but I would allow the money to be taken up and payed off in so many years, the amount to be calculated on the income tax assessment. Having provided schools, we come to management, and as every parish with a population of 400 inhabitants will have its school, I consider that it should have, for the purpose of obtaining funds, and also of having an interest in them, its education committee, consisting of the clergyman for the time being and two lay members, either elected from the ratepayers or one by the owners of property and one by ratepayers. In parishes under 400 inhabitants they should be joined to others. This plan, with regard to local committees, may have its disadvantages. No doubt some would invest a power in the board of guardians or some other body, but I believe it would stimulate local effort, and where prejudice exists, frequently by giving persons a real interest in the matter, you help to disarm it. These boards will have, of course, the assistance of a Government inspector. With regard to masters, the appointment should be with the committee, sanctioned by the inspector; whether he should be certified or not should be left to their discretion, provided he can pass a regular examination; and with regard to his payment, I would adhere as much as possible to the present system of school pence with Government aid and other auxiliaries. The payment of pence gives every well-intentioned parent a personal interest in his child's progress, and instils a certain amount of independence which I believe it is well to foster. I would leave it to the board to pay the amount from 3*d.* per head to 1*s.* per head per week; the scale of charges to be printed, and not altered to suit individual cases. And now in some parishes I fear we may have a deficiency of income; nevertheless I am of opinion that when the Government aid and local effort have failed to supply the deficiency, it shall be legal for the local board, after say one month's notice, to call a meeting, and with the consent of the ratepayers, to levy a rate on the income tax assessment at so much in the pound. I would only apply this as a last resort; but notwithstanding it may be much opposed, I believe the State is bound to place education within the reach of all; therefore the owners of personal property should be called on to contribute to the support of a system in which every member of the State is so deeply interested. Should a majority of the ratepayers, in case of a deficit, object to a rate, I would propose that it should be lawful for the committee, with the consent of the inspector, to order a rate to be made to supply the deficit. I am of opinion that the Government grant should be extended to a much greater extent than at present, and even to all schools complying with conditions which should not be so strictly imposed as at present. With regard to teaching, I consider that to give every child the opportunity of learning to read and write, with a knowledge of arithmetic, is all that can be expected; but your teaching should not be purely secular, it should be combined with religious teaching, having in view the conscientious opinions of dissenters. I cannot consider it necessary that the Church catechism should be taught in the week. Doctrinal teaching may be pretty well limited to those points on which the majority of churchmen and dissenters are agreed. I should consider it a great misfortune for Government aid to be given to a purely secular school, although we cannot dispute the fact that the tendency of the present day is rather to ignore religious teaching, and to follow in almost everything reason or German rationalism, instead of the fundamental truths of God's revealed word. The clause proposed to be inserted by the Duke of Marlborough, and acted upon with regard to religious teaching, allows plenty of liberty, and I should say would disarm opposition. I now come to the question of children's attendance at school, and although I believe it will be generally admitted that a great deal of good would follow from a child being sent to school, I cannot bring myself to believe we should be dealing fairly in making attendance compulsory; if such a system were adopted it would be repugnant to our feelings as Englishmen, and in many instances create a dislike and distrust it would be well to avoid. Instead of compulsory attendance, therefore, I would propose that a child should be able to read tolerably well and write before he works at all. I know of no better system than calling upon them to undergo an examination and obtain a

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certificate from the master or Government inspector or his assistant; but when a child has once entered a school, I would not allow his withdrawal, except from illness or removal from the parish, until he has attended school for 40 weeks, or the number of weeks the school is opened for the year. Where a man has a large family, some of the elder members or he himself may be able to instruct the younger members, and enable them to get their certificate without a compulsory attendance at school, and here I see no reason why we should adopt a different plan with the labouring class than is done in many instances with the class immediately above them, the elder members of which very frequently teach the younger equally as well as if they had received a school education. I believe the early age at which many children are sent to work is of little advantage either to a master or the head of a family. If you take some little boy to keep off rooks or some other light employment, he is probably paid 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* per week, and when you come to consider the extra food or clothing required, there is a very small advantage to the father of a family. I would propose, therefore, that no child should work for wages before the age of 9½ years supposing him to commence work at Lady day, or before 10 years supposing him to commence work at Michaelmas, the difference in the period of the year more than compensating, in my opinion, for the difference in the age; and in the winter half-year every boy up to the age of 12 years should be allowed to leave his work at four o'clock. I have no doubt we may have differences of opinion, but I do not value boys' labour in the winter half-year at much after that time, and I cannot but regret that at stablework boys are frequently made to do what under-carters or older servants ought to do. The management of a stable is generally left pretty much to the carter, and masters are not frequently alive to the way in which boys are managed. With regard to girls, I think a rule as to age may be made. The principle of the Colliery Act would apply to boys; it is this: "That no boy of ten years of age "shall be allowed to work in a coal pit, unless "he brings a certificate from a duly qualified master "that he can read and write, before he can work at "all." Content with this end, it takes no notice of the question whether they have attended school or not. I come now to the system which I consider a most powerful auxiliary in promoting education, I mean the system of night schools, and provided every boy, before the age of 12 years, leaves his work for the winter half-year at four o'clock, I believe that for the first year he goes to work he should attend school four hours per week for the first winter half-year, and five hours per week for the other half-years, until he attains the age before mentioned. The time will, in consequence of his leaving work earlier, be his employer's time. Having some years since taken a great interest in this subject, I can bear testimony to the advantages attendant upon it. Some few years since, when the late Bishop of Rochester (Wigram) was Archdeacon of Winchester, he used all his influence to extend the system in that county, and I believe with the most beneficial results. I would impress upon the middle classes generally, and employers of labour in particular, the necessity of doing their utmost to foster and encourage well regulated night schools; they keep boys from falling into mischief, and at the same time improve them in every way, and I believe it tends to create a spirit of respect which cannot be too much encouraged. If we let a boy leave school at nine or ten years of age, and do not give him any further instruction, I believe we are doing little to any solid advancement in education; if we come to apply the same test to others in an advanced station in life we should be the first to notice its shortcomings and defects. It may be stated that in going so far as I propose we shall be raising others too near the standard of education we ourselves have reached. I would beg to suggest it is more incumbent on us to move out of their way, and I believe this improvement in the education of our own particular class in many districts will not be one of the least advantages in an extended education of others. . . . With regard to the bill of Mr. Bruce, which was laid before the House of Commons not long since, there are some very good clauses as to the arrangement of school pence, and also respecting religious instruction, and likewise the appointment of a Minister of Education. I believe the part of the bill which encourages local responsibility to be also a step in the right direction. The Government plan consists in a greater development of the present system, and rectifies in some instances some of its faults, such as not granting aid to several schools where at present it is much needed. Although it does not go so far as many may wish, still I do not doubt when we have a responsible minister appointed we shall be able to see where it is principally deficient, and this is a question where a certain amount of caution is requisite, lest in endeavouring to do too much, and in an excess of zeal, we should hinder instead of advance the cause we wish to promote. We must consult not merely our own feelings, but those of the bulk of the labouring population, and endeavour to overcome that spirit of indifference to the cause of education upon the part of parents which will for some time at least operate as a drawback to its advancement. Gentlemen, I have now placed before you my views on this subject, and I am convinced it is a question in which progress is necessary. The competition into which every trade and business has to enter calls upon us to use every effort, not merely to advance ourselves, but to endeavour as far as possible to promote the education of those with whom we are more immediately placed in contact. Class interests in years gone by may have induced many employers of labour to believe that education was inimical to their interests. Civilization fortunately has progressed, and if there are those who still entertain those opinions, I would tell them I cannot bring myself to believe that an allwise Creator ever endowed men with faculties capable of development, and yet intends they should be kept in ignorance. Many of our greatest men have sprung from the working classes, and I know of no effort that will more repay the making than that of placing within the reach of every man the means of raising himself in the social scale; and in doing this we shall be fulfilling the sacred injunction of "Doing unto others "as we would they should do unto us." I would ask you, then, to discuss the subject, not merely as it affects ourselves as employers of labour, but as those who are deeply interested in the welfare, prosperity, and happiness of our common country.

The Chairman, Mr. Chandler senior, Mr. Godwin, and *Mr. Cundell* spoke very briefly on the subject, chiefly corroborating the views of the lecturer.

Mr. Spearing moved the following resolution, and *Mr. Hewitt* seconded it; it was then put to the meeting and carried unanimously: "That this "club, fully recognizing the advantage of educating "the agricultural labourer, is of opinion that every "child should be able to read and write before com-"mencing work, and that it should also have the "opportunity afterwards of attending night school."

Votes of thanks to the lecturer and the chairman closed the meeting.

[I think these papers are sufficient to show that, whatever may be the supposed attitude and temper of the farmers as a body, Berkshire and Wiltshire farmers, at any rate, are not incapable of appreciating the difficulties that surround the question of the education and employment of the agricultural labourer, nor indisposed to attempt the solution of them in a candid and progressive spirit. If such tempers generally prevailed, and I believe they are spreading more widely year by year, judicious legislation would give the farmers what Mr. Wentworth says they cannot give themselves, a common ground of union, on which they could fight successfully against narrow prejudices, bad customs, and antiquated methods, and carry out those plans of improvement which an enlightened experience shows, promote at the same time the

highest and truest interest of the employer and the employed.]

MINUTES OF PAROCHIAL MEETINGS.

County of Norfolk: St. Faith's Union.

No. 1. *Monday, July* 15, 1867.

Meeting at Attlebridge, for

Attlebridge - Pop., 93 - Acr., 1,206. - R.V., 1,000*l.** and
Alderford - Pop., 29 - Acr., 432. - R.V., 708*l.*

Present at Meeting:

Mr. Samuel Pumfrey, occupier of 300 acres.
Mr. Richard Reyner, occupier of 180 acres.
Mr. Robert Rix, occupier of 450 acres.

The land in these parishes belongs to three proprietors. The parishes are ecclesiastically united, though distinct for poor law purposes.

The supply of labour is not equal to the demand. Mr. Pumfrey could employ on his single farm all the labourers resident in the parish. Labour is imported from Ringland, Swanington, and Felthorpe.

The resident labourers are close to their work. The non-resident come from one to two miles.

The weekly wage now is 12*s.*

Task work is grass mowing, at from 3*s.* to 4*s.* 6*d.* per acre; turnip hoeing, at 3*s.* an acre (an acre being a fair day's work); corn harvest (about a month), from 6*l.* to 7*l.* for the job till the crop is housed.

There are some excellent new cottages built by Mr. Micklethwayt; and the cottages generally are tenantable. There are only two cottages with a single bedroom each. But more cottages are required. The ordinary rent varies from 2*l.* to 3*l.* 10*s.*, depending on size of house and garden.

There are three employers in Attlebridge, and one in Alderford.

The soil is light sand; the cultivation is arable and pasture, the pasture being about one-eighth of the farm.

The owners of the land at Attlebridge are resident; the owner of Alderford lives about 12 miles off. The residence of the landowners is not perceived to affect the condition of the poor.

Rent is about 20*s.* an acre; tithe, 5*s.* Game is highly preserved. Mr. Pumfrey is leaving his farm in consequence of its being overrun.

Females, almost exclusively married women, are employed in turnip singling, corn weeding, hay and corn harvest. A woman's day is reckoned at eight hours, and her wage is 8*d.* a day.

The three gentlemen present employ no boy under 13.

There is no day school at either Attlebridge or Alderford. The children go to Weston, about 1¼ mile away.

There would be no hardship, and it would be desirable to enact that no child should be employed under eight years of age; and the meeting would desire to see young unmarried girls employed in domestic service, and not in field labour. Great difficulty is felt by farmers in getting servants.

It is to be wished that every child should be able to read, and to write well enough to send a letter to his friends, and to cast up an account; and the legislature ought to see to this.

There is no slack time in the year during which attendance at school could be made compulsory without hardship both to the parents and the employers. In the winter boys would be wanted to look after bullocks and sheep, &c.

The moral condition of the people in these parishes is improving rather than deteriorating. There are only two illegitimate children in the parish, born to young women in service.

The labourers are generally found honest and trustworthy.

Richard James Reyner.
Samuel Pumfrey.
Robert Rix.

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No. 2. *Monday, July* 15, 1867.

Meeting at Morton-on-the-Hill, for

Morton - Pop., 149 - Acr., 977 - R.V., 997*l.*

Of the area of the parish, 519 acres are arable; 196 meadow and waste; the rest, woodland and plantations.

Present at Meeting:

T. T. Berney, Esq., of Morton Hall, magistrate and landowner.
Rev. N. Manley, rector.
Mr. Thos. Gaze, land occupier.
Mr. Thos. Wm. Gaze, guardian and overseer.
Mr. John Large, surveyor and occupier.

All the land in the parish belongs to Mr. Berney, with the exception of about 100 acres.

The supply of resident labour is not adequate to the demand. Some of the imported labour comes from a distance of from two to three miles.

Weekly wages at present are 12*s.*; carters earn 1*s.* to 2*s.* more.

Piece work is paid at following rates: 2*s.* 6*d.* per acre for turnip hoeing (once over); 3*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* per acre for grass mowing. A man will earn 6*l.* or 7*l.* in the harvest. A shepherd earns about 5*l.* a year more than a common labourer.

The cottages are in fair condition, well distributed; the rent varying from 3*l.* to 5*l.* including garden, often a quarter of an acre in size; poor rate and other charges paid by the landlord.

There are four employers of labour; one farm is 400 acres, another 80, another 100, another 40; some of the occupations run into neighbouring parishes, and *vice versâ.*

The soil is light sand; the farming mixed; about a fifth of a farm being in pasture.

The chief landowner is resident.

The average rent per acre is 20*s.*; tithe, 5*s.* The poor rate about 2*s.* in the pound.

Females, principally married, are employed in the same work as at Attlebridge, and at the same wages. More labour of this kind would be employed if it could be procured.

One girl under 13 is occasionally employed (but is generally at school); there may be 10 boys employed, ranging in age from 10 to 13, not however all belonging to the parish. When not employed, they generally go to school.

Mr. Gaze believes that all these boys can read and write. There is no day school at Morton; the children attend school at Weston.

The rector had a night school for two or three winters, attended by from 13 to 14 boys; but the only place in which he could hold it was his kitchen; and last winter it was discontinued, owing to some disinclination on the part of the boys to attend.

The half day or alternate day system is considered to be impracticable in agriculture.

There would be no hardship in making it penal to employ a child under eight; a boy is not of much use upon a farm before nine, at which age he would be of use to keep birds, or to assist the shepherd. Boys are not used in Norfolk in ploughing.

Mr. Gaze, jun., thinks that 35*l.* would represent the

* The figures following the name of each parish in these Minutes represent its *population, acreage,* and *rateable value,* respectively.

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total earnings (day, piece, and harvest work) of an able-bodied man in the year.

N. M. Manley, Rector.
Thos. Gaze.
Thos. Wm. Gaze.
John Large.

Mr. Berney would have signed also, but had sustained an injury in the right hand which disabled him from writing.

[The prices given me at Attlebridge for piece work were considered by this meeting pitched rather too high. On the other hand Mr. Gaze's estimate of the total annual earnings of an able-bodied man was considered at other places, at present prices, too low, and 37*l.* or 38*l.* was thought to be nearer the mark. It was thus computed :—

	£	s.	d.
52 weeks at 12*s.* - -	31	4	0
Excess in turnip hoeing, &c. (6 weeks at 3*s.*) - -	0	18	0
Ditto, in hay harvest (2 weeks at 6*s.*) - -	0	12	0
Ditto, in corn harvest (3 weeks at 28*s.*) - -	4	4	0
	£36	18	0

It is assumed in this estimate that there is no lost time.]

No. 3. *Monday, July* 15, 1867.

Meeting at Witchingham, for

Great and Little Witchingham, Pop., 675 ; Acr., 2,983 ; R.V. 5,472*l.*

Present at Meeting :

Rev. W. Howard, rector, chairman of board of guardians.
Mr. Robt. Leamon, occupier.
Mr. H. T. Knights, landowner and churchwarden.
Mr. Robert Stimpson, occupier and guardian.
Mr. John Dunt, assistant overseer.

Great Witchingham is an "open" parish ; there are at present about a dozen cottages vacant in consequence of a large emigration of labourers last year.

Little Witchingham, however, is "close." There are only 33 inhabitants on 738 acres.

At present the supply of labour in the parish is about adequate to the demand. The cottages are clustered chiefly in one corner of the parish, but in no case have the labourers to travel an unreasonable distance to their work.

The present weekly wage is 12*s.* The piece work ranges about the same as at Morton. Harvest work will average 6*l.* per man for the job. The men are already hired by Mr. Leamon at that price.

The cottages are fair ; but some of them, from the habits of the tenants, are not kept as they should be.

The rent is high, ranging from 3*l.* to 5*l.* Many have no gardens, and others are badly off in this respect. These are cottages in a street, built for investment. In most open parishes in the county the cottages are of this kind, and do not belong to the landowners.

The farming is mixed, about one-fourth being in pasture. The soil is very various. The farms are about nine in number, and range in size from 400 to 50 or 60 acres.

The principal landowners are not resident.

The land lets at from 25*s.* to 30*s.* an acre ; the tithe was commuted at 7*s.* 6*d.* per acre.

Females (married and unmarried) are employed, but they are scarce, and more would be employed if they could be got. They are employed in singling turnips, weeding corn, and harvest work. If the corn were high and wet, they would not be allowed to enter it ; as, if they did, they would do more harm than good. A woman's day is eight hours at 8*d.* The employment that they are put to does not produce any physical ill results.

Girls are employed occasionally in turnip singling, twitching, and bird keeping in the spring and summer. They are not required for work in the winter, and might easily be sent to school.

Boys are employed at nine in similar work, and begin to be very useful at 11.

A boy of nine would earn from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a week ; a boy of 11, from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.*

A boy's day is 10 hours ; a bird keeping boy may be employed 14 hours. But bird keeping boys want a deal of looking after, and an old man with a gun would be much more efficacious than three such boys.

There is a school in the parish, not in connexion with Government, under a master and mistress.

The average annual cost is about 70*l.* ; the number of children on the books being 80.

The annual subscriptions amount to 25*l.* The vicar thinks that every resident in the parish from whom subscriptions could be expected subscribes. There is an endowment of 10*l.* There are quarterly scholars who pay 3*s.* 6*d.* or 5*s.* a quarter. The labourers pay 1*d.* a week.

The vicar considers the school adequate to the wants of the parish, both in size and in quality of education. Neither the religious difficulty, nor distance, nor poverty keep children from school ; but there are cases in which improvidence does.

There are dames' schools in the parish. Children are not taken into the parish school under five, nor till they know their letters.

There were two evening schools last winter, but they were not very successful.

Half day schooling or alternate day schooling is utterly impracticable in an agricultural locality ; but there are slack times at which children might be sent to school if parents were disposed to send them.

There would be no hardship in prohibiting the employment of children below the age of eight ; but if a higher age were fixed, a hardship would occur in the case of large families. The work to which children of 9 or 10 years of age would be put would be light work.

It is desirable that every labouring man's child should be able to read, write, and cast a simple account.

W. Howard.
Robert Leamon.
H. T. Knights.
Robert Stimpson.
John Dunt.

No. 4. *Tuesday, July* 16, 1867.

Meeting at Sprowston, for

Sprowston - Pop., 1,500 - Acr., 2,551 - R.V., 5,592*l.*

Present at Meeting :

Rev. H. Banfather, incumbent.
Mr. Robert L. Cobb, farmer.
Mr. J. H. Norgate, farmer and guardian.
Mr. Fred. Andrews, parish clerk, postmaster, and wheelwright.

Sprowston adjoins the city of Norwich. The population adjacent to the city are employed in shoemaking, weaving, brickmaking, &c. The number employed in agriculture is about 250 (including the whole family).

The parish is open ; at the end adjoining Norwich houses are being run up rapidly ; but more houses are wanted on the farms, to bring the labourer closer to his work. Even the distance of a mile is found to tell.

The rent of a cottage, with a quarter of an acre of garden ground is about 4*l.*

Mr. Cobb farms 400 acres, and has eight cottages. He would like four more, and would then be satisfied.

On one of the farms there are three or four regular men who come two miles to their work.

It would be a capital thing if the landlords would build nice comfortable cottages for the men, and charge the tenants with interest on the outlay. Labourers so housed, near their work, and under the farmer's eye, are found to be in every sense better and more respectable.

Mr. Cobb thinks that a sufficiently good cottage, with kitchen, back-place, and three bed rooms, can be built for from 80*l.* to 100*l.*

Most of the existing cottages have two bed rooms.

Mr. Norgate farms upwards of 400 acres, and has only four cottages at his command; would like eight more, and would be content to pay the landlord interest on his outlay.

The rates of wages and piece-work here correspond with those paid at Morton and Witchingham; but Messrs. Cobb and Norgate think that an able-bodied man would earn upwards of 35*l.* this year.

The cottages are not well distributed; are too near Norwich; too remote from the farms on which the men are employed. If a man is tired with his walk, the master suffers; as soon as his back is turned the man is resting.

There are three farms in the parish of 400 acres; the rest vary from 150 to 40 acres.

One of the landowners is partially resident; two are non-resident. Of the latter, one (who owns 1,000 acres) does not subscribe to the school or any other parochial object; the other (who owns 500 acres) gives 1*l.* a year to the school. The resident landowner is liberal.

The parish is found to suffer from the non-residence of the landowners.

The rent of the land varies from 1*l.* to 2*l.* an acre. The great tithes are about 700*l.*; belong to the dean and chapter; are leased; the lessees do nothing for the parish.

There is, nearly all the year round, employment for females; mostly the wives of labourers. The work, however, is not laborious. A woman's day is eight hours at 8*d.* The employment of young girls is considered highly undesirable, but is sometimes indispensable. Though a half-day or an alternate day system is considered impracticable, advantage might be taken of the slack months (in the dead of winter) to secure education for children; but there would be difficulty in applying compulsion, owing to the different circumstances of different families.

There is a school, attended by about 140 children, with an average attendance upwards of 100. Total cost about 45*l.*, including 20*l.* school pence. Three teachers, all females, are paid respectively, 20*l.*, 16*l.*, and 4*l.* The last is merely a monitor.

There has never been an evening school in the parish. It is thought that it would be very useful; indeed it seems to be the only way of meeting the educational difficulties of a rural population.

The improvidence of parents is the only real cause that keeps children away from school. The religious difficulty has never been heard of.

The education of a labouring man ought to include ability to read intelligently, to write a letter, to cast an account. This is not attained now. Mr. Cobb thinks of the 12 or 14 men that he employs, only two can write their names. The clerk thinks that most of the young people in the parish between 16 and 20 employed in agriculture can neither read nor write. As postmaster, he gets letters every morning of which it is almost impossible to decipher the address.

There was an inquest held last Saturday at which most of the jurors could not sign their names.

HENRY BANFATHER, P.C. of Sprowston.
JNO. HY. NORGATE, Churchwarden and Guardian.
ROBERT LEGGETT COBB, Farmer.
FREDERICK ANDREWS.

No. 5. *Wednesday, July* 17, 1867.

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser

a.

Meeting at Ringland, for

Ringland - Pop., 360 - Acr., 1,210 - R.V., 1331*l.*

Present at Meeting:

Mr. James Howes, guardian and churchwarden
Mr. Wm. Clarke, land occupier.
Mr. Jeremiah Abel, householder.

There would be no hardship upon employers in making it penal to employ a child under eight.

There is a slack time in the year, perhaps three months, during which a child between 8 and 12 might be receiving education. As things are, farmers keep boys on for the winter without wanting them, in order to secure them during those parts of the year when they are valuable.

The land principally belongs to one landowner, but there are four or five little parcels of land, and as many houses, which belong to small owners.

The cottages are clustered into a village; a good many of them are in indifferent condition, but are being improved. Rents are high, varying from 4*l.* to 6*l.* a cottage.

The land is poor; rent averages 20*s.* an acre.

Neither landowner nor clergyman are resident, which operates much to the disadvantage of the parish.

The school in the parish is endowed with 28*l.* a year from land; for which 14 boys and 14 girls are educated free. It is taught by a respectable man and his wife, the latter a superior woman.

There are no voluntary subscriptions.

The Dissenters have an evening school.

The parents are anxious to take their children away to work as soon as they can earn anything. In the endowed school the free education lasts for five years.

The supply of labour in the parish is ordinarily equal to the demand, but a good many women and several men find employment in Taverham Paper Mill.

No agricultural labourer has any inordinate distance to go to his work.

From July to August is the time when extra labour is chiefly required. Mr. Howes has occasionally employed a gang from Weston (he occupies about 600 acres), but he would always do without them if he could. The work is only moderately done, and is the most expensive work that is done. He would rather pay his own people extra.

JAMES HOWES, Guardian and occupier.
WILLIAM CLARKE, Occupier.
JEREMIAH ABEL, Overseer.

[The schoolmistress at Col. Custance's school at Weston told me that she did not like taking in scholars from Ringland school (some of whom occasionally apply for admission), as they come so badly prepared. The Ringland school, only receiving 28 children, is plainly inadequate to the wants of the parish.]

No. 6. *Wednesday, July* 17, 1867.

Meeting at Weston-Longville, for

Weston - Pop., 471 Acr., - R.V., 3,952*l.*

Present at Meeting:

Mr. Robert Fuller, churchwarden.
Mr. John Carman, guardian and occupier.
Mr. Bowles Salisbury, occupier and assistant overseer.
Mr. Thomas Salisbury, occupier.
Mr. James Howes, occupier (here and in Ringland).

There are four large landowners; about 20 cottages belong to small independent owners. There are about 70 cottages in the parish. The landowners' cottages are let at rents varying from 3*l.* to 4*l.* (with gardens), the small proprietors charge higher, from 4*l.* to 6*l.*, with small gardens, and bad bedroom accommodation.

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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There are many cottages with only one bedroom. The cottages would hardly average a bedroom and a half a-piece. The general condition of the cottages is bad.

The supply of labour is equal to the demand. There is a gangmaster in the parish, who draws his gang partly from Weston and partly from the adjoining parishes. He is seldom employed in Weston. Mr. Carman has never employed him; prefers giving his work to six women whom he constantly employs. Wages range here much the same as at Morton and Attlebridge.

The parish is straggling, and the cottages are scattered. It frequently happens that a man does not work on the farm that is most adjacent to his cottage; no labourer, however, except of his own choice, has any excessive distance to go to his work.

The largest farm in the parish is 400 acres, the rest vary from 300 to 40 acres. There some smaller occupations of from 20 to 5 acres.

The cultivation is chiefly arable; the soil is a fair average mixed-soil land.

The chief landowner is resident, takes an active interest in the welfare of the parish, and built and maintains the school.

Females are employed. If they stayed at home they would probably send their children out to join a gang.

Very few children under 12 are employed by the farmers. Children's work is not worth what is paid for it, unless it is under supervision. They are generally employed on the pressure of the parents. If the farmer would not employ them, they would probably be sent to the gang.

There would be no hardship in making it penal to employ a child under 8; and there is a slack time of three or four months in the winter during which the labour of a child between 8 and 12 is not required, and he therefore could be sent to school.

The school in the parish is adequate to its wants. It receives children from neighbouring parishes. It is wholly supported by Col. Custance.

The education of a labouring man ought to include ability to read intelligently, to write a letter, and to cast a common account.

There is not an evening school in the parish at present.

Half-day or alternate day schooling is not considered practicable in an agricultural district.

JOHN CARMAN, Farmer and guardian.
ROBT. FULLER, Churchwarden.
THOMAS SALISBURY.
BOWLES SALISBURY.

No. 7. *Wednesday, July* 17, 1867.

Meeting at Honingham, for

Honingham - Pop., 328 - Acr., 2,563 - R.V., 3,738*l.*

Present at Meeting:

Rev. Thos. Fellowes, vicar.
Rev. W. C. Ward, curate.
Mr. Stephen Hipkin, occupier, guardian, and churchwarden.
Mr. Richard Sendall, occupier.
Mr. Henry Smith, occupier.

The parish belongs to one landowner.

The supply of labour resident in the parish and the cottage accommodation are inadequate. There are 43 cottages in the parish for agricultural labourers. The are 41 able-bodied labourers resident in the parish, and about 20 imported. The cottages are mostly clustered in a village; no labourer has to walk much more than a mile to his work.

The largest farm is about 600 acres; others are 450, 400, 230 acres. There are also a few small occupations. The farming is chiefly arable; the soil is very various. The rent is about 25*s.* an acre.

The cottages are in very good condition; the rent varies from 50*s.* to 70*s.*, including in most cases a good garden. There is hardly a cottage with a single bedroom.

The landowner is resident, and takes an active interest in the parish and people. Ill-conducted people would not be allowed to remain in the parish.

There would be no hardship in making it penal to employ children under 8 years of age. The average age of the boys at present in the first class of the school is 10½. At 10 years old a boy begins to be useful, and his education after that must be carried on, if at all, at an evening school. In the winter time there is abundant employment for boys in looking after stock and sheep, driving the horse in the chaff-cutter, &c.

Wages are, to a boy of 10 or 11, 2*s.* 6*d.*; of 12, 3*s.* 6*d.* and 4*s.* 6*d.*; of 14, 5*s.* a week.

Mr. Hipkin has seven women in constant employ; Mr. Smith, three.

Wages are much the same as at Morton. At present prices an able-bodied man would earn about 38*l.* in a year.

There is a joint school for Honingham and Tuddenham fairly accessible to the children. Not under Government; mixed; under a master and mistress. There are about 120 on the books, out of a population of 840. The average attendance for last year was 91. The total annual cost is about 80*l.* The subscriptions in the parish are liberal; and any deficiency is made up by the vicar.

There has been an evening school for 17 years; generally well attended. There were 40 in attendance last winter. Of those under 25 the great majority can read and write. All the gentlemen present at the meeting concurred in thinking an evening school very valuable.

All regretted that parental control is lessening, and Mr. Fellowes attributed much of the loose conduct of young men and girls to the fact that farmers have discontinued the practice of taking young men into their houses, where they were kept under control.

It was thought that every labourer's child should be able to read intelligently, to write, and to work sums in the four ground rules of arithmetic.

The employers present considered it very undesirable that young unmarried girls should work on the land. Only one girl of 16 is working for anyone present.

Gangs under certain circumstances are very useful; but they certainly require to be placed under regulation.

THOMAS LYON FELLOWES, Vicar.
WM. CRAIG WARD, Curate.
STEPHEN HIPKIN.
HENRY SMITH.
RICHD. SENDALL.

No. 8. *Thursday, July* 18, 1867.

Meeting at Felthorpe, for

Felthorpe - Pop., 514 - Acr., 2,240 - R.V., 1,526*l.*

Present at Meeting:

Major Bourchier, resident gentleman.
Mr. James Pratt, guardian and churchwarden.
Mr. W. Gardiner, churchwarden and overseer.
Mr. Thos. Nash, miller and farmer.
Mr. Saml. Grey, occupier.

The land in Felthorpe belongs to four large owners, and several small. The majority of the cottages belong to small owners. There are from 90 to 100 cottages in the parish; one small proprietor owns 24. The landowner lets his cottages at from 2*l.* to 3*l.*; the small proprietor would put his rent for a similar cottage perhaps 10*s.* higher. The cottage rents generally are reasonable. The cottages are well distributed as regards proximity to the farms. Several people resident

in Felthorpe work in Taverham (which is a close parish), both on the farms and at the paper mills; and in Haverland on the farms.

The land in the parish is a light saud; "not one *good* acre in it."

Wages here range the same as at Morton and elsewhere in the Union.

The total earnings of a good labourer in the year, at present prices, would be 37*l.* or 38*l.*

The largest occupation in the parish is 330 acres; other farms vary from 250 to 50 acres.

The landowners are not resident in the parish, but reside in the neighbourhood. One of them (Mr. E. Fellowes, M.P.) entirely supports the school.

The rent averages about 15*s.* an acre.

There is not much female labour employed in the parish. It is scarce. Able-bodied women who can walk the distance (three miles) prefer working at Taverham Paper Mills. The only farm work on which women are employed is turnip singling, "hay-sell," and corn harvest. They can earn 1*s.* a day turnip singling; at corn harvest they earn 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a day, according to time. To earn 2*s.* they would work from 6 a.m. to sundown, including meals.

A boy does not begin to be really useful on a farm before 10. A boy under 8 is generally useless.

There is a good school in the parish, attended by from 70 to 90 children, entirely supported by Mr. Fellowes.

A proper education for a labourer should teach him to read, write, and cast an account.

Anything in the shape of a compulsory enactment, would be a hardship in the case of large families.

The half-day or the alternate day system is considered impracticable, but an evening school properly organized would be a valuable adjunct to the day school.

JAS. J. BOURCHIER.
JAMES W. PRATT.
W. D. GARDINER.
THOMAS NASH.

No. 9. *Thursday, July* 18, 1867.

Meeting at Taverham, for

Taverham - Pop., 212 - Acr., 2,021 - R.V., 2,161*l.*

Present at Meeting:

Rev. R. C. Burton, rector.
Mr. Wm. Mumford, guardian, overseer, churchwarden, and occupier.
F. A. Magnay, Esq., churchwarden, overseer, and occupier.

This parish is peculiarly situated, in consequence of the presence of the Taverham Paper Mills, employing 250 hands.

There are about 30 cottages in the parish, of which 11 are attached to the mill. There are only six cottages occupied at present by agricultural labourers, Consequently neither the supply of cottage acommodation nor of resident labour is equal to the demand. This makes the labourers very independent, as they are able to make almost their own terms.

The whole parish, with the exception of 120 acres, is owned by one proprietor.

The resident labourers are housed conveniently for their work; the imported labour comes from Ringland, Felthorpe, and Horsford. Mr. Mumford feels strongly the inconvenience of some of his labourers residing at such a distance from their work. Of the cottages occupied by agricultural labourers, three are new and excellent; the other three are above the average. The new cottages have three good bedrooms. The rent ranges from 30*s.* to 60*s.* All have garden ground.

The cottages occupied by the mill hands are old and overcrowded.

There are four farms in the parish. The landowner is resident, and farms 900 acres of land, drawing much of his labour from Ringland, which is quite accessible to him.

Female labour is almost impossible to be procured, and the work that could be done by them has to be done by men. Mr. Burton considers this to be a good thing for the general condition of the family, as the woman is in her proper place in her home.

A boy under 8 is of no use on a farm; not of much use at 9; they begin to be of use at 10. By the time he is 13, a forward boy will have learnt to plough. A boy under 12 cannot stand the cold of winter, and there are three months during which he might advantageously be sent to school. Half-day or alternate day schooling is considered quite impracticable.

There is a school, under a mistress, an ex-pupil teacher. Every child able to attend is in attendance. There are at present 45 on the books, with an average attendance of 35. It is adequately supported by voluntary subscriptions. The school pence amount to about 14*l.* The rate is 2*d.* for one child, 4*d.* for two; all beyond two are free. The cost in 1866 was 58*l.* The landowner subscribes 25*l.*; the millowners, 10*l.*; the rector, 10*l.*

There has been a successful evening school; the difficulty in maintaining it is to procure teachers. Children are freely admitted to the day school for short periods when they happen to be out of work.

R. C. BURTON.
FRED. ARTHUR MAGNAY.
WM. MUMFORD.

No. 10. *Thursday, July* 18, 1867.

Meeting at Drayton, for

Drayton - Pop., 451 - Acr., 1,282 - R.V., 2,064*l.*

Present at Meeting:

Rev. Hinds Howell, rector.
F. A. Magnay, Esq., churchwarden and occupier.
Mr. E. Adcock, farmer and churchwarden.
Mr. Samuel Bunn, landowner and occupier.
Mr. Wm. Edwards, occupier.

The parish is an "open" one There are nearly 100 cottages in the parish. Many residents at Drayton work at Taverham Paper Mills. The supply of agricultural labour is about adequate to the demand. No labourer has any excessive distance to travel to his work. Wages here are the same as generally throughout the Union; 37*l.* a year would represent the whole earnings of an agricultural labourer in the year.

The rent of cottages varies from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*; there is generally a good garden.

The largest occupation in the parish is 360 acres; other occupations are 300, 120, 100, 70 acres. There are a number of smaller occupations varying from five to 40 acres.

The soil is light sand; the farming is mixed.

The rent varies from 7*s.* to 40*s.* an acre, and is considered generally to be too high.

A gang has never been heard of in the parish. Not more than three or four women are employed here on the farms, and very few children. Mr. Bunn doesn't care about employing many boys; he considers them dearer than men; they want so much looking after.

There is a good school in the parish, sufficiently supported by voluntary contributions. Total cost, about 55*l.*; 84 children's names are on the register; average attendance, 55. Under a trained mistrees, but not in connexion with Government.

There is an evening school in the winter months, taught by the rector.

There are very few young men in the parish between 16 and 25 but can read; but several of them would be unable to write a letter.

A boy of 10 or 11 during the winter can't stand the cold, and had better be at school. But a boy of 12 or 13 would be of as much use in the winter as in the summer, to look after stock.

The religious difficulty in education is not felt in this parish, though there are Baptists here. Improvidence

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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is the only cause that really interferes with education. There is a family earning 53*s.* 6*d.* a week, who have always been most irregular in their payments, and at the present moment two of their children are excluded from the school for irregularity of attendance.

The minimum of education for an English labourer ought to comprise ability to read intelligently, to write a letter, to reckon a shop bill. Mr. Bunn thinks if people would stop there nobody ought to complain of over-educating.

HINDS HOWELL, Rector.
SAM. BUNN.
W. P. EDWARDS.

No. 11. *Friday, July* 19, 1867.

Meeting at Horsford, for

Horsford - Pop. 665 Acr., 4,177 - R.V., 3,682*l.*

Present at the Meeting:

Rev. J. D. Ballance, vicar.
Mr. Gerard Day, occupier of 700 acres.
Mr. Robert Colman, householder.
Mr. Robert Wortley, occupier of 200 acres.
Mr. Peter Cannell, occupier of 35 acres.
Mr. John Wade, overseer.
Mr. John Bunn, overseer.
Mr. James Ives, occupier of 20 acres.
Mr. Robert Heath, Scripture reader.
Mr. James March, occupier of 20 acres.
Mr. John Canham, occupier of 8 acres.
Mr. Wm. Priestley, private medical practitioner.

The parish is open. There are 144 houses, of which about 120 are such as would be occupied by agricultural labourers. No scarcity of labour is experienced. The cottages are distributed over the parish, and no labourer has to travel an unreasonable distance to his work.

Mr. Wm. Priestley and Mr. Heath state that there are at least 25 cottages in the parish with single chambers, of which more than half are occupied by men with families. There is not one labourer's cottage with three chambers.

The majority of the cottages belong, not to the large landowners, but to small owners, and have been built for investment. Mr. Cannell, who owns seven cottages, gets 3*l.* for a cottage with a single chamber and a garden of from 10 to 20 rods; 4*l.* 10*s.* for a double chamber cottage.

There are at this moment 10 unoccupied cottages. There has been a considerable emigration of young men northwards in search of more remunerative employment.

Eight new cottages, all double chambered, very comfortable, were built last year. They let, with 16 rods of garden, at 4*l.* They stand in a row, and cost 400*l.* There are 12 or 14 cottages not supplied with wells, which have to borrow from their neighbours, perhaps renting under another owner.

The weekly wage is 11*s.* Mr. Wortley puts out all the work he can by the piece. A man's whole yearly earnings would average, Mr. Day thinks, about 13*s.* a week. Piece work is paid at the same prices as generally in this Union.

The soil is various, but mainly sand. The farming is chiefly arable; about one-fifth of the land under cultivation is pasture. There are nearly 1,000 acres of "ling" land (uncultivated heath), of which about 350 acres belong to the poor, who cut the turf for fuel.

The large landowners are not resident. The only assistance they offer is to the school, to which one subscribes 10*l.*; the other, 3*l.*

The rent of land under cultivation varies from 5*s.* to 40*s.* an acre; that at 5*s.* being very poor, newly-broken up land.

About 25 adult women (of whom five or six would be unmarried) are ordinarily employed on the land; and about 20 children under 13, of whom Mr. Heath does not know one under 9.

The labour of a child under 8 is of no use to the farmer. Mr. Wortley has had children as young as 7, owing to the pressure of parents, who wish their children to add a shilling or two to the earnings of the family.

When Mr. Wortley wants a boy, he wants to have him regularly all the year through; but a boy under 11 cannot withstand the cold of winter.

There are not enough boys in the parish to work the alternate day system of schooling. There are not more than two or three boys between 9 and 13 who are not employed at present. The school is large, handsome, new; built at a cost of 800*l.* (of which the vicar contributed 640*l.* and the ground); in connexion with Government; under a certificated mistress, with 90 children on the register, and an average attendance last year of 61. The mistress says she cannot ordinarily get a boy into the first class, unless she can keep him to beyond 9 years of age.

The religious difficulty has not been known to keep any children away from school. The only real difficulty arises in some cases from the indifference of parents, in others from a desire to see their children earn something at the earliest possible age.

Every labouring man's child ought to be able to read intelligently, to write a letter, and to cast an account; though Mr. Wortley doubts whether the last accomplishment is necessary. He holds with their having sufficient learning, but not with their having too much. Mr. Ives thinks that by 10 years of age, a child ought to be able to read, write, and to work sums in the four ground rules of arithmetic. But the real pinch is in the case of large families, who very often cannot keep their children at school up to that age.

Mr. Heath thinks that not more than two-thirds of the young men in the parish between 16 and 25 can read; and about two-thirds of those that can read can write their names. It would be a very small proportion who can write a letter.

There is an evening school during the winter months, and has been for eight or ten winters; but there is a difficulty in inspiring uneducated young men with sufficient desire for education to use it. There is an increasing sense of the value of education among the parents. Many children are kept at school with great regularity. Of the 61 in average attendance last year, 55 had attended more than 200 times.

JOSIAH D. BALLANCE, Vicar.
GERARD J. DAY.
ROBERT COLMAN.
ROBERT WORTLEY.
PETER CANNELL.
JOHN WADE, Overseer.
JOHN BUNN, Overseer.
JAMES IVES.
ROBERT HEATH.

No. 12. *Friday, July* 19, 1867.

General Meeting held, by the invitation and kindness of John Longe, Esq., at Spixworth Park.

Present:

J. Longe, Esq., Spixworth Park, magistrate and landowner.
Mr. John Utting, Stanninghall, occupier of 600 acres.
Rev. Henry Banfather, curate of Crostwick.
Mr. James Reynolds, St. Faith's, occupier of 160 acres.
Mr. E. Hind, sen., Catton, occupier of 190 acres.
Mr. Hind, jun., Frettenham, occupier of 310 acres.
Mr. Barker, St. Faith's, occupier of eight acres and veterinary surgeon.
Rev. J. G. Tipper, curate of St. Faith's.
Mr. Eaton, Spixworth, occupier of 500 acres.
Mr. Holmes, Spixworth, occupier of 400 acres.
Mr. Barnes, Beeston St. Andrews, owner and occupier.

Mr. Wm. Reynolds, St. Faith's, occupier of 220 acres.
Mr. Wm. Reynolds, St. Faith's, occupier of 470 acres.
Mr. Geo. Reynolds, Crostwick, occupier of 309 acres.
Mr. Howlett, Crostwick, occupier of 330 acres.
Mr. Edward Turner, of St. Faith's, occupier of 360 acres.
Mr. Robt. Reid, Frettenham, occupier of 390 acres.
Mr. Richards, St. Faith's, relieving officer.
Rev. Henry Howes, rector of Spixworth.
Mr. Wm. Priestley, surgeon, of St. Faith's.

It is the opinion of this meeting that there would be no hardship in making it penal to employ any child in agricultural labour under 8 years of age.

Only two gentlemen present have at this moment in their employment boys, one each, between 8 and 9. They earn 1*s.* 6*d.* a week.

It is the opinion of this meeting that the half-day or the alternate day system of schooling is impracticable in agriculture.

It is not thought likely, even if there were a slack time for children in the winter, that parents who have once tasted their earnings would send them to school unless obliged. Of course there would be exceptions in the case of parents who take a more enlightened interest in their children's welfare.

The evening school is considered to be very important, as an instrument of carrying on an interrupted education, and deserves every encouragement.

Though it is not the experience of this meeting that the *educated* labourer always makes the *best* labourer, yet it would be wrong to grudge the child of the agricultural labourer the best education within his reach.

The supply of labour in this neighbourhood is considered adequate to the demand.

About $2\frac{1}{2}$ cottages to a hundred acres of land would be a sufficient supply.

This neighbourhood is not adequately supplied with cottage accommodation for the labouring poor; though from bad distribution or other causes there are occasionally to be found vacant cottages.

Too many of the cottages in the district have only one bedroom, and this question of the housing of the poor is more important in its bearing upon the moral condition of the people even than their education.

Mr. Richards, the relieving officer, generally finds the cottages overcrowded. One case was mentioned in which in one room 10 feet square there recently slept a man, his wife, and 10 children, varying in age from 20 downwards.

It is the opinion of this meeting that no cottage occupied by a labourer with a family of sons and daughters ought to have less than three bedrooms.

John Longe.	J. W. Reynolds.
Henry Howes.	John Gore Tipper.
George Eaton.	Edward Turner.
Hy. Wm. Banfather.	H. Howlett.
John Utting.	James Reynolds.
George E. Reynolds.	Wm. S. Priestley.
Orlando Barnes.	Benj. Holmes.
Rob. Read.	E. Hinde.
E. W. Hinde.	Edmund Barker.
W. Reynolds.	Robert Richards.

No. 13. *Monday, July* 22, 1867.

Meeting at Horstead, for

Horstead - Pop., 607 - Acr., 2,678 - R.V., 3,589*l.*

Present at Meeting:

Mr. J. S. Minns, churchwarden and occupier of 270 acres.
Mr. Charles Race, occupier of 65 acres.
Mr. S. C. Cooke, overseer and miller.
Mr. John Coman, parish clerk and assistant overseer.

Norfolk.
Rev. J. Fraser.
a.

Horstead is an open parish; there is no difficulty in getting land for cottages. The supply of labour is about equal to the demand. The cottages are chiefly clustered into a street; some of the labourers have to travel two miles to their work. The cottages are in fair order; most of them have two chambers, several three; there are very few that have only a single chamber. There are 92 cottages in the parish; the rent varies from 3*l.* to 5*l.* 10*s.*; in the case of the higher rental there is a good garden.

The rent of the land is about 22*s.* per acre.

Wages are 12*s.*; piece work is paid at the rates general in this Union.

There are 12 or 13 employers of labour in the parish, and the farms range in size from 60 to 350 acres.

There are several landowners, of whom only one, owning 500 acres, is resident. Though the non-residence of the landowners must affect the condition of any parish, yet this parish suffers less from this cause than might be expected, in consequence of the interest taken by several residents in the condition of the poor.

There is a school in the parish under a mistress, attended at this time by 58 children, of whom 37 are girls and 21 boys. It was doubted if the school was thoroughly efficient.

There is no night school in the parish. If an efficient one were maintained, it would be a great boon.

It is allowed that the educational condition of the labouring poor at present is not satisfactory. In Horstead quite a third of the young men can't read, and very few could write well enough to write a letter.

Mr. Cooke, in his capacity of miller, wants boys who know enough of figures to keep an account of quantity of corn shot, &c., and finds a difficulty in getting them.

The gentlemen present think a labouring man ought to be able to read with fair intelligence, to write a letter, and to cast a simple account. The difficulty is, how to secure this.

The half-day or alternate day schooling is considered impracticable in agriculture; any form of compulsory education would be attended with difficulties, owing to the hardship that would be inflicted upon large families. The night school it is thought must be the instrument employed to continue the education of boys who have been called away from school to work.

There would be no hardship in making it penal to employ a child under the age of 10, if a dispensing power existed in the case of large families.

The religious difficulty has not been found to keep any children away from school in this parish.

Jacob S. Minns.
Chas. Race,
Sam. C. Cooke.
John Coman.

No. 14. *Monday, July* 22, 1867.

Meeting at Hainford, for

Hainford - Pop., 643 - Acr., 1,758 - R.V., 2,578*l.*

Present at Meeting:

Rev. W. A. Keppel, rector.
Mr. James Reynolds, manager of an occupation of 300 acres.
Mr. Wm. Golding, churchwarden and occupier of 230 acres.
Mr. Wm. Sexton, overseer and occupier of 50 acres.
Mr. Wm. Roberts, occupier of 20 acres and churchwarden.

The parish is open. There are cottages enough and to spare. There are about 130 cottages, of which 9 or 10 at present are unoccupied. Many of the

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

a.

labourers, resident in this parish, work on farms in Spixworth, Stratton, and Frettenham, in which there is a deficiency of cottages. There is a considerable weaving population in this parish, who are employed in this way during the winter. This employment improves the condition of the people.

The cottages mostly belong to small owners, and were built for investment. Most of them are in tolerable order, but in some of them there are cases of overcrowding. Many of the recently built cottages, though too slightly run up, are constructed after an improved pattern.

The rent varies from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.*, including a garden of from 10 to 20 rods. The cottages are well distributed; a man could seldom have to travel more than a mile to his work.

Two of the chief landowners are resident. Two-thirds of the land in the parish lets at 30*s.* an acre; one-third at about 15*s.*

The farms are of all sizes, ranging from 300 acres to 10 acres.

About 20 females are employed in the fields, of whom not more than three or four are single. The single women employed are mostly women with no character who cannot get out to service.

Mr. Golding thinks that a boy can get none too much education, perhaps hardly enough, by 10 years of age; and Mr. Sexton thinks he ought to stay at school till 12.

There should be more children at school in this parish than there are. The rector does not consider the school as efficient as it ought to be, owing to inadequate support. The school house, built on copyhold land, is tumbling down, and a fine is now due in respect of it, and the rector does not see his way to repairing it. The school at present is held in a hired room.

There is generally an evening school in the winter months, but the difficulty is to find teachers.

Mr. Keppel, though recognizing the difficulties that surround its practical working, is not hostile to the principle of a school rate. A master would be far more useful in this parish than a mistress, but the funds cannot be raised.

There is a considerable number of young men in the parish who can neither read nor write.

W. A. W. Keppel.
James Reynolds.
William Golding.
William Sexton.
William Roberts.

No. 15. *Tuesday, July* 23, 1867.

Meeting at Haverland, for

Haverland - Pop., 131 - Acr., 2,054 - R.V., 1,728*l.*

Present at Meeting:

Mr. Wm. Muskett, churchwarden, guardian, and occupier of 460 acres.

Mr. W. G. Overman, steward to E. Fellowes, Esq., M.P.

The parish is close, entirely the property of Mr. Fellowes, M.P. It contains four farms, one 600 acres, another 460, another 260, the fourth 182; the rest park and plantations.

The owner resides during four months of the year. The labour resident in the parish is not equal to the demand. The extra labour is imported from Felthorpe and Swannington. Mr. Muskett imports 10 able-bodied men and four boys. They have not, however, more than a mile to travel. A gang from Reepham, said by Mr. Overman to be well conducted, is employed by Mr. Fellowes, perhaps for a dozen days in the year, chiefly in weeding the park, picking stones, &c. The number working in it averages about 20.

Mr. Muskett does not recollect any cottages being pulled down without being replaced by others. There are now 21 cottages in the parish, all in good order. There is no overcrowding. All the new cottages have three bedrooms. The gardens contain a quarter of an acre of ground, which is thought to be as much as a labouring man can cultivate properly. The rent throughout is three guineas.

There is a school in the parish, entirely supported by Mr. Fellowes, under a very respectable elderly woman. There are 60 on the register, of whom about 45 belong to Haverland. About 12 or 14 children come from the next parish, Brandistone. There has never been an evening school in the parish.

It is found that a large proportion of the young men from 16 to 25 are ignorant, can't read or write; but it is thought that there is an improvement in this respect in those who are leaving school at present. Mrs. Overman has a singing class, to which belong four boys who have recently left school, who have no difficulty in reading the hymns.

The principle of the Print Works' Act is the only one that is considered applicable to agriculture, and even that would be surrounded by difficulties in the case of large families. Mr. Muskett thinks the people want every penny they can get. Wages and the prices of piece work here range the same as throughout the Union.

It is no over estimate of the education of a labouring man to make it include ability to read intelligently, to write a letter, and to cast a simple account. This amount is certainly not attained now; but the agricultural labourer, though deficient in education, is not deficient in intelligence, and is found competent to do all the work that is required from him on the land. They are generally found honest and trustworthy, and both Mr. Muskett and Mr. Overman find the men in their employ fairly sober.

Mr. Muskett employs two single women (45 and 30 years of age). Mr. Overman employs two constantly, one married, the other about, 22 years of age, single. The latter has worked on the farm nine years. She is so near-sighted that she could not go to service.

Willm. Muskett.
W. G. Overman.

No. 16. *Tuesday, July* 23, 1867.

Meeting at Booton, for

Booton - Pop., 246 - Acr., 1,040 - R.V., 1,800*l.*

Present at Meeting:

Rev. W. Elwin, rector.

Francis Parmeter, Esq., guardian and occupier.

Booton is an open parish. There is a sufficient supply of labour and of cottages. The cottages are of fair average quality. There are two or three instances of overcrowding. The rent ranges from 2*l.* 12*s.* to 3*l.* The majority of the cottages have a fair allotment of garden ground (say 16 rods); there are a few, four or five, without gardens. There is only one resident landowner. The three largest farms contain 600, 300, and 200 acres respectively. Wages and piece work are at the rates general in the union.

Mr. Parmeter, on 600 acres of land, employs three or four women constantly all the year round; another occupier of 300 acres employs two; the third large occupier employs none, except in hayseu and harvest.

Mr. Parmeter has never employed a boy under 12, unless it might be for a month at crow keeping. He would be sorry to employ a boy under that age, except for such occasional emergencies.

There is a school in the parish entirely supported by voluntary subscriptions. There is no regular school house, but the school is kept in a good cottage, specially hired for the purpose. The mistress is a young woman of 30, who is reported to be a good teacher. The elder children are occasionally removed from this school to a neighbouring school which is under a master and subject to Government inspection, and are generally found to take extremely good places there.

Mr. Elwin thinks that the girls, as a rule, get a very sufficient education in the matter of reading, writing, sewing, and cutting out; but something is still to be desired in respect of the boys.

Mr. Elwin and Mr. Parmeter consider that the only effectual remedy in the case of boys, would be to require a certain amount of attendance at school up to a certain age, say to 12, as a condition of employment. Any such scheme, however, ought to be accompanied with a dispensing power to relieve the hardship which would otherwise be inflicted upon large families. Any such scheme would, in the opinion of these gentlemen, be retarded and embarrassed by the introduction in any shape of the element of a rate. They further think that it would be a boon to the employer, and no hardship to the parents, to make it penal to employ a child under 10. Education in this district has made considerable progress in the last 10 years; but there is room, with advantage to all classes, for still further improvement.

Both Mr. Parmeter and Mr. Elwin bore willing testimony to the marked improvement in the habits of the people in respect of drunkenness. A drunken man is a rare spectacle, and the public house has nothing like its former trade.

WHITWELL ELWIN.
FRANCIS PARMETER.

No. 17. *Tuesday, July* 23, 1867.

Meeting at Swannington, for

Swannington - Pop., 385 - Acr., 1,413 R.V., 1,881*l.*

Present at Meeting :

Capt. Parker, magistrate and *ex officio* guardian.

Mr. Wm. Muskett Elliott, guardian and occupier of 180 acres.

Swannington is an open parish. Mrs. Parker is the lady of the manor, and principal landowner. There are 69 cottages in the parish owned by different proprietors. The supply of labour and of cottages is adequate. There are three or four cottages vacant now; this parish supplies Attlebridge, Alderford, and Haverland with part of their labour. The general condition of the cottages is good, above the average; but there are several with single chambers, and of course some instances of overcrowding. A considerable number of the cottages have been improved within the last two years. The rent varies from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* Most of the cottages have a fair allowance of garden ground, though some in the village street are less well off in this respect.

The largest farm is over 500 acres; there are five other farms ranging from 180 acres down to 30. The rent of the land averages about 20*s.* an acre.

Only a few women, chiefly married, are employed throughout the year; some additional ones are emeployed in spring and summer, weeding corn, in hayseu and harvest.

Boys are employed. Mr. Elliott thinks he has never had a boy on his farm under 9; but Captain Parker believes they are not unfrequently employed at an earlier age.

Great pains have been bestowed on the school by the rector; he built the house and bears the whole annual expense, but Capt. Parker has often been surprised to find the ignorance of boys when they have reached the age of 11 or 12, who appear to have forgotten all they had learnt. He accounts for that by the early age at which they are removed from school.

The rector has had a night school, taught by himself and his wife. Indeed, it is thought that more pains could not be bestowed upon the education of the poor than have been bestowed in this parish; and yet in Capt. Parker's opinion the results cannot be considered satisfactory.

Mr. Elliott thinks every boy ought to be kept at school till 10. If kept much longer, he fears they would become unfitted for farm work. But he would not like to enforce this by penalty, as it would frequently inflict hardship upon large families.

Both he and Capt. Parker consider the half-day and the alternate day system of schooling impracticable in farm labour; but there is a slack time in the year of which advantage might be taken by parents to send their children to school more frequently than they do.

Swannington school is under a mistress, an untrained person, and it is doubted whether she is very efficient as a teacher. There are about 50 children on the register, and between 30 and 40 in ordinary attendance. The school house is centrally situated. The religious difficulty has not been felt, though there are dissenters in the parish; the only cause of non-attendance or irregularity is the indifference of parents. Mr. Elliott says that two or three of the young men who work for him can't read, and he believes that the writing of the parish generally is at a very low ebb indeed.

HASTINGS PARKER.
WILLM. M. ELLIOTT.

No. 18. *Wednesday, July* 24, 1867.

Meeting at Rackheath, for

Rackheath - Pop., 271 Acr., 1,981 - R.V., 3,020*l.*

Present at Meeting :

Rev. J. Harrison, rector.

Mr. Henry Sutton, guardian and occupier of 600 acres.

Mr. Edward Daniel, occupier of 270 acres.

Mr. Chas. Coldham, occupier of 25 acres and overseer.

Mr. Fred. King, occupier of 240 acres.

The parish is close, entirely belonging to Sir Henry Stracey.

The supply of labour is very nearly adequate to the demand. The cottage accommodation is not quite adequate, but half a dozen more cottages would meet the wants of the parish.

Mr. Harrison only knows of two cottages with a single bedroom; he does not know of one with three bedrooms. There are some instances of overcrowding; but generally the condition of the cottages is above the average of the neighbourhood. The rent ranges from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 3*l.* 18*s.* They have all good gardens, varying in size from a quarter to half an acre. They are all well placed in respect of the farms, but badly placed in regard of the church and school.

The landowner is resident, takes an interest in the parish, and bears the whole money cost of the school.

There is a school in connexion with Government, under a certificated mistress, with upwards of 50 children on the register, and an average attendance of 30 or 32. The attendance is unfavourably affected by the distribution of the cottages.

The rector has had a night school each winter that he has been here, attended by about 14 scholars of all ages; but here again the distribution of the cottages tells with bad effect.

It is the opinion of this meeting that no boy ought to be employed under eight years of age.

There is no slack time during which the service of a useful boy could be spared.

Mr. Harrison finds that one of the great causes of non-attendance at school is the necessity for children to take their fathers' dinners, and this goes on through every season of hard work.

In fact the great difficulty in the way of any effective scheme of education is the desire of the parents to make their children earn something at the earliest possible moment.

THOMAS HARRISON.
FRED. KING.
HENRY SUTTON.
EDWARD DANIEL.
CHARLES COLDHAM.

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

a.

No. 19. *Wednesday, July* 24, 1867.

Meeting at Wroxham, for

Wroxham - Pop., 409 - Acr., 1489 - R.V., 2,343*l.*

Present at Meeting:

R. Blake Humfrey, Esq., magistrate.
James Green, Esq., guardian and landowner.
Mr. John Martin, occupier of 270 acres.
Mr. Barnabas Clark, occupier of 430 acres.
Mr. Alfred Chamberlin, owner and occupier of 300 acres.
Mr. Charles Utting, landowner.

The parish is open; the landowners are mostly resident.

The supply of agricultural labour resident in the parish is not equal to the demand. Some of the imported labourers have to travel from two to three miles to their work. There are 62 cottages in the parish, clustered chiefly into a street, and near the school, but not so conveniently placed for some of the farms. A portion of the population are employed as watermen, fishermen, maltsters, brickmakers, and potters; probably not more than half of the able-bodied men are employed on the farms.

The cottages are not of a high order; the worst are five cottages belonging to the parish, consisting merely of a sitting room and a closet, without a regular bedchamber, some of them occupied by large families. There is no repairing fund but the rent, and that is with the greatest difficulty obtained. They are felt to be discreditable cottages, and there has been a vote in vestry that they should be offered for sale, in the hope that the purchaser might improve them.

A considerable number of the cottages have only one sitting room and one bedroom; the newer cottages have two lower rooms and two upper chambers; there is not one cottage in the parish occupied by an agricultural labourer that has three bedrooms. The rent varies from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* All at the higher rent would have gardens.

Women are employed in labour on the farms, but they are mostly married. It is the unanimous opinion of those present that the employment of girls and young single women in the fields is highly prejudicial to morality.

The labour of boys cannot be dispensed with; but a boy's labour is not of much value before 10. It would be no hardship, as regards the employer, if it were made penal to employ a boy under 10. For boys between 10 and 13 it would be difficult to find a slack time, even in the depth of winter, when they could be sent to school.

It is the opinion of those present that the majority of the young men in the parish between 16 and 25 can read and write. There was an evening school last winter attended by about 30 scholars, at which Mr. Utting taught, and at the conclusion of the season it was an exceptional case to find one who could not read and write.

A manifest improvement is perceived in the parish from the active exertions of the present curate. Mrs. Humfrey has a Sunday class attended by about 20 scholars, most of whom can read and write fairly.

There is a day school in the parish attended by about 60 scholars. It is fairly supported; the total annual cost being from 45*l.* to 50*l.* There is an endowment of 15*l.*; the school pence amount to from 10*l.* to 12*l.*; the balance is made up by voluntary subscriptions. It is not in connexion with Government. The mistress has been trained, but is not certificated; a is superior person of about 28 years of age. The room is of a good size and well ventilated. The mistress's salary is 35*l.*

R. Blake Humfrey. John Martin.
A. J. N. Chamberlin. James Green.
Barnabas Clark. Chas. Utting.

No. 20. *Wednesday, July* 24, 1867.

Meeting at Salhouse, for

Salhouse - Pop., 684 - Acr., 2,026 - R.V., 2,663*l.*

Present at Meeting:

Rev. F. Steward, curate in charge.
Mr. Baseley Hales, overseer and occupier of 350 acres.
Mr. W. Leeder, guardian and occupier of 260 acres.
Mr. Edward Sutton, occupier of 160 acres.
Mr. Wm. Hargrave, occupier of 200 acres.

Salhouse is an open parish. The supply of labour is greater than the demand. Many of the labourers resident in this parish work in adjacent parishes where there is a deficiency of cottages. There are very few cases in the parish of men having to go any excessive distance to their work. The cottages are clustered in two or three groups. The church and school are centrally situated.

There is a sufficiency of cottages; two or three are empty now. There are several cottages which have only one bed room, but most have two. Only one could be mentioned that has three chambers. The rent ranges from 3*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.*; some of them have a quarter of an acre of garden ground. Mr. Steward estimates that there are 100 cottages in the parish.

The occupations range from 350 to 15 acres. The farming is almost exclusively arable. The soil is light sand, "as bad and ungrateful as soil can be." The rent varies from 20*s.* to 30*s.* an acre.

None of the large landowners reside in the parish, though some of them have residences in adjoining parishes. One of them, Mr. Cator, is extremely liberal to the parish.

There is a national school in the parish, with about 45 names on the register, and an average attendance of about 30. There is also a school held in the Wesleyan chapel attended by about the same number of children.

The national school is under Government, with a certificated mistress, at a salary of 35*l.* But Mr. Steward cannot say that it is liberally supported. The school room would accommodate 70 children, according to the Government scale.

Some women are employed, but not so many as formerly. Mr. Leeder and Mr. Hales conclude that the husbands earn more money, and that the wives do not care to come out. The present is an extra time, and there may be from 20 to 30 employed now. The farmers do not wish to see young girls work in the fields; let them go to service. Mr. Hales would like a gang, as there is a certain sort of work that must be done by women and children.

The land cannot be worked properly without children's labour; but a boy is of no use under 10 years of age, unless it be for a month in the autumn, and again in the spring to scare birds from new-sown fields. There would be no hardship in making it penal to employ a child under eight. A boy of eight has no business out in the fields. Though it is admitted that boys are not of much use upon a farm under 10, yet they are frequently employed at an earlier age, owing either to the dearth of labour at particular times or to the pressure of large families.

All present think that the night school is what the Government should encourage, if they want to do any good to education.

There is no slack time for boys of 11 or 12 during which they could be sent to school.

Mr. Steward tried a night school last winter, but living a mile from the school house, and obtaining no assistance, he was obliged to abandon it.

There is great apathy among the parents with regard to the education of their children.

It is thought desirable that all children should at least be able to read and write.

The greatest nuisance in this parish is the opening of the public houses on the Sunday.

F. Conway Steward.
Baseley Hales.
Wm. Leeder.
Edwd. Sutton.
Wm. Hargrave.

Depwade Union, Norfolk.

No. 21. *Tuesday, July* 30, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Alburgh, for

Alburgh	Pop., 587	Acr., 1,515	R.V., 2,800*l.*
Wortwell	Pop., 466	Acr., 1,113	R.V., 1,925*l.*
Denton	Pop., 518	Acr., 2,436	R.V., 4,094*l.*

Present at Meeting:

Rev. J. A. Coombe, rector of Alburgh.
Mr. B. Bond, occupier.
Mr. J. C. Miles, owner and occupier, and churchwarden.
Mr. Saml. Dunn, occupier and churchwarden.
Mr. C. Dunn, occupier.
Rev. F. S. Basden, Congregational minister of Denton.
Mr. Islip, of Denton.
Mr. Henry Spelman, occupier and town reeve.
Mr. George Miles, occupier and guardian at Wortwell.
Mr. R. L. Bond, relieving officer.
Mr. S. Y. Brock, occupier and constable.
Mr. S. Smith, parish clerk.
Mr. W. Blofield, owner and occupier.
Mr. C. Spelman, occupier and guardian.
Mr. H. Parker, occupier.

Alburgh, Wortwell, and Denton are open parishes.

At this peesent moment the supply of labour is about equal to the demand. There is also a sufficient supply of cottages, which are generally conveniently placed. No man would have to travel two miles to his work, except by his own choice.

The ownership of the cottages is pretty equally distributed between the large landowners and small proprietors. There has been a decided improvement in their condition within the last few years. Mr. Brock has built 12 cottages within the last five years, of which about half had three bedrooms. It is a common practice to build a double cottage with five sleeping chambers. A double cottage of this description, 32 feet long by 22 feet wide, and 16 feet high to the wall plate, with a shed to each tenement, and separate privies, would cost, if of brick, about 210*l.*; if of clay lump, about 180*l.*

Improvement, however, is still needed, and the relieving officer mentioned cases of overcrowding.

The rent ranges from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*; the garden containing from 10 to 20 rods.

The larger tenants live under non-resident landlords; in Alburgh a non-resident landowner is the only subscriber to the school.

The land is mostly heavy; the rent averages from 28*s.* to 30*s.* an acre, exclusive of tithes.

The gentlemen present employ about 35 women and girls in the spring and summer weeding corn, haymaking, turnip singling, stone picking, &c. Women are not employed in this district in getting in the wheat harvest, though they are of use with barley and beans. A woman earns 8*d.* a day; a girl of 14 or 15, 6*d.*

It is the opinion of this meeting that it is highly undesirable to employ young girls and boys or men together; and it is the practice of the gentlemen present to employ unmarried women exclusively in company with their own sex, and as far as possible, girls under the supervision of their mothers.

The employment of boys is indispensable, but the employment of boys under 10 is very rare and very undesirable.

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

a.

There are schools in all the three parishes. "They are kept going."*

It is thought that a labouring man's child should be able to read intelligently, to write a letter, and to cast an account; but there was a considerable difference of opinion as to how far the present system is producing this amount of intelligence. A considerable majority of the meeting were adverse to any legislative interference, as they could not see how it would remedy any existing evil.

Both the half-day system and the alternate day system of schooling are considered impracticable. There is, however, a slack time of which advantage might be taken for education in the case of some children, chiefly girls, if parents were disposed to avail themselves of it.

It is the opinion of the meeting that the efforts of educationists should be directed to make the most of the time before the child is 10 years old; after that time, in the case of boys, the only efficient instrument for carrying on education is the night school.

J. A. Coombe.	R. L. Bond.
Fredk. S. Basden.	B. Bond.
Clement W. Spelman.	W. W. Blofield.
George S. Miles.	Charles Dunn.
Henry Parker.	Samuel Dunn.
Henry J. Spelman.	Samuel Smith.
Isaac C. Miles.	S. Y. Brock.
Wm. Islip.	

July 30.

I was absent from the meeting, the minutes of which are above written, but I fully coincide with the spirit of them.

In this parish much has been done during the last year, under the spur of the Sanitary Commission, towards improvement in the drainage, &c. of our cottages, and I believe now that all are in fair condition.

In this parish the supply of labour is now only barely sufficient to the employ, and my belief is that any legislation tending to curtail the employ of women and children in field labour would not work satisfactorily.

It might be desirable that the employment of the two sexes *in company* should be restricted, but the mode of enforcing such restriction would possibly be found a matter of some difficulty.

C. Mortlock, M.A., Cantab.,
Guardian and Churchwarden of Denton.

[N.B.—On my return home I passed through Wortwell, which is a hamlet of Redenhall, and with few exceptions, the cottages which line the road appeared to be of the most wretched description, by far the worst, taken as a lot, that I have seen in Norfolk. I am informed that in another part of the parish things are better.]

No. 22. *Wednesday, July* 31, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Dickleburgh, for

Dickleburgh	Pop., 895	Acr., 2,284	R.V., 4,364*l.*
Burston	Pop., 419	Acr., 1,399	R.V., 2,578*l.*
Rushall	Pop., 242	Acr., 1,149	R.V., 1,783*l.*
Shimpling	Pop., 219	Acr., 768	R.V., 1,358*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Dickleburgh—
Rev. G. Stevenson, rector.
Mr. Francis Dix, owner, occupier, and guardian.
Mr. Wm. Smith, owner and occupier.
Mr. W. R. Smith, occupier.
Mr. Mickleburgh, owner, occupier, and churchwarden.
Mr. Batho, tradesman and owner of cottage property.

* I interpreted this phrase to mean that the schools are not adequately supported.

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From Burston—
Mr. Wm. Dixon, occupier, guardian, and churchwarden.
From Rushall—
Mr. John Stanton, occupier, guardian, and churchwarden.
Mr. Thomas Arnold, occupier.
From Shimpling—
Rev. J. W. Millard, rector.
Mr. W. Bate, owner and occupier.
Mr. I. G. Spelman, occupier and guardian.
Mr. Charles Chilvers, occupier.

Dickleburgh is an open parish. There must be at least 80 landowners. The supply of labour is fairly adequate to the ordinary demand. Mr. Mickleburgh thinks that there are 136 cottages. The majority have two bedrooms; but a few large families occupy cottages with a single chamber. The rent ranges from 3*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.*

Burston is an open parish; perhaps 10 or 12 owners. The supply of labour is equal to the demand. The supply of cottages is deficient, and many of them are in very bad order, small and low and overcrowded; the rent much the same as at Dickleburgh.

Rushall is an open parish, almost every building belonging to a different owner. Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and Bethel Hospital at Norwich have property here. The supply of labour is adequate. The cottages are pretty fair as regards repair and sanitary appliances, but very deficient in bedroom accommodation. The evil is increased by the growing habit among adult young men of remaining at home, unmarried, with their parents.

Shimpling is an open parish. There are ten or a dozen owners, including the owners of cottage property. About three-fourths of the cottages belong to small owners, who have built them for investment. Most of the cottages are in fair repair, but they are very small and deficient in bedroom accommodation; there is only one cottage with three chambers. The supply of labour is inadequate. But six or seven out of the 35 cottages in the parish are occupied by a class of men who are called "truckers," and who call themselves "marine store dealers," who are not available for labour on the land. The rent ranges from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 6*l.*

At Dickleburgh there is a school (a good room), not connected with Government, partly endowed, and adequately supported. There are two or three private schools.

There is a school at Burston; also at Rushall (an excellent room, built with Government assistance, but not at present under inspection). At Shimpling there is no public school; the children that attend school go to Burston or Dickleburgh. There is, however, a small private school attended by about 10 children.

Neither the religious difficulty, nor distance, nor real poverty is found to keep children away from school, but many parents imagine themselves too poor to send their children to school, and others are sadly improvident. The amount of the school fee is not the difficulty; but if parents with large families were compelled to send their children to school in many cases there would be a difficulty both in feeding and clothing them.

It is the opinion of this meeting that it is highly desirable, if possible, that children should be kept at school till 10 years of age; but if employment under that age were universally made penal, great hardships would be inflicted on large families; and it was doubted if in many cases, unless compulsion were applied, parents, prohibited from sending their children to work, could be persuaded to send them to school.

It is the unanimous opinion of the meeting that the half-day and the alternate day system of schooling are impracticable, the circumstances of factory and agricultural labour being so different; but it is admitted that there are three or four months of winter, say from November to the end of February, of which advantage might be taken for education if parents were disposed to avail themselves of it.

Anything like stringent legislation in this matter would produce in many cases grievous hardship, but several gentlemen present considered that there would be no trouble in demanding, previous to employment, a certificate of the child's having attended school during the slack months in the previous year.

Wages remaining at 12*s.* a week, and with the ordinary amount of piece work, the total annual earnings of an able-bodied labourer of the best quality would be 40*l.*

In Dickleburgh every family with two children and upwards under the age of 16 has an allotment of a quarter of an acre for 2*s.* a year, free of rates and tithe, provided out of 10 acres of land set apart for that purpose under the Inclosure Act. In Rushall the labourers have a similar quantity, for which they pay 10*s.*

George Stevenson.	Thomas Arnold.
Francis Dix.	J. W. Millard.
John Mickleburgh.	Isaac G. Spelman.
William Batho.	Charles Chilvers.
William Dixon.	Wm. Bate.
Jno. Stanton.	

No. 23. *Wednesday, July* 31, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Scole, for the parishes of

Scole (with Thorpe Parva, and Frenze)	Pop., 747	Acr., 1,528	R.V., 3,436*l.*
Thelveton	Pop., 160	Acr., 1,041	R.V., 1,734*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Scole—
W. C. Curteis, Esq., D.C.L., magistrate, landowner, and occupier.
Mr. Spooner Nash, owner and occupier.
Mr. John Rogers, occupier.
Mr. John Lines, occupier.
Mr. Charles Pettett, owner and occupier.
Mr. Henry Mole, occupier.
Mr. Frederick Simpson, occupier.
Mr. Wilby Bowen, occupier.
From Thelveton—
Mr. Michael Calver, occupier.

Scole is an open parish. There is a large flax mill in the parish, employing from 40 to 100 hands, according to the supply of flax. There is no redundant labour. The supply of cottages is adequate, but the majority of them are bad, very small, badly ventilated; some with very bad water supply; very many with only one chamber; in pretty fair repair; a considerable number without adequate gardens. There are many instances of overcrowding. The rent ranges from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* About half of them belong to small proprietors.

It is highly desirable that every cottage occupied by a labouring man with a mixed family should have three chambers. Dr. Curteis and Mr. Lines would even like to see this enforced by law.

Thelveton is a close parish; the whole of it one estate, which is just now changing hands. The supply of labour is inadequate, and more cottages are required. The cottages that exist have large gardens, but want a good deal of repair; they have been neglected. The rent varies from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* The chief of them have only one bedroom; a case was mentioned of a family of ten all occupying a single chamber.

The Union Chargeability Act is thought to have already acted favourably on the supply of labour, and must also act favourably on the supply of cottages.

There is a school at Scole, in connexion with Government, under a master certificated but untrained. There are 78 names on the register, and an average attendance of 60. Only two boys are over 10, one between 9 and 10, five between 8 and 9; there are nine girls over 11. The whole school income is about 65*l.*, including the Government grant. The volun-

tary subscriptions amount to 32*l.* There are many dissenters in Scole, but the school is Church of England. Attendance at church or at Sunday school is not made compulsory.

There was a night school in Scole last winter, with an attendance of about 40 scholars.

At Thelveton there is no school.

The educational condition of the agricultural poor at the present moment is felt to be not satisfactory. There are many children in Scole—Mr. Pettett thinks there are 40 children around him—who do not attend school. The only reason seems to be the improvidence or indifference of the parents. A family was named in which there were five children of age to attend school who go neither to school nor work. The father is a spinner in the flax mill, and earns high wages.

There would be no hardship in prohibiting the employment of children in field labour under eight. Indeed a boy is of very little use upon a farm under 10.

The half-day and the alternate day system are considered impracticable in agriculture, but there is no employment for small boys during the three or four winter months; they cannot bear the cold.

The education possessed by a labouring man's child ought to include ability to read intelligently, to write a letter, and to cast an account. All the gentlemen present are desirous that this measure of education should, somehow or other, be secured.

The labouring class generally are considered honest and trustworthy. Habits of drunkenness are less prevalent than in former years; but there is still a great deal of unchastity, attributable perhaps to the promiscuous way in which many families live. Half the fruit of the schools is lost through the way in which the people are herded in their homes.

W. C. Curteis.
S. Nash.
Jno. Lines.
Chas. Pettett.
Wilby Bowen.
Henry Mole.
John Rogers.
Frederick Simpson.

No. 24. *Thursday, August* 1, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Thorpe Abbotts, for

Thorpe Abbotts	Pop. 256	Acr., 1,144	R.V. 1,804*l.*
Billingford	Pop. 199	Acr., 1,004	R.V. 1,620*l.*
Brockdish	Pop. 544	Acr., 1,104	R.V. 2,224*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Thorpe Abbotts—
- Rev. W. Wallace, rector.
- Mr. J. L. King, owner, occupier, chairman of board of guardians, and churchwarden.
- Mr. Geo. Smith, occupier, churchwarden, and overseer.

From Brockdish—
- Rev. G. France, rector.
- G. Holmes, Esq., owner, occupier, and magistrate.
- Mr. Hinde, occupier.
- Mr. Booty, owner and churchwarden, and
- Mr. G. B. Mann, relieving officer.

[N.B.—The two principal occupiers in Billingford were unable to attend from illness, but Mr. King occupies in Billingford as well as in Thorpe.]

Thorpe is an open parish; cottages have been within the last ten years built by the blacksmith and the publican, and a carpenter owns some old cottages. The supply of labour resident in the parish is not adequate to the demand. Labourers are imported from Hoxne, Brockdish, and Rushall. The cottages generally are indifferent, some of them very bad, leading to cases of overcrowding. One landowner has recently built eight cottages of improved construction, with three bedrooms each, which are to be let to weekly tenants at a rent not exceeding 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. Another landowner, who owns three-fourths of the cottages in the place, has declared his intention of putting them all in good condition at the earliest opportunity. The water supply of the village is bad, owing to the depth to which the wells must go. A landowner has promised to erect a pump for the use of the village, which is likely to cost 100*l.* The cottages are rented at from 3*l.* to 5*l.*; a "hovel" or two let at from 6*d.* to 9*d.* a week.

Billingford is a close parish, with an adequate supply of labour and of cottages. The cottages, generally are not good, and there has been no recent improvement. Most have good gardens; rent much the same as at Thorpe. The landowner is not resident.

Brockdish is a purely open parish, with a redundant population, produced by the existence of a drabett factory in the adjoining parish, which, when in full work, probably supports 100 of the Brockdish population. The cottages generally are good, and if the people could only be sorted a little better there would not be much overcrowding; but as things are the state of things in many instances is not satisfactory. The rent ranges from 3*l.* to 5*l.* Many of the houses in the street have a garden so small as to be scarcely worth mentioning.

The labourers in these parishes have no excessive distance, except from their own choice, to travel to their work. People are found to dislike cottages in lonely situations, at a distance from the shop, church, and school. A case was mentioned in which two biggish lads were afraid of coming to the evening school because they would have to pass through a mile of wood.

There are kinds of agricultural labour which can be best done by females, such as stone picking, weeding, singling the root crops, hay harvest. In wheat harvest, when it is put out by the acre, women would take part with their husbands in the work, but when a contract is made with the men at so much for the job, these women are not employed. There is observed to be a growing indisposition on the part of women to work in the fields, owing, it is thought, to the generally improved condition of the agricultural labourer.

It is thought undesirable to employ young girls and unmarried women under 20 or so in field labour generally; but the employment of girls in the field, under proper supervision, for a few weeks at the seasons when their services are most useful, is not considered to be morally more mischievous to them than is their contact one with another in the village street or in their own homes.

The employment of boys is indispensable, and unless they are employed at a sufficiently early age they never acquire that aptitude which will fit them to become efficient labourers. It is thought that the age of 10 is quite early enough at which to begin, but Mr. King considers that if it were made penal to employ any child in field labour under 10, hardship might be inflicted in the case of large families.

Mr. Hinde thinks that a boy under 10 earning 1*s.* 6*d.* a week does himself 3*s.* worth of harm; gets stunted in his growth; and the fact that his parents want his earnings shows that they were nearly at starvation point before, and that the boy is not likely to be half fed while he is at work.

It would be desirable to make it penal to employ any child in field labour under eight, but it is not considered that there is a slack time of which advantage can be taken to carry on education in a day school. Mr. Wallace very seldom finds that boys who have been at work come back to school in the winter; doubts, if they did, whether the schoolmistress would be able to manage them.

It is the opinion of the meeting that if boys can be kept at school till 10, their further education must be carried on through the night school.

In Billingford there is only a dame's school, kept in a cottage; in Thorpe, a school, not under Government inspection, though built with Government

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assistance, under a mistress, adequate to the wants of the parish. In Brockdish the school is under Government inspection, with a certificated mistress and pupil teacher, with 70 children on the register, and an average attendance of 55. The majority of scholars are girls. The school is quite adequate to the wants of the parish. There is also a small private adventure school; the payment there is 3*d.* a week; at the parish school 2*d.* for one, 3*d.* for two, 4*d.* for three.

At Thorpe the system of quarterly prepayments at a reduced scale is adopted. Mr. France tried it at Brockdish, but didn't find it answer.

W. Wallace.
George France.
R. F. Hinde.
Gervas Holmes.
John L. King.
George Smith.
Will. Booty.

[Mr. Mann, the relieving officer, had to leave before the meeting was concluded, but he bore testimony to the insufficient cottage accommodation of many families in the district, and also to the unsatisfactory condition of education, of which, in his capacity of registrar, he is in some measure able to judge. He finds that a large proportion of those, males as well as females, between the ages of 15 and 30 who come to register births and deaths cannot write their names. He thinks, however, he discerns a smaller amount of ignorance of this kind in those between 15 and 20 than in those between 20 and 30, which indicates that some improvement is going on.]

No. 25. *Thursday, August* 1, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Starston, for the parishes of

Starston	Pop., 481	Acr., 2,168	R.V., 3,682*l.*
Redenhall with Harleston	Pop., 1,736	Acr., 2,539	R.V., 6,250*l.*
Needham	Pop., 395	Acr., 1,100	R.V., 1,982*l*

Present at Meeting:

From Starston—
- Rev. A. M. Hopper, rector, magistrate, and diocesan inspector of schools.
- C. Etheredge, Esq., owner, occupier, and churchwarden.
- W. C. Smith, Esq., occupier and guardian.
- Mr. John Saunders, occuper and assessor.
- Mr. D. Danby, owner and occupier.
- Mr. T. Mullinger, occupier.
- Mr. T. Redgrave, occupier and overseer.
- Mr. George Alexander, occupier.
- Mr. E. Cheney, occupier and overseer.
- Mr. Jas. Lanham, occupier.
- Mr. Robert Baker, occupier.
- Mr. S. Drewell, occupier.
- Mr. G. Thurling, occupier.
- Mr. Caleb Barker, occupier.

From Needham—
- Mr. J. B. Pratt, occupier and overseer.

From Redenhall—
- W. M. Hazard, Esq., churchwarden and solicitor.

Starston is a perfectly open parish. There are 27 owners of land in it. At the south end of the parish there is a sufficient supply of labour, but at the north end it is inadequate, and necessary work has sometimes to be left undone in consequence. There are 75 cottages in the parish, of which nine are now untenanted. The untenanted ones are either unfit for habitation or with insufficient accommodation; 31 have been either rebuilt or renovated within the last 15 years. The condition of the cottages generally is good, some of them very good; but there are 18 of inferior quality. The rent ranges from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 6*l.*, according to the quality of land and the accommodation of the cottage. The rent of the majority would be about 4*l.* The rector only knows of two cases of overcrowding. There is a sufficient and an efficient school in the parish, under Government inspection, with a certificated mistress and pupil-teacher, with 50 children on the register, and an average attendance of 42. The rector only knows of two children in the parish who ought to be at school who are not.

Needham is an open parish, with a great many landowners. In the last 35 years the property has been very much subdivided, in Mr. Pratt's opinion, to the injury of the parish, as many of the farms are now little better than cottier occupations. The supply of labour is adequate to the present demand, but would not be adequate to a system of improved culture. Some of the cottages are very poor, some pretty good. Mr. Pratt does not think there is much overcrowding, though here and there occurs a case of insufficient accommodation. Very few have three chambers. The rent would be much the same as at Starston. There is only a Sunday school at Needham; the children that attend school go to Brockdish or Harleston, but there must be several children who are neither at school nor at work. There has never been a resident clergyman at Needham, which has told unfavourably on the condition of the parish.

Redenhall with Harleston forms a parish containing 1,736 inhabitants, of which 1,302 reside in Harleston, which is a market town. Very few agricultural labourers reside in the actual town, though its suburbs contain a considerable number. In Redenhall proper there is a sufficiency both of labour and of cottages. The cottages generally are not of a good description, especially those in the suburbs of the town. The worst belong to small proprietors, the best to the larger landowners. There has been some improvement, which it is hoped may continue. Mr. Etheredge has recently converted eight cottages into five. Rents are much the same as at Starston, but a cottage in or near the town without a garden would fetch as much money as a cottage in the country with a garden.

There is a National school, in two departments, just outside the town, which serves both for Redenhall and Harleston. It is adequately supported (a charity of 70*l.* a year being applied to its maintenance by the trustees), and is a very efficient school; it is under Government inspection, and has a certificated master and mistress. There was a British school, which was discontinued about three months ago in consequence of a deficiency of funds.

The employment of females in field labour at certain seasons of the year cannot well be dispensed with; indeed, the gentlemen present would be glad of more female labour than they can at present procure. Women are employed in stone picking, weeding corn, haymaking, and singling root crops; they are not employed in wheat harvest in these parishes. Women are useful in weeding corn till it comes into the ear. The cultivation here is what is called the ten-furrow system, and the woman walks up the furrow and weeds the corn as far as she can reach on either side with her weeding hook. Mr. Pratt says "they won't stop long "enough to get wet."*

The employment of young unmarried females in field labour is highly undesirable and demoralizing; they ought to be in service. There are at present only two girls between 15 and 18 employed in Starston; not one under 15.

Boys' labour is indispensable on a farm. They are wanted for tending bullocks and sheep, weeding, singling, carting and cleaning turnips, stone picking, and bird keeping; but Mr. Pratt could do without them in bird keeping better than in any other capacity.

There will be no hardship either to parent or employer if it is made penal to employ a child in labour under 8 years of age. A boy's labour is worth very little under the age of 10, and at that age it is

* I suppose Mr. Pratt meant wet by rain, because if the corn itself is wet with dew or after rain, it would not require a woman to stay very long to get the under parts of her clothing saturated.

time that he should commence farm work if he is ever to become an efficient labourer; but this meeting are strongly averse from any penal legislation which would prevent the employment of children between 8 and 10, as they consider that at this age the question must be left to the discretion of the parent. A boy from 9 to 10 would earn 2*s.* a week.

As many boys are wanted, and quite as much wanted, in the winter as in the summer; pulling, cleaning, and cutting turnips, feeding cattle and sheep, &c., so that there is no slack time of which advantage can be taken for boys after the age of 10 to attend school.

In the opinion of this meeting the night school is the only effective and practicable instrument for carrying on the education of agricultural boys after 10 years of age, and deserves every encouragement. Mr. Hopper named six labouring men who have learnt in the night school to read, write, and cast up accounts after they had reached the age of 25.

It is thought that every labouring man ought to be able to read well enough to amuse or improve himself, to write a letter, and to cast a simple account. A case was mentioned in which an employer would have been glad to promote his yardman, who has lived with him 40 years, to the higher post of bailiff, but was unable to do so because he was not a sufficiently good scholar.

There is observed to be a growing inclination on the part of the better educated young men to exchange farm labour for what they fancy to be more pleasant or more profitable employment.

An adequate supply of cottages, properly distributed among the farms, and with sufficient accommodation for the families who inhabit them, is felt to be, perhaps, the most vital element of all in the well being both of the employer and the labourer; and this meeting desires to see this question pressed most strongly upon the attention of landowners generally.

A. M. Hopper, rector of Starston.
C. Etheredge, churchwarden.
J. B. Pratt.
W. C. Smith, guardian.
Wm. Hazard, churchwarden of Redenhall.
John Saunders.
Jno. Redgrave, overseer.
Thos. Mullinger, occupier.
Daniel Danby.
George Alexander, occupier.
Matthew Barker, assessor.

No. 26. *Friday, Aug.* 2, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Pulham Magdalene, for Pulham St. Mary Magdalene and Pulham St. Mary the Virgin.

Pulham Magd.	Pop., 1,279*	Acr., 2,886	R.V., 5,018*l.*
Pulham, St. Mary	Pop., 863	Acr., 2,965	R.V., 4,854*l.*

Present at the Meeting:

From Pulham Magdalene—
Rev. L. R. Henslow, rector.
Mr. S. Barnes, owner, occupier, and churchwarden.
Mr. J. Stanley, occupier and churchwarden.
Mr. W. Nurse, occupier, owner, and guardian.
Mr. J. Baxter, occupier.
Mr. P. Goldsmith, owner and occupier.
Mr. S. Rix, schoolmaster.
Mr. W. Mann, owner and occupier.
From Pulham St. Mary the Virgin—
Rev. R. Bond, rector.
Mr. Thos. Bond, occupier and churchwarden.
Mr. John Stewart, occupier and churchwarden.

Pulham Magdalene is an open parish. The supply of labour is not more than sufficient, but adequate to the present demand. It is rather more plentiful this year than it has been for the last two or three years. There are plenty of cottages, several standing empty at this moment; a large number of them are deficient in chamber accommodation; very few have more than two bedrooms. There are several cases of overcrowding. The rent varies from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*, depending on the quality of the house and the size of the garden. There are about 150 cottages in the parish, and a total of about 200 houses. There are a Sunday, day, and night school. The day school has 115 names on the register; average attendance, 75. There are at this moment on the register 12 boys and 7 girls (children of agricultural labourers) over 9, and nine boys and six girls between 8 and 9.

The schoolmaster thinks that a boy kept at school regularly to the age of 9 would carry with him into life an amount of learning that would stick to him; but in a class of 15 that he had last winter in the night school, ranging in age from 11 to 19, not one could read what he would call well; about seven could write moderately, and about two or three could do a compound addition sum.

Pulham St. Mary is an open parish, with a barely sufficient supply of labour; an adequate supply of cottages. A great many of the cottages are very bad, deficient in provisions for decency; most are supplied with water from pools. In some parts of the parish you would have to go 60 or 70 feet before coming to water. The rent ranges from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* 10*s.*; the average would be about 3*l.* 10*s.*

There is an endowed day school; the endowment and the school pence produce about 40*l.* The governors of Christ's Hospital appoint the master; he is now 80 years of age, and past his work. He would have been pensioned off if Christ's Hospital would have assisted; at present, therefore, the day school is inefficient.

The rector has generally had a night school, attended by 25 or 30 scholars, boys and girls. Last winter he was unable to hold it in consequence of ill health. The only assistance he can procure is that of the old schoolmaster.

The employment of women cannot be dispensed with at certain seasons of the year; but there is observed to be (though Mr. Bond has not noticed it) an increasing indisposition on the part of females to work in the fields, owing, it is thought, to their more comfortable circumstances. Mr. Stewart, whose farm lies some distance from cottages, has experienced considerable difficulty in getting labour.

There is a gang in Pulham Magdalene, exclusively of boys (from 12 to 15 in number), who are employed extensively in summer (weeding corn, singling turnips and beet, &c.) in consequence of this deficiency of women. The gangmaster, when he has no employment for his gang, is a day labourer. The work is generally badly done by the gang, and the master of it finds that he cannot retain the boys if he exercises anything like necessary discipline.

The employment of young unmarried females in field labour (except under the supervision of their mothers) is considered undesirable; but the mischief of it arises less from the employment itself than from the way in which their unoccupied time is spent, owing to the laxity of parental control, allowing them to be about the village street at late hours, &c.

Boys must be had upon a farm; they are quite as useful in their way as men, but they are of no real use under 10, and there would be no hardship in making it penal to employ a child in field labour under the age of 8.

It would be quite impracticable to apply the half-day or the alternate day system of schooling to field labour; it would take double the number of boys that actually exist. Boys are quite as much employed in these parishes in the winter as in the summer, cleaning the root crop and tending stock.

The evening school is the only effective instrument that this meeting can see for carrying on the interrupted education of the agricultural labourer's child.

* Includes the union house; population of the parish about 1,100.

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Some of the gentlemen present consider that the summer is even a better season for the evening school than the winter.

The great difficulty in the way of education is the apathy of the parents. There are families in Pulham Magdalene who cannot be persuaded to send their children to school at all. There must be at least 40 children in the parish in this condition. Mr. Henslow thinks that some form of compulsion is the only effective remedy of the evil.

LEONARD R. HENSLOW, rector of Pulham, S.M.M.
RICHARD BOND, rector of Pulham, St. M. Virgin.
THOMAS BOND.
SAMUEL BARNES.
JOHN STEWART.
JOHN STANLEY.
PHILIP GOLDSMITH.
WM. NURSE.
JAS. BAXTER.
WM. MANN.

No. 27. *Friday, Aug.* 2, 1867.

Meeting at Gissing for

Gissing Pop., 481 - Acr., 1,899 R.V., 3,562*l.*

Present at Meeting:

Rev. Sir W. Kemp, rector and landowner.
Mr. Wm. Carter, occupier, guardian, and churchwarden.
Mr. Wm. Woolsey, occupier of 280 acres.
Mr. Samuel Warnes, occupier.
Mr. John Start, owner and householder.
Mr. Richard Flogdell, occupier.
Mr. Charles Self, occupier.
Mr. John Norman, occupier.
Mr. John Simonds, occupier.
Mr. Reuben Warnes, occupier.

Gissing is an open parish. Sir W. Kemp is the principal landowner; Norwich Grammar School has an estate of 286 acres; Doughty's Hospital, in Norwich, has another of 140 acres; Mr. Start owns 80 or 90 acres; Mr. Kerrison owns 140 or 150 acres; Mr. Blake owns 80 acres.

At the present time the supply of labour is equal to the demand. No labourer has to go any unreasonable distance to his work. The cottages are not clustered in a village, but scattered over the parish. There is a sufficient number of cottages; some are standing empty now. Many of them are in bad condition, without sufficient accommodation for the families which inhabit them. It is the opinion of the meeting that every cottage inhabited by the labouring married man with a mixed family of sons and daughters ought to have three bedrooms. There are several bad cases of overcrowding, and many of the cottages are much out of repair. Most of the cottages have gardens, ranging in size from 10 to 20 rods. The rent varies from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*; the average rent would be 3*l.* 10*l.* or 3*l.* 15*s.*

There is no public day school, nor a church Sunday school. At the Wesleyan chapel there is a Sunday school and a free school for two half days in the week. There is also a private adventure dame's school (Mrs. Smith's) attended by from a dozen to 20 children But the means of education in the parish are very deficient; nor is there any present prospect of improvement.

There has not been an evening school. It is not too much education for a labouring man to possess which enables him to read with understanding, to write a letter, and to cast a simple account; but the labouring class generally are far below this point as yet.

Women's work, at certain seasons, is indispensable on a farm; but young unmarried women had better be in service. There is a great difficulty in procuring domestic servants in the farm houses. They will hire themselves at Michaelmas and perhaps stay through the winter; but as soon as "the sun shines on both sides the hedge" they want to change for work in the fields. It is the liberty and the power of disposing of themselves as they please in an evening that tempts them.

There is no gang in the parish; but there is a woman, deserted by her husband, who occasionally collects six or eight children, boys and girls, varying in age from eight to eleven, and does jobs of stone picking, weeding, root singling, &c. She does her work "middling well." Her language is rather rough, but she is not believed to misuse the children.

The land is heavy, and requires a good deal of weeding in the spring; it is the practice to plough for barley before Christmas, and the land wants a thorough weeding when the seed begins to come up.

The labour of boys is indispensable. Mr. Woolsey paid 16*s.* 6*d.* a week last spring time for four or five weeks to boys to keep off the rooks, which are very numerous and very destructive at seed-time. There would be no hardship in making it penal to employ a boy in field labour under eight; and there are three slack months in the winter, beginning from the middle of November, of which advantage might be taken for the education of many boys; the services, however, of a certain number of boys are as much required in the winter as in tho summer.

In 1850, when Mr. Woolsey began business, flour was 1*s.* 4*d.* a stone, and wages were 7*s.* a week, and a man got 4*l.* 4*s.* for his harvest, taking 12 acres; now flour is 2*s.* 8*d.* a stone, wages are 11*s.* a week, and the harvest is 6*l.* 10*s.*, a man still taking 12 acres.

It is not considered that either the half-day or the alternate day system of schooling are practicable in agriculture.

The labourers work from 6 to 12, and again from 2 to 6; the horsemen's time is from 6 to 11, and 2 to 6. A horseman has the same wages as a labourer, and lives in a cottage rent free. A woman's day is from 8 to 12, and from 2 to 6; her wage is 8*d.* a day.

WILLIAM CARTER, Churchwarden.
WILLIAM WOOLSEY.
JOHN START.
RICH. FLOGDELL.
JOHN SIMONDS.
CHARLES WESTGATE SELF.
JOHN NORMAN.
REUBEN WARNES.
SAMUEL WARNES.

[N.B.—Sir W. Kemp was present at the meeting, but being hard of hearing, took no part in the discussion. The minutes were read over to him, but as he said he could only hear them imperfectly, he declined to sign them with his name.]

No. 28. *Monday, Aug.* 5, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Stratton St. Mary, for

Stratton St. Mary -	- Pop., 743 - Acr., 1,489 - R.V. 3,046*l.*
Stratton St. Michael -	- Pop., 251 - Acr., 1,049 - R.V. 2,096*l.*
Tasburgh	- Pop., 446 - Acr., 884 - R.V. 1,750*l.*
Tharston	- Pop., 351 - Acr., 1,556 - R.V. 2,882*l.*
Wacton -	- Pop., 244 - Acr., 1,028 - R.V. 1,739*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Stratton St. Mary—
Rev. F. W. Jerrard, rector.
R. R. Burroughes, Esq., landowner and magistrate.
Mr. R. Hotson, occupier and churchwarden.
Mr. E. Barnes, occupier and churchwarden.
C. Neville, Esq., resident gentleman.
Mr. Thos. H. Barton, medical officer of the union.
Mr. John Furness, solicitor.

From Stratton St. Michael—
Mr. John Hotson, solicitor, clerk to board of guardians, and occupier.
From Tasburgh—
W. Gwyn, Esq., magistrate, landowner, and occupier.
From Tharston—
Mr. Henry Clamp, occupier and guardian.
Mr. R. Abbs, occupier and churchwarden.
From Wacton—
Rev. C. Grain, rector and guardian.
Mr. Wm. Le Grys, occupier and churchwarden.

Stratton St. Mary is an open parish; the largest landowner is R. R. Burroughes, Esq. The supply of labour is fairly adequate to the demand; indeed it is rather better this year than it was last; but a scarcity is apprehended. There are enough cottages. Most are "clay-stud," or "clay-lump." They are generally in a fair state of repair. Most have gardens. The rent ranges from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*, according to the size of the cottage and garden. There are one or two cases of overcrowding.

There are two schools in the parish; one parochial, the other private. The former has 66 children on the register, with an average attendance of 50. The private school is attended by about 35 children, half of whom come from neighbouring parishes. The parochial school is held in a good room; not in connexion with Government. For the last eight or ten years there has been an evening school, with about 20 on its list, young fellows from 12 to 20 years of age. There is also a parish reading room, self supporting, with different rates of subscription, and about 60 members. Several London and provincial papers are taken in; and there is a library supplied with books from Norwich in addition to a stock of some 500 volumes belonging to the institution.

In Stratton St. Michael the land belongs to four or five owners. The supply of labour is inadequate; one of the principal farmers last year could not have his turnips hoed at all, in consequence. There are not enough cottages, and there is no disposition to build. Mr. Hobson thinks that if there were more cottages there would be a better supply of labour. The existing cottages are mostly in fair condition; the rent much the same as at Stratton St. Mary. In both parishes there is no excessive distance for the labourer to travel to his work.

There is a parochial school in Stratton St. Michael, and two private schools. The parish school is attended by about 20 children. The private schools are for children of a somewhat superior class.

In Tasburgh there are several owners; a sufficient supply of labour just now, but it has been short the last two years. This is the first year for several years that Mr. Gwyn has had a man come to him asking for a job. There is a large supply of cottages, many of which are occupied by people who do not work on the land. The condition of the cottages is very fair; but there is a nest of four cottages, built of wood, belonging to a labouring woman, which are tumble-down.

There is a school at Tasburgh, not in connexion with Government, sufficient for the wants of the parish; the room was built about 20 years ago. It is under a mistress, overlooked by the rector.

In Tharston there are several landowners. Just now, a sufficiency of labour; enough cottages; several are standing empty at this moment. They are generally in good condition. Rent from 3*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.*; most of them with large gardens.

There is a parochial school, sufficient for the parish, under a mistress, supported chiefly by Lady Harvey.

In Wacton there are also several owners. Insufficient supply of labour and of cottages. Existing cottages generally in good condition; rent 3*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* There is a parochial school; 40 names on register; average attendance 30. Supported, but not adequately, by voluntary contributions. There has been an evening school for the last 11 years, entirely taught by Rev. C. Grain; about 14 attend on the average. Both at Stratton St. Mary and at Wacton the operation of the night school has been found very beneficial.

Mr. Barton, the medical officer of the union, reported the general state of the cottages in his district to be pretty fair as regards sanitary appliances; thought it was not premature to employ boys and girls at the age of 10 years; girls can go out to work as easily as boys; it would be a question, depending upon the constitution of each individual, how far to employ girls in field work between the ages of 13 and 15. On the whole, he considered field work healthy; he could not recollect any cases of permanent constitutional injury resulting from early employment.

It is the opinion of this meeting that a labouring man ought to be able to read, to write a letter, and to cast a shop account. It is felt that this amount ought not to be denied to him; though many a man, it is feared, when educated to this extent will be lost to agriculture. This amount of learning is far beyond what is ordinarily possessed by the farm labourer. There could be no hardship in making it penal to employ a child under eight years of age in field labour; indeed the labour of a child under 10 is of very little value to an employer.

No one could say a word for the half-day or the alternate day system; but there are perhaps three slack months in the winter of which advantage might be taken for education. But the opinion of the meeting is that the sooner a boy who is intended for an agricultural labourer begins to work after 10 years of age, the better. There would be nothing physically injurious in the work to which a boy would be put between 10 and 12 years of age.

There is a gang in the neighbourhood which is occasionally employed in Stratton St. Michael. As at present worked the gang system is considered decidedly mischievous. The system is dying out in this neighbourhood; 30 years ago several farmers used it; at present only one farmer in these five parishes could be mentioned who employs a gang.

The labour of women cannot be dispensed with on a farm, and at present there is a very insufficient supply of it, but it is felt that the mother of a young family is more in her place at home than in field work, and young unmarried women should go to service; but it would be better for them to work in the fields, especially if under a mother'e eye, than to remain idle at home.

If boys could be kept at day school till 10, and then carry on their education for three or four years more in the night school, as much will have been done for their education as can reasonably be expected.

There was a difference of opinion among the gentlemen present as to whether drunkenness is on the increase or the decrease; Mr. Clamp thought it was on the decrease, and that if the malt tax were repealed, it would cease altogether. An apparent increase in drunkenness was attributed to the abundant crop of apples last year; cider has been sold at ½*d.* a pint. There was thought to be a diminution of crime, partly attributable to a more rigid system of police.

Wm. Gwyn.
Randall R. Burroughes.
J. Hotson.
F. W. H. Jerrard.
C. Grain.
Chas. Jas. Nevill.
R. Hotson.
W. Le Grys.
E. Barnes.
Robert Abbs.
Henry Clamp.
Jno. Furness.

No. 29. *Monday, Aug.* 5, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Morningthorpe, for

Morningthorpe	Pop., 140	Acr., 972	R.V. 1,860*l.*
Fritton	Pop., 235	Acr., 816	R.V. 1,562*l.*
Hardwicke	Pop., 227	Acr., 855	R.V. 1,406*l.*
Shelton	Pop., 192	Acr., 1,292	R.V. 2,046*l.*

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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Present at Meeting:

From Morningthorpe—
F. Irby, Esq., magistrate and landowner.
Mr. J. M. Barnes, occupier and guardian.
Mr. Jas. Mickleburgh, occupier and overseer.

From Fritton—
Rev. H. Wilson, rector.
Mr. Geo. Rackham, occupier.
Mr. John Cann, occupier.
Mr. Thomas Betts, occupier, guardian, and churchwarden.

[Hardwicke and Shelton sent no representatives, though the usual notice had been posted to the clergyman and churchwardens.]

The land at Morningthorpe belongs to two or three owners. The supply of resident labour is not sufficient for the parish, nor the supply of cottages. Labour is imported from Stratton, Fritton, and Hempnall. The cottages are in good repair, and there is no overcrowding. The rent ranges from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.*

There is a joint day school for the two parishes of Morningthorpe and Fritton under Government inspection, with a mistress provisionally certificated; 64 children on the register; average attendance last week 34. There are at this time three boys on the register over 10; two between 9 and 10; one between 8 and 9. The school is adequate to the wants of the parishes, and is fairly supported. The average annual cost is about 40*l.*, of which 24*l.* are provided by voluntary subscriptions.

There is a night school both in Fritton and Morningthorpe, conducted by the clergymen with such voluntary assistance as they can procure. They are said to have worked remarkably well; Mr. Wilson considers it the most hopeful part of his work.

There is a joint school also for Hardwick and Shelton; but there was no one present at the meeting to give an account of its condition. There is no night school in either of these parishes. It is believed that there is a sufficient supply of labour both in Hardwick and in Shelton, and more than a sufficient supply of cottages. Last year, in Shelton, there were 11 cottages belonging to a single owner standing empty at one time.

There would be no hardship to prohibit the employment in field labour of children under eight, but the prohibition would be of little service to education, unless at the same time security were taken that the children should be sent to school.

A boy who is to make an agricultural labourer ought to begin not much later than 10, or he never gets handy. Boys who stay at school in the workhouse till 15 or 16 seldom turn out well as labourers.

The alternate day system would not be impracticable at all if there was a sufficient number of boys; but the experience of the present meeting is that there is not now a sufficiency of boys working them *all every day.*

There are three or four slack months in the winter of which advantage might be taken for the education of boys between 10 and 12, if parents were disposed to avail themselves of it; but on stock farms there is quite as much demand for boy labour in the winter as in the summer.

In the opinion of this meeting the night school is the most efficacious instrument for carrying on the education of boys after they have once gone to work; and it deserves much more encouragement and attention than it generally receives. Mr. Wilson perceives a growing appreciation of its value on the part of young men. A case was mentioned of a man who had an offer of a bailiff's place who could read but neither write nor cipher. Having three months' notice, he attended Mr. Wilson's evening school, and in the course of the winter acquired sufficient knowledge to enable him to accept the place.

An agricultural labourer is certainly none the worse for education; and it is thought that his learning ought to include ability to read, write a letter, and cast up a simple account.

A decided decrease in drunkenness has been remarked in the last few years; and some instances were mentioned which indicated that this improvement may be partly traced to education. It was also thought that there is less unchastity; but it was felt that this evil will never be considerably mitigated till the people are provided with ampler accommodation in their homes.

The labour of women is necessary for about six months in the year, but young unmarried girls should go to service. Some girls, however, won't go to service; they like the liberty of their Sundays and their evenings.

No gentleman present approves of the gang system.

T. W. Irby.
Herbert Wilson.
Thomas Betts.
John M. Barnes.
George Rackham.

No. 30. *Tuesday, August* 6, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Tivetshall St. Mary, for

Tivetshall St. Mary	Pop., 362 - Acr., 1,096 - R.V., 2,000*l.*
Tivetshall St. Margaret's	Pop., 375 - Acr., 1,634 - R.V., 2,866*l.*

Present at Meeting:

Miss Elizabeth Shipley Dix, occupier, owner, and overseer.
Mr. Frederic Spelman, occupier and guardian.
Mr. John Aldous, owner, occupier, guardian, and churchwarden.
Mr. Wm. Tillett, occupier and churchwarden.

Both the Tivetshalls are open parishes. The largest landowner, who owns 800 or 900 acres, is non-resident. The supply of labour this year is about sufficient; last year it was short. Mr. Spelman has had more harvest men offer this year than for the last six years. His and Mr. Aldous' idea is that the financial distress in London has caused many men to return to their homes. Several of the men migrated into Yorkshire; they send word to their friends that they are getting on pretty well, but don't know whether they might not have done as well for themselves if they had stayed at home. Mr. Spelman apprehends that the revival of speculation will again drain agricultural districts of their labour supply.

Some of the cottages are pretty fair, others middling; some are now standing empty. Mr. Spelman would like to see it made compulsory upon every cottage to have three chambers.

The rent ranges from 3*l.* to 5*l.* Wages are now 12*s.*; have been raised 1*s.* this week. Mr. Spelman has contracted with his men, for the harvest month, at 6*l.* 10*s.*; Mr. Aldous, for the job, at 6*l.* 15*s.*

Miss Dix thinks that when you can put out work by the piece, it is the best plan both for employer and labourer; but small occupiers can't do that, as theirs is more jobbing work.

At turnip singling a girl of 12 years of age helping her father, ought to earn, and frequently does earn, for the family 9*d.* a day. No machine could do this work.

Miss Dix does not see any harm in a girl of that age going out to work under her mother's eye; in fact, she considers it a healthful and useful occupation, while the earnings are of great importance to large families. They are under the restraint of their mothers, and at 13 or 14 are ready to go to service, when they generally do much better than those who have been allowed to remain idle and unrestrained at home. Mr. Spelman mentioned the case of four girls from two families, who worked constantly for him from about 10 to 14, who are now all in service and doing well.

The alternate day system is quite impracticable. There would be great difficulty in giving orders to two sets of boys, and there are not boys enough in the country to work the system.

Boys are so rarely employed under eight, that it seems unnecessary to legislate prohibitively on the subject. Speaking generally, boys are hardly of any use under 10, and had better be at school. But it was thought that this ought to be left to the discretion of the parent, and that great hardship would occasionally arise under a compulsory enactment.

A wish was decidedly expressed that every labouring man should be able to read, write, and cast an account. Mr. Spelman thinks that education would be better promoted by more freedom than by compulsion. Mr. Spelman thinks there ought to be a school in every parish, open to all, without distinction of religion. Miss Dix would like to see the education given a little more practical and stripped of some of its finery.

At present there is practically no school in Tivetshall within reach of the labouring poor, in consequence of a difference between the rector of the parish and the owner of the land on which the building stands.

ELIZTH. S. DIX.
FRED. SPELMAN.
JOHN ALDOUS.
WILLIAM TILLETT.

No. 31. *Tuesday, August* 6, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Tibenham, for

Tibenham	Pop., 729	Acr., 3,253	R.V., 5,182*l.*
Moulton	Pop., 442	Acr., 1,346	R.V., 2,380*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Tibenham—
Rev. T. W. Thompson, vicar.
From Moulton—
Mr. Thomas Robertson, occupier.
Mr. Riches Neave, owner and occupier.

In Tibenham Sir R. J. Buxton is the great landowner, who is non-resident; there are several smaller owners.

There is no deficiency of labour at present, nor of cottages, but a considerable number of the cottages, perhaps 20, are in very bad condition, and three or four are untenanted at this moment in consequence. Most of them are built of clay stud or clay lump. The vicar cannot call to mind any cottage with three bedrooms, though the majority have two; but in many cases these two are very imperfectly separated, so that decent privacy cannot be secured. The rent ranges from 3*l.* to 4*l.*

There is a school in the parish, in connexion with Government, under a certificated mistress, with 82 children's names on the register, and about 60 in average attendance, fairly supported by voluntary contributions; the whole annual cost amounting to between 60*l.* and 70*l.* The school has very much revived in the last two or three years, and is now in very fair order.

There has been a night school for the last two winters, taught by ladies of the parish under the superintendence of the vicar. It was attended by about 20 or 25 scholars last winter, of whom three-fourths at the end of the season could read tolerably and write their names. No charge was made to the scholars.

In Moulton there are several owners; the largest estate does not exceed 300 acres. There are enough people in the parish to work the land, but none too many. There is no surplus of cottages. Most of the cottages belong to small proprietors; some are in fair, some in moderate, and some in indifferent condition.

Mr. Robertson is strongly of opinion that the condition of many of the homes of the agricultural poor is shameful; and that the absence of all sufficient provisions for decency lays the foundation of that immorality that is commonly set down as the result of females working in the fields.

There is a parish school, of which the main expense is borne by the clergyman. The gentlemen present could not report anything exactly as to its condition. There has been no night school for the last few winters.

Mr. Robertson and Mr. Neave have sometimes found children under 8 of use, indeed Mr. Robertson likes to get hold of them as soon as he can, and both these gentlemen would be sorry to see any penal legislation by reason of the difficulties it would throw in the way of the maintenance of large families.

They think that by the help of the Sunday and night school much more may be done than at present to improve the condition of the education of the labouring poor.

During the three winter months a boy of 10 years of age is not of much use in field work; and he could then be sent to school; but it would be quite out of the question to attempt to keep boys at a day school to the age of 13. The alternate day system is also considered quite impracticable. There are not enough boys, and no farmer would take the trouble to teach two sets.

It would be impossible to do without women's work in the fields; but Mr. Robertson likes to see men and women, boys and girls, working separately. He has no objection to a gang if it is properly organized, and under the control of a respectable man. He has never had a gang yet, but if there was one near him he should employ it.

Mr. Thompson is not in favour of compulsion in education, nor does he see how present efforts can be made more effective by legislation, except it be in the way of encouraging night schools. He fully admits the disadvantage to education of the early withdrawal of children from school; but he fails to see how the principles of the Factory Acts can in any shape be successfully applied to the case of agriculture. If applied without modification they would be nearly equally mischievous to the employer, the parent, and the child.

J. W. THOMPSON.
RICHES NEAVE.
THOS. MANBY ROBERTSON.

No. 32. *Wednesday, August* 7, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Forncett St. Peter, for,

Forncett St. Mary.	Pop., 299	Acr., 728	R.V., 1,306*l.*
Forncett St. Peter	Pop., 655	Acr., 1,828	R.V., 3,490*l.*
Aslacton	Pop., 356	Acr., 1,164	R.V., 1,884*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Forncett, St. Peter—
Rev. W. G. Wilson, rector.
Mr. W. Ellis, occupier, and churchwarden.
Mr. Thomas Dix, occupier.
Mr. Robert Hewitt, occupier and guardian.
Mr. Walter Brewster, occupier.
From Forncett St. Mary—
Rev. J. Cooper, rector.
F. Boileau, Esq., owner and magistrate.
Mr. John Gardiner, occupier and guardian.
Mr. John Self, occupier and churchwarden.
Mr. George Blanchflower, occupier and overseer.
From Aslacton—
Rev. R. de Jersey, perpetual curate.
Mr. John Grimes, occupier and churchwarden.

Forncett St. Peter is an open parish; there are about 60 owners. The supply of labour is somewhat in excess of the demand. There are times in the year when there are ten or a dozen able-bodied men out of employ.

The cottage accommodation is sufficient; there are a few vacant houses at this moment. The cottages are mostly let independently of the land. A hundred acre farm requires four cottages; a 200 acre farm, 7;

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a 300 acre farm, 10. This proportion applies to arable farms.

The cottages generally are in a satisfactory condition; but not many of them have three chambers. There are one or two cases of overcrowding. The rent would range from 3*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.*

There are two schools, one of them for the younger children of a distant hamlet. The principal school is held in an excellent room; in connexion with Government, under a certified mistress; 52 children on register, and 33 in average attendance. The hamlet school is attended by 45 children. There is a small endowment, and the schools are sufficiently supported.

In Forncett St. Mary the land belongs to several landowners, not less than 25. There is an excess of labour, and more cottages than are wanted; two or three are now unoccupied. Some of the cottages, belonging to small proprietors, are in bad condition; but the greater part are in fair order. Some of them are not worth repairing; "it would be a charity to take a match and set fire to them." There are very few with three chambers. The average rent would be three guineas.

There is a school with abundant accommodation in connexion with Government, under a certificated master. Forncett boys are found to want a master to keep them in order, and there being few schools in the neighbourhood under a master, there is a class of biggish boys, mostly above the labouring rank, who come from adjacent parishes. Two or three come from Stratton, which is three miles off. There are 50 names on the register, with an average attendance of about 35. The whole annual cost of maintenance is about 80*l.*, of which 8*l.* arises from endowment, about 16*l.* from school fees, and about 40*l.* from voluntary subscriptions. In each of the Forncetts there is an evening school, the results of which are considered to have been beneficial. There were 16 attendants at Forncett St. Peter, and 14 at Forncett St. Mary, last winter.

Aslacton is an open parish; the land belongs to 25 or 30 owners. There is just about an adequate supply of labour, and rather more cottages than are required. The cottages generally are in good condition, but there are a few exceptions. Not more than two or three have three chambers. Rent the same as at Forncett. There is a school held in a good room built about 10 years ago, under a moderately efficient mistress, not in connexion with Government, with about 45 children on the register, and an average attendance of 25. There is much irregular attendance, in consequence of the demand for children's labour in the fields. Mr. de Jersey does not think there is one labouring man's son at school at present who is 10 years of age. The annual cost is about 34*l.* There is no endowment; the pence amount to between 4*l.* and 5*l.* About 8*l.* is subscribed, 5*l.* of which is from Betton's charity; the incumbent makes up the deficiency. There has been an evening school, attended last winter by about 14, of which advantage was gladly taken, and which produced satisfactory results. Many who had never attended church before became regular in their attendance there.

On the general subject of education there was a unanimous opinion that every labouring man's child ought to be able to read intelligently, to write a letter, and to cast a simple account; and as far as the schools are concerned, there is abundant opportunity in these parishes for the attainment of this amount of education, the only hindrance being the early age at which the children, particularly the boys, are removed.

A boy is of very little use in farm work under the age of 10 unless he works under proper supervision. It would be quite an exceptional case to find a child employed under 8; but a majority of seven to four (one employer remaining neutral) objected to any legislative interference which should make it penal to employ a child under that age. The minority consisted of one employer and the three clergymen present.

Neither the half-day nor the alternate day system of schooling is applicable to agriculture, and in these parishes more boys are employed in the winter than in the summer, but a boy continually employed would rarely be under 12 years of age; for younger boys there would be a slack time during the winter of which advantage might be taken for education if the parents were so disposed. It is found that the schools are fullest between Christmas and Easter.

No women are employed continuously throughout the year. There is an increasing number of women who refuse to go out to work in the fields at all.

The gang system is not generally used in these parishes, but Mr. Gardiner has occasionally imported a gang from a neighbouring parish. He has been satisfied with their work, and thinks a large farm cannot be properly cultivated without some such system of organized labour.

Francis G. M. Boileau.	Thomas Dix.
W. G. Wilson.	Walter Brewster.
Robert Hewitt.	P. Rivers de Jersey.
John Self.	John Gardiner.
William Ellis.	Geo. Blanchflower.
John Grimes.	

No. 33. *Wednesday, August* 7, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Bunwell, for

Bunwell - Pop., 907 - Acr., 2,455 - R.V., 3,930*l.*
Carleton Rode - Pop., 905 - Acr., 2,572 - R.V., 4,615*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Bunwell—
- Rev. F. G. Gill, curate in charge.
- Mr. Wm. Burton, landowner, occupier, guardian, and churchwarden.
- Mr. Wm. Betts, occupier, guardian, and churchwarden.
- Mr. Nelson Lanham, occupier.
- Mr. Samuel Kemp, occupier.

From Carleton Rode—
- Rev. J. Cholmeley, rector.
- Mr. Elisha Bateman, occupier and churchwarden.
- Mr. George Gunns, occupier.
- Mr. Robert Smith, owner, occupier and miller.

The land in Bunwell belongs to several owners, of whom Sir Robert Buxton is the largest. The supply of labour at present is equal to the demand. There are enough cottages; a few are vacant. Some of the cottages are bad enough; but the majority are in fair tenantable condition. They mostly belong to small proprietors. The rent ranges from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* The lower rented cottages have very little garden ground. There are not more than two or three that have three chambers. Mr. Burton thinks it "won't admit of argument that every cottage occupied by a family ought to have three chambers."

There is a school in the parish, held in a room that was part of the old workhouse. The parish is six miles long, and consequently in the winter there is a difficulty in getting the distant children to school. There are two or three private adventure schools. In the parochial school there are about 60 children on the register, with an average attendance of 45 in the summer, and 25 in the winter. There has been an evening school for the last 12 years, conducted by the curate without assistance, held in his own house, attended by about 40 scholars. It was discontinued last winter in consequence of Mr. Gill's not feeling himself equal to it, and there was no one else to carry it on. He is not satisfied with the results. It has made the young men better scholars, but not more moral. There is a good deal of drunkenness in Bunwell, partly attributable to the roving habits of a part of the population, who are drovers, dealers, &c.

The mistress of the day school receives about 25*l* a year. The total cost of the school is about 32*l.* a year. The pence amount to about 7*l*; the subscriptions from landowners amount to 4*l.* The rector, who is non-resident, allows the curate 30*l.* for the good of the parish, of which he applies as much as is necessary for the support of the school.

Carleton Rode is an open parish, with about 50 landowners. One landowner has about 800 acres; no one else has more than 150. Carleton, as well as Bunwell, is full of "dealers." There are between 80 and 90 occupiers who pay tithe.

At present there is enough labour, a sufficient supply of cottages, and some to spare. Some of them are in abominable condition, but the generality are in fair order, though with deficient chamber accommodation; the rent ranges from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* Most have gardens, and some orchards.

Both in Bunwell and in Carleton there are many weavers. In the winter time there are perhaps 100 looms at work in each parish; working from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., a woman earns about 1*s.* a day.

There is a parish school in Carleton, and a private adventure school kept by the wife of a publican in her own house. She has perhaps 30 children. In the parish school, which is in connexion with Government, there is an enrolment of about 60 children, with an average attendance of 40. The total annual cost is 50*l.*, of which the rector has to spend nearly 40*l.* out of his own pocket. The schoolroom was built in 1821, and is capacious and lofty.

Mr. Cholmeley had a night school for four years, but has discontinued it for the last two winters in consequence of complaints arising about the noise made by the lads on their return home. He means, however, to try it again.

No farmer would employ a boy under 8 years old if he could possibly get an older boy; and it would not therefore embarrass him in any of his operations if it were made penal to employ him under that age. Boys at 8 or 9 may be useful for casual employment; but for continuous employment throughout the year a boy, to be useful, ought not to be less than 10 years of age. A handy boy from 10 to 12 years of age would earn from 2*s.* to 3*s.* a week. It would be a very rare thing to find a boy of 12 years of age who is unemployed during any portion of the year; but for boys under 12 there are slack months in the winter, during which the children might be sent to school, and they "had better be there."

No one present seemed to think that the half-day or alternate day system could be applied to the education of farm boys; at any rate not to boys in this part of the country, where the stock are exclusively stall-fed, and the boys are constantly employed in cleaning and cutting up roots, feeding the cattle, &c, and there is no excess of boy labour.

Women's labour cannot be dispensed with; but fewer women are willing to work in the fields now than formerly. A woman can hardly ever be got to milk a cow. In Carleton there are many young unmarried women employed in the fields, and a few in Bunwell. They are generally employed exclusively with their own sex (except in harvest time). It would be very much better for them if they went out to service, but they prefer the liberty of their evenings at home.

There are no gangs employed in either parish; many people would not know what the system means.

Mr. Gill thinks that the majority of young men in Bunwell between 16 and 25 can read and write their names, and attributes it to the influence of the evening school. Mr. Cholmeley has formed a less hopeful estimate of the educational condition of Carleton. It is no more education than every labouring man ought to possess to be able to read intelligently, to write a letter, and to cast an account.

No employer present on engaging a labourer would ever think of inquiring whether he could read or write; he would be content to know that he was honest and sober and a good workman.

John Cholmeley.	Samuel Kemp.
Fred. G. Gill.	Robert Smith.
William Burton.	Elisha Bateman.
Wm. Betts.	George Gunns.
Nelson Lanham.	

No. 34. *Thursday, August* 8, 1867.

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Collective Meeting at Fundenhall, for

Fundenhall	Pop., 1,348	Acr., 684	R.V., 2,358*l.*
Hapton	Pop., 196	Acr., 684	R.V., 1,156*l.*
Ashwellthorpe	Pop., 409	Acr., 979	R.V., 1,719*l.*
Tacolnestone	Pop., 451	Acr., 1,557	R.V., 2,760*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Fundenhall—
- G. Barton, Esq., owner, occupier, churchwarden, and guardian.
- Mr. W. W. Reeve, occupier.
- Mr. F. Tye, occupier.
- Mr. Watson, bailiff.
- Mr. George Harvey, farmer and publican.
- Mr. Wm. Howes, owner and occupier.

From Hapton—
- Mr. D. Rattee, veterinary surgeon and farmer.

From Ashwellthorpe—
- Sir H. Tyrwhitt, Bart., landowner.
- Mr. C. W. Harvey, occupier.
- Mr. W. Dewing, occupier and owner.

From Tacolnestone—
- F. G. Boileau, Esq., occupier and owner.
- Rev. F. Corbould, rector.
- Mr. E. Phillippo, occupier.
- Mr. J. Bassingthwaighte, occupier and churchwarden.
- Mr. T. Kirk, occupier.
- Mr. James Bassingthwaighte, jun., occupier.
- Mr. John Ludkin, occupier.
- Mr. R. Newman, occupier.
- Mr. H. Huggins, occupier.
- Mr. Geo. Self, occupier.
- Mr. R. Barnard, bailiff.

In Fundenhall the land belongs to several owners. There is rather an excess of labour, and of cottages. A few are unoccupied. They are in fair condition; perhaps a fourth have three chambers, very few have only one chamber. They are mostly built of clay lump or clay stud. The rent ranges from 2*l.* 12*s.* to 5*l.*, depending chiefly on the size of the garden.

There is a school, held in a good room, attended by 30 girls and 14 boys; average attendance from 18 to 24. Only one boy over 10. The school is adequately supported. A night school has been held for the two last winters by Mr. Barton, attended by 15 or 16 lads and young men. There is no resident clergyman.

In Hapton there are two principal owners and several small proprietors. There is a sufficiency of labour and of cottages. The cottages are fair; the rent the same as at Fundenhall.

There is a parish school, supported by voluntary subscriptions. It is an efficient school, well attended, not in connexion with Government, superintended by the incumbent. In the winter months there is a night school. The means of education are quite sufficient in Hapton.

In Ashwellthorpe the land belongs to several owners. There is plenty of labour and of cottages. Two or three cottages belonging to a widow woman who can't afford to repair them are in bad condition, but the generality are in fair order. There are one or two cases of overcrowding, chiefly from the people's own fault, keeping big girls at home, who ought to be out.

There is a day school in connexion with Government, under a certificated mistress, with from 60 to 70 children on the register. There has been no night school since the last curate left, two years ago.

In Tacolnestone the land is the property of three principal and a large number of small owners. There is enough labour, and a sufficient supply of cottages. They are mostly in fair order; but there is not a sufficient number with three chambers. The rent varies from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.*; the average would be about 3*l.*

There is a school under a mistress, entirely supported by Mr. Boileau, with about 40 children on the register. In the winter of 1865-6 there was a night school, under the management of a Scripture reader, attended

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by about 20 scholars, which was fairly successful. But the Scripture reader left, and last winter it was discontinued.

It is the unanimous opinion of this meeting that no child ought to be employed in agricultural labour under 8 years of age, and it would be no hardship to make it penal to employ them.

It is considered impracticable to apply the half-day or the alternate day principle to boys employed in agriculture; but the meeting thinks that there are three or four months in the winter, during which there is very little employment for boys under 11 or 12, when they might with great advantage be sent to school. For boys above the age of 12 it is thought that the night school is the only efficient instrument for carrying on their education, and it is much to be wished that there were a good night school in every parish.

It is the opinion of this meeting that, as every child under 12 years of age is certain to lose at least 30 days' labour in the year, it would be desirable, and there would be no hardship, to enact that no child under that age should be employed in agricultural labour without producing a certificate of having attended school for that number of days in the course of the preceding twelvemonth.

It is considered desirable that when labourers of different sexes are employed in the fields they should, as far as possible, be kept separate; and it is felt that the present cottage accommodation of the agricultural poor is in too many cases very unsatisfactory, and that this question really lies at the root of the physical and moral condition of this portion of the population.

GERARD BARTON.
WILLIAM HOWES.
WALTER WILLIAM REEVE.
F. TYE.
DANL. E. RATTEE.
W. WATSON.
GEO. HARVEY.
HENRY TYRWHITT.
C. W. HARVEY.
W. DEWING.
FRANCIS G. M. BOILEAU.
T. CORBOULD.
E. PHILLIPPO.
JOHN BASSINGTHWAIGHTE.
HENRY HUGGINS.
THOMAS KIRK.
ALFRED G. SELF.
JOHN LUDKIN.
ROBERT NEWMAN.
JAMES BASSINGTHWAIGHTE.

No. 35. *Thursday, August* 8, 1867.

Meeting at Hempnall, for

Hempnall - Pop., 1,094 - Acr., 3,572 - R.V., 5,735*l.*

Present at Meeting:

Rev. G. T. Hall, vicar.
Mr. Samuel Hipperson, owner and occupier of 125 acres.
Mr. Roger Roberts, innkeeper.
Mr. Wm. Rackham, shoemaker.
Mr. James Nory, baker.
Mr. Wm. Arnold, occupier of 120 acres.

The land in Hempnall belongs to a considerable number of owners, of whom the two principal ones are J. T. Mott, Esq. (who is also lay impropriator), and F. W. Irby, Esq. The population has decreased by nearly 200 in the last 20 years. A great many of the labourers work out of the parish. There are more cottages than are required; there are 16 or 20 now standing empty. No man need walk much more than a mile to get to his work. The cottages are not really good, and are deficient in chamber accommodation. The rent is generally high, and many cottages have very small, if any, gardens. They mostly belong to small proprietors.

There is one National school and several private adventure schools. The National school is held in a good building, in a low damp situation, erected in 1847, with 82 children on the register, and about 56 in ordinary attendance. Twelve years ago it was much more flourishing than it is now; there were then boys in attendance of from 14 to 17 years of age; and the subscriptions have fallen off from 32*l.* to 10*l.* Many parents are found to prefer private schools as more genteel; one of the private schools in the parish has upwards of 40 scholars. Among many of the parents there is a positive indifference on the subject of the education of their children. The school received a building grant from Government, but has not been inspected for eight or nine years, and no annual grant is received. The whole annual cost of the school is about 50*l.*, of which 20*l.* is provided out a parish charity, about 15*l.* from school pence, and 10*l.* from voluntary subscriptions. The master and mistress receive 25*l.* a year in addition to the school pence.

Every labouring man's child should be able to read intelligently, to write a letter, and to cipher, and the schools that are offered to them ought to secure this amount of education. It would make no difference in this part of the country if it were made penal to employ a child in agricultural labour under eight years of age. In general a boy is of very little use upon a farm before he has reached the age of 10 or 12. A biggish active boy would earn from 3*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* a week.

There is a slack time in the winter for small boys, if parents were disposed to send them to school. But many children are growing up without proper discipline and education, and the school in its present condition is not such as to attract them. Some years ago efforts were made to carry on an evening school, but they did not succeed, and latterly they have not been repeated.

Not so many women are employed in Hempnall, after the acreage, as in some other parishes; but many young girls seem to prefer work in the fields to domestic service, on account of the greater liberty they enjoy. Farmers were never so much put to for dairymaids as they are now. Young girls will not go where there are cows to milk or a child or two to nurse. It is considered very much better that they should go out to service than work in the fields.

There is no gang in this parish, the farmers present prefer to have their own complement of regular labourers.

When women are employed, they are generally put to work by themselves, except in haysell and harvest.

ROGER ROBERTS.
JAMES NORY.
WILLIAM RACKHAM.
SAMUEL HIPPERSON.
WILLIAM ARNOLD.

[The Rev. G. T. Hall was obliged to leave before the meeting was concluded.]

COUNTY OF NORFOLK: UNION OF DOCKING.

No. 36. *Thursday, September* 12, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Ingoldisthorpe, for Parishes of

Ingoldisthorpe - Pop., 372 - Acr., 1,100 - R.V., 2,191*l.*
Dersingham Pop., 822 - Acr., 2,700 - R.V., 4,112*l.*
Shernbourne - Pop., 144 - Acr., 1,300 - R.V., 1,215*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Ingoldisthorpe—
Rev. W. J. Beckett, rector and diocesan inspector of schools.
Mr. T. Williamson, churchwarden, guardian, and occupier.
Mr. R. Farrin, overseer and occupier.
Mr. R. Lewis, occupier.

From Dersingham—
Mr. Stanton, occupier.
Mr. R. Stanton, occupier.
From Shernbourne—
Rev. W. Leech, vicar.
Mr. John Williamson, churchwarden, guardian, and occupier.

Ingoldisthorpe is an open parish, containing about 45 cottages, 30 of which belong to two proprietors holding only small quantities of land; the rest belong to the landed proprietors. The supply of labour is in excess of the demand, and the supply of cottages is fully adequate to the agricultural wants of the parish. The cottages belonging to the landed proprietors are good; those belonging to the small proprietors are very bad. The rent ranges from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*, depending upon the size of the house and garden. There are six cottages without gardens. The cottages are built either of brick or of "carr stone," the latter a sandstone which hardens by exposure to the atmosphere, and forms an excellent material. There is ample school accommodation. The school at Christmas will be in connexion with Government, and is ordinarily attended by about 50 children. The annual cost is about 60*l.* a year. The school pence amount to 6*l.* or 7*l.* a year. The rest of the expense has hitherto been borne by the rector, but one landed proprietor has recently promised an annual subscription of 10 guineas.

In Dersingham the land belongs to at least 20 proprietors, the principal of whom are His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, Marquis Cholmondeley, and Mr. Bellamy. There is a sufficient supply of labour; many of the labourers resident in Dersingham work out of the parish. There are enough cottages for the actual wants of the parish, but many of the cottages are overcrowded. Their condition varies; some are very bad, others, recently built, are good. Very few have three bedrooms. The rent the same as Ingoldisthorpe. Most have gardens. There are also 40 or 50 allotments, belonging to the parish under the Inclosure Act, assigned to the labouring poor according to the judgment of the trustees.

There is an elementary school attended by about 50 children, supported by voluntary subscriptions, but with the chief expense falling upon Mr. Freeman. There a few small dames' schools, but the provision for education is not adequate to the wants of this large parish.

In Shernbourne there are three landed proprietors, two farms, and about 25 cottages. The supply of labour is about equal to the demand. The cottages have been recently repaired, and some new ones built, and they are generally in fair condition. There are two or three with three bedrooms, and all have gardens. The rent is cheap, ranging from 2*l* to 3*l.* Emmanuel College, Cambridge, owns 500 acres in the parish, and has only six cottages. There is a school, attended by about 20 children, chiefly supported by one of the landowners; the annual cost is about 25*l.* The mistress is an elderly woman, and has kept an evening school on her own account for four or five winters.

Upon the general questions submitted to the meeting, it was considered that there is no advantage to the employer in the labour of a boy under 10.

When young girls are employed in field labour they should work under the eye of their fathers or mothers; the employment of the two sexes in mixed gangs is considered to be highly undesirable. It is the unanimous feeling of the employers of labour present that young girls should go out to service instead of working in the fields, but female labour could hardly be dispensed with altogether. There are some kinds of work (such as turnip singling, barley gathering, wheat tying) which women can do better than men; other work (picking twitch) that men would not do, and women's labour is cheaper labour.

There would be from three to four months' slack time in the winter, of which advantage might be taken to carry on the interrupted education of boys between 10 and 12 years of age, but the school managers present fear that the introduction of such boys into the day school would bring in an element of insubordination which would materially interfere with the well-doing of the school. They would also be difficult to manage and to teach in a night school. The object to be aimed at is to secure a more regular attendance at school between the ages of 6 and 10.

No gentleman present has any objection to bring against the system or kind of education given in the existing elementary schools, on the ground of its being unsuitable to the condition of the children. All think that the labouring man ought to be able to read, to write, and to cast a common account.

W. T. Beckett.
Thos. J. E. Williamson.
Robert Farrin.
Richard Lewis.
William Leech.
John Williamson.
Robert Stanton.
Richard Stanton.

No. 37. *Friday, August* 13, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Hunstanton, for

Hunstanton - Pop., 490 - Acr., 1,800 - R.V., 3,398*l.*
Heacham - Pop., 990 - Acr., 3,465 - R.V., 5,925*l.*
Ringstead - Pop., 522 - Acr., 3,600 - R.V., 3,251*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Hunstanton—
Rev. W. M. Church, rector.
Mr. Dodman, churchwarden and occupier.
Mr. Hunn, guardian and occupier.
From Heacham—
C. N. Rolfe, Esq., landowner and magistrate.
Mr. Lewis, churchwarden and occupier.
Rev. E. Oakley, curate.
Mr. Burcham, occupier.
From Ringstead—
Mr. Kitton, churchwarden, guardian, and occupier.
Mr. Wharton, occupier.
Mr. Wells, occupier.
Rev. W. L. Hussey, rector, and
Mr. Freeman, of Dersingham.

In Hunstanton all the land, except about a couple of acres, belongs to Mr. L'Estrange. There is abundance of labour, and a sufficient supply of cottages. The cottages belong to the landowner, and are mostly in good condition, but there are a few cases of overcrowding. Mr. Church can only remember four that have three bedrooms. There are five cottages occupied by widows at 10*s.* rent per annum; the rents ordinarily range from 2*l.* to 4*l.*

There is a school for boys, and another for girls. The former is free for 16 boys; the endowment is 33*l.* and a house. The girls' school is supported by the lord of the manor, who contributes 50*l.* Neither is in connexion with the Government, but both are considered by the diocesan inspector to be in a condition of thorough efficiency. Boys are retained in this school to a higher age than usual, in consequence of the improvement in the condition of the parents, owing to various local circumstances, the rise of the watering place of New Hunstanton, &c.

There is a night school, with an attendance of about 26 scholars. The schoolmaster is paid 5*l.* a year for teaching in it, and he is assisted by the curate and one or two gentlemen resident in the village.

In Heacham the land belongs to Mr. L'Estrange and Mr. Rolfe, and to Caius College, Cambridge; there are also several small proprietors. There is a sufficiency of labour and of cottages. The majority of the cottages belong to small proprietors; about half are thoroughly good, and the rest are very bad

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and highly rented. The agricultural labourers are generally well lodged. The rent ranges from 2*l.* to 5*l.* 10*s.* The high rent does not always imply a better cottage. Some of the cottages, built in rows, are very inadequately supplied with accommodations necessary for health and decency.

There is a school in the parish, not in connexion with Government, under an excellent uncertificated master, with about 120 names on the register, and an average attendance of 90. The annual cost is about 80*l.* or 90*l.*; Mr. Rolfe subscribes 50*l.*, Mr. L'Estrange 10*l.*, Caius College 5*l.*

For the last eight or nine years there has been a night school, conducted by the curate and some volunteers, at first attended by about 40 scholars, last winter by about 20. The sense of its value seems to have lessened.

The land in Ringstead belongs chiefly to Mr. L'Estrange, and there are six or seven small proprietors, owning from 5 to 40 acres of land. The The quantity of labour is about sufficient, and there are enough cottages for the wants of the parish. About half the cottages belong to the landowner, the rest are owned by small proprietors, and are treated as investments. The rent asked by the small proprietors is considerably in excess of that taken by the landowner, while the cottages generally are in worse condition. Some very fair cottages are deficient in gardens and out-door accommodation.

There is a parish school, in connexion with Government, under a certificated master, with about 90 names on the register and an average attendance of 60 or 70. The total annual cost is about 90*l.*, and it has generally cost the rector 50*l.* a year. The landowner subscribes 10*l.*, and there are other subscriptions of 2*l.*, 1*l.*, 10*s.*, 7*s.* 6*d.*, and 5*s.*

There has been a night school every winter for the last 10 years, taught by the master of the day school, with an average attendance of 15 last winter. The rector used to teach it, but he was informed from the Privy Council Office that if he continued to do so he would forfeit his grant, and the school will be deprived of the benefit of his aid for the future. The difficulty arose from the fact that under the trust deed the rector is the sole manager.

The rate of wages in the district at present is 12*s.* a week, yardmen and teamsmen get 14*s.* a week. The harvest money this year has been 6*l.* 10*s.* to 6*l.* 15*s.*, and, owing to the favourable season, it was earned in less than a month. A first-class labourer at day and piece work at present prices earns at least 40*l.* a year.

It is the opinion of this meeting that the home of the labourer ought to be placed within reasonable distance of his work, and that any man who has to travel more than a mile to his work suffers thereby a loss of physical power which lessens his value as a labourer.

The meeting consider that the labour of a boy under 10 years of age is of no practical value to the farmer, and that it would cause no embarrassment to him if it were made penal to employ boys under that age, the season of harvest excepted. It is felt, however, that an absolute prohibition of this kind might inflict hardship upon large families.

At the same time, it is not seen how such prohibition would promote the education of such children, unless it were accompanied by some provision to secure their attendance at school.

All the gentlemen present are of opinion that the half-day system and the alternate whole-day system are impracticable in agriculture; the principle of the Printworks Act might be more applicable, provided that hours spent in a night school were allowed to count, but difficulties are perceived in the way of working the principle, and the opinion of the meeting is that the great thing to be aimed at is to secure the more constant attendance at school of agricultural children between the ages of 6 and 10. It is thought that the night school, though it can only be regarded as a supplement to, and not as a substitute for, the day school, should form a regular part of the educational organization of every rural parish.

It is the unanimous opinion of the meeting that, if it could be dispensed with, the employment of women in field labour is most undesirable; the younger women would be better in service, the married women in their homes. But the question is largely affected by the different circumstances of different farms. Mr. Lewis and Mr. Wharton, one occupying 1,000, the other 700 acres, cultivate their land without the employment of women at all; and Mr. Freeman, occupying 1,200 acres, employs as few women as he possibly can, and would rather do without them altogether if it were possible. Other gentlemen thought that they could not cultivate their land satisfactorily without female labour in the spring time and during harvest.

The gentlemen present have no objection to bring against the present system of elementary education, which they consider to be suitable to the wants and future condition of the children, and they would wish to see every labouring man able to read intelligently, to write legibly, and to cast up a common account.

The meeting feels that the moral condition of the agricultural poor depends more than upon anything else upon the condition of their homes; that the condition of these homes at present is in the highest degree unsatisfactory, and that some regulation analogous to the provisions of the Lodging House Act, should be applied to remedy some of the more crying evils of overcrowding and defective sanitary arrangements.

The meeting sees with regret the increase in the number of beerhouses, and considers that the transference of the licensing power from the magistrates to the Excise has operated prejudicially upon the condition of rural parishes.

Charles Neville Rolfe.
W. M. H. Church.
Joshua Freeman.
Martin Dodman,
Thos. B. Kitton.
Edwin Oakley.
Thos. Wharton.
Wm. Law Hussey.
Wm. Lewis.
John W. Hunn.
J. G. Burcham.

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38. *Saturday, Sept.* 14, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Snettisham, for

Snettisham - Pop., 1,173 - Acr., 5,579 - R.V., 7,884*l.*
Sedgeford - Pop., 742 - Acr., 4,121 - R.V., 4,737*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Snettisham—
- Rev. H. Bridgewater, curate.
- Mr. H. Barnard, occupier.
- Mr. Chas. Beck, guardian and occupier.
- Mr. Stephen Margetts, guardian, churchwarden, and occupier.
- Mr. Gowing, assistant overseer, sanitary inspector, and chemist.
- Mr. Lambert Lewis, guardian and occupier.
- Mr. Lambert, occupier and shopkeeper.
- Mr. Lawson, assessor and saddler.

From Sedgeford—
- Rev. J. A. Ogle, vicar and rural dean.
- Mr. J. Spinks, churchwarden and occupier.
- Mr. J. W. Howlett, guardian and occupier.
- Mr. W. Rix, churchwarden and occupier.

The land in Snettisham belongs to five principal owners. There is a sufficient supply of labour on most of the farms; but there is one farm of 800 acres, belonging to the corporation of Lynn, which has only two cottages, and is three miles distant from the heart of the parish. There are 182 cottages in the parish, of which three-fourths have been built for

speculative investment, and not for the accommodation of particular farms. The condition of the cottages generally is unsatisfactory. They are frequently overcrowded, and the chambers are too small. There are perhaps 50 with only one bedroom, and there are certainly not six cottages with three bedrooms. The rent ranges from 1*l.* (for the smallest cottages, with very little garden—mere hovels in fact) to 5*l.*

The provision for education in the parish consists of—

(1.) A free grammar school for 20 boys, endowed with land, producing about 120*l.* a year, and a house. Most of the free boys are children of labourers; there are also about 15 paying day boys and 25 boarders. The latter are the sons of farmers and tradesmen in the neighbourhood. The school is not under any inspection, but is administered by 12 trustees, who admit the boys by examination.

(2.) A parochal school, in connexion with Government, supported by voluntary contributions, held in a fair room, with 100 children on the register and an average attendance of about 75; taught by a provisionally certificated mistress. The diocesan inspector reports it as a very good school.

There are also three or four private schools in the parish, attended by children of the labouring class.

In Sedgeford the land belongs chiefly to five proprietors, upwards of 2,000 acres belong to the dean and chapter of Norwich (now to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners), and on this extent of land there does not exist a single cottage. Another owner has over 1,000 acres, with about 30 good cottages; another over 500 acres, with no cottage; another upwards of 100 acres, with one cottage; another over 50 acres, with two or three cottages. There are 119 cottages in the parish, of which between 80 and 90 are in the hands of small owners. The general condition of the cottages in the parish is very unsatisfactory. Some terrible cases of overcrowding exist. In one instance a man and his wife and seven children, ranging from 2 to 21 years of age, of both sexes, and one female lodger with an illegitimate child occupy one sleeping room. In another, a man and his wife with nine children of both sexes, ranging in age from infancy to 15 years, have but one bedchamber. In another, a man and his wife and eight children of both sexes, from infancy to 18 years of age, are no better off for sleeping accommodation.

The cottages are fairly distributed over the area of the parish, and no labourer has to travel any unreasonable distance to his work.

The supply of labour is in excess of the demand, and several cottages are now standing empty.

The rent of the cottages varies from 3*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* Most of them have good gardens, but a considerable number are in a bad state of repair. Many are without proper privy accommodation, and the attention of the sanitary inspector has been called to the fact, but without leading to any improvement.

There is an excellent school in connexion with Government, chiefly supported by one of the landowners, who contributes 50*l.* a year, besides having built the room and teacher's house. There are 53 names on the register (which is below the usual number), and an average attendance of 39.

There is a private school in the parish, kept by a dame, attended by about 30 children, whose parents are chiefly Nonconformists.

Neither in Snettisham nor in Sedgeford is there a night school at present.

If it could be proved to be an advantage to the child, and no hardship to the parent, there would be no embarrassment caused to the farmer by making it penal to employ a child under the age of 10. But it is the opinion of the meeting that unless some compulsion were exercised on thriftless parents, or some security were taken to secure the regular attendance of such children at school, such prohibition would only aggravate present evils, and the children who were prevented from being employed would, in many cases, only be getting into mischief and become a public nuisance.

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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It was thought that if the regular attendance of such children could be secured they would be turned out into life at the age of 10 with a fairly sufficient amount of knowledge for their station in life. It would be the wish of the gentlemen present that every labouring man should be able to read his Bible and write a letter, and it was felt that this amount of knowledge is not generally possessed by agricultural labourers now.

The difficulties surrounding the maintenance of a night school were fully recognized, but so also was its value as the adjunct of a day school, and it was thought to be an instrument of education which ought to be encouraged as much as possible.

It was the opinion of the meeting that the employment of young girls over 14 in field labour is highly undesirable; indeed, that the employment of young girls of any age could easily be dispensed with, and if the girls can get out into domestic service, by all means they should be encouraged to go. A prohibition to employ them in the fields would act as such an encouragement. A case was mentioned by one gentleman present of three women whom he used to employ habitually, who were very handy workers in the fields, but now make the worst possible wives.

The condition of the homes of the labouring class was thought, in many cases, to be incompatible with the bringing up of a family in habits of decency and morality, and it was the unanimous opinion of the meeting that legislation ought to be immediately brought to bear upon this subject, so as to remove some of the many evils that are felt to result from things as they are.

The distance that some labourers have to travel to their work was also mentioned as a feature, in the present distribution of cottages, which operates very prejudicially both on the employers and the employed.

It is the decided opinion of the meeting that there are too many beerhouses in the country, and that the facilities recently afforded for procuring a licence to open a house for the sale of beer are likely to produce, and are producing, mischievous effects.

H. H. Bridgwater, Curate of Snettisham.
Henry Barnard, Snettisham.
J. W. Howlett, Sedgeford.
Stephen Margetts, Snettisham.
T. N. Spink, Sedgeford.
William Rix, Sedgeford.
J. Gowing, Snettisham.
G. Lawson, Snettisham.
J. A. Ogle, Vicar of Sedgeford, rural dean.

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39. *Monday, Sept.* 15, 1867.

Collective Meeting at East Rudham, for

East Rudham	Pop., 956	Acr., 3,904	R.V., 4,587*l.*
West Rudham	Pop., 487	Acr., 2,800	R.V., 3,475*l.*
Houghton	Pop., 230	Acr., 1,521	R.V., 1,348*l.*
Syderstone	Pop., 528	Acr., 2,450	R.V., 2,593*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From East and West Rudham—
Rev. F. P. Willington, vicar.
Mr. H. C. Bonner, churchwarden, occupier of 2,000 acres.
Mr. E. Sheringham, churchwarden, occupier of 800 acres.
Mr. J. B. Stedman, guardian and occupier of 450 acres.
Mr. E. Tingey, churchwarden and occupier of 850 acres.
Mr. J. Baker, guardian and occupier of 300 acres.
Mr. E. Savory, overseer and occupier of 1,400 acres.
Mr. Manby, medical officer.
Mr. J. Drage, merchant.

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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From Houghton—
Mr. W. Stanton, churchwarden and occupier of 500 acres and sub-agent for Marquis Cholmondeley.
Mr. F. Goulder, guardian and occupier of 700 acres.
Rev. J. H. Broome, vicar.
From Syderstone—
Rev. W. H. Tudor, rector.
Rev. T. Carpenter, curate.
Mr. W. Tayton, churchwarden, guardian, and occupier of 1,100 acres.

In East and West Rudham the principal owners are the Marquis Cholmondeley and Marquis Townshend; there are a few small proprietors. The supply of labour at present is about adequate to the demand. If landowners built cottages in neighbouring close parishes, there would be an ample supply both of labour and cottages. The cottages are not in good condition, but improving, and they are not well distributed, too much clustered, a result which has been brought about by the Inclosure Act. The majority of them belong to small proprietors. The rent ranges from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 6*l.* In many cases the cheapest cottages are the best, and belong to the landowners. Wages at present are 12*s.* a week.

There is a parochial school, built by subscription and Government aid; an excellent room. The school is under a certificated master and an infant mistress, with an average attendance of about 100; supported by subscription, aided by the Government capitation. The school pence amount to from 30*l.* to 35*l.* The subscriptions were 32*l.* last year, of which 15*l.* or 16*l.* were subscribed by the farmers. There has generally been a night school, but it was discontinued last winter in consequence of the vicar's not being able to get any help.

In Houghton the Marquis Cholmondeley is the sole owner. The supply of resident labour is sufficient for the acreage of the parish, and there are enough cottages. The cottages are in a good condition of repair, but more chamber accommodation would be of advantage. The rent ranges from 1*l.* 10*s.* to 2*l.* 10*s.*; the latter sum including the rent of an allotment of a quarter of an acre. Mr. Stanton, Lord Cholmondeley's agent, thinks that the allotment is too large, and that an eighth of an acre is as much as a labouring man can find time to cultivate, and that with proper cultivation he might get as much off the smaller quantity as he now gets off the larger.

There is a school in Houghton, entirely supported by Lord Cholmondeley, held in an excellent room, under a master and mistress, attended by between 40 and 50 children, some of whom come from an adjoining parish. There has also been a night school, which in the opinion of the vicar has worked satisfactorily. There is also an infant school.

In Syderstone the chief owner is the Marquis Cholmondeley. There is not always a sufficiency of resident labour. The landowners' cottages are in good repair, but those belonging to small proprietors, of which there is a considerable number, are in much worse order, and the rents in some cases rise as high as 6*l.*; in fact, the dearest cottages are the worst.

There is a school, under Government, mixed, under a certificated mistress, supported by subscriptions, which amount to about 33*l.* a year. It is attended, on the average, by about 50 children. There is also a small dame's school, attended chiefly by children of Nonconformists. There is no compulsion on the day scholars either to attend Sunday school or to come to church. There has been a night school, but it has not worked effectively, as the young people were reluctant to come, and there was a difficulty in keeping awake those that did come. The master also, a labouring man in the village, was not a very efficient teacher, though an intelligent man.

It is the unanimous opinion of this meeting that the labour of a boy under 10 years of age is of no practical value to the farmer.

Upon the further question of penal prohibition and compulsion there was a difference of opinion; but a resolution proposed by Mr. Bonner was carried by a majority of 11 to 3 that—(1) it would be no hardship to the farmer if it were made penal to employ a boy under 10 years of age (the season of haysell and harvest excepted); but (2) that such prohibition would produce no benefit, but rather the reverse, unless it were accompanied by some provision which would oblige the parents of such children to send them to school.

It is thought that on farms of the character prevailing in this neighbourhood, where the land has a tendency "to grow everything that ought not to grow," women's labour is indispensable. On Mr. Bonner's occupation of 2,000 acres about 20 women are employed nearly throughout the year, but the meeting sees with regret young unmarried girls at work in the fields, and would much prefer that they should go out to service.

It would be even desirable to prohibit their employment in farm labour under the age of 16, by which time they would be fitted for service, but as some girls are never likely to make domestic servants, it would not be right to raise the restriction to a higher age.

The condition of the cottages which are the homes of the labouring class is considered to be most unsatisfactory; no cottage occupied by a labouring man with a mixed family can be called decent which has not three properly partitioned chambers. At present not five out of every 100 cottages are so provided. It is the opinion of the meeting that every farm ought to have its proportionate number of cottages, and a double cottage on every 100 acres in the case of large farms would be a proper proportion, and the right way for a landowner to regard his cottages is to look upon them, not as a remunerative investment, but as part and parcel of his farm in the same sense as the homestead and the barns.

It is the opinion of the meeting that the present mode of licensing beerhouses is open to many objections, and produces very mischievous effects, and they would wish to see no difference in the way of granting a licence made in favour of the beerhouse as compared with the house that can sell wines and spirits.

The meeting is strongly in favour of night schools, and would wish every labouring man to be able to read and write, even though he should not thereby be made a better labourer.

F. P. Willington, Vicar of East and West Rudham.
Henry C. Bonner.
Edwd. Sheringham.
Edmund Savory.
Edward Tingey.
John Drage.
Wm. H. Tudor, Rector of Syderstone.
Tho. Carpenter, M.A., Curate of Syderstone.
Wm. Tayton.
J. H. Broome, Vicar of Houghton.
Wm. Stanton.
F. C. Goulder.

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40. *Monday, Sept.* 16, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Great Bircham, for the parishes of

Great Bircham	Pop., 489	Acr., 3,400	R.V., 2,619*l.*
Bircham Newton	Pop., 118	Acr., 1,065	R.V., 1,060*l.*
and			
Bircham Tofts	Pop., 169	Acr., 1,435	R.V., 860*l.*
Bagthorpe	Pop., 69	Acr., 750	R.V., 730*l.*
Barmer	Pop., 62	Acr., 1,000	R.V., 1,164*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Bircham Magna—
Rev. J. B. Winckworth, curate in charge.
Mr. Edward Kitton, occupier of 800 acres.
Mr. W. Hopking, occupier of 260 acres.

Mr. J. Layland, schoolmaster.
Miss Mary Kitton.
Miss Rebecca Kitton.
Mr. John Cutter, occupying 940 acres.
Mr. F. Goulder, occupier.

From Bircham Newton and Tofts—
Rev. J. Mayo, curate.
Mr. John Jarrett, guardian, churchwarden, overseer, and occupier of 500 acres.
Mr. Jas. Leftley, steward of Miss Lancaster, occupying 570 acres.

From Barmer—
Mr. J. Martin, churchwarden, guardian, and occupier of 900 acres.

From Bagthorpe—
No representative.

The whole of the land in Great Bircham belongs to the Marquis Cholmondeley. There would be a sufficiency of labour if all the labourers residing in the parish worked in the parish. As it is, several men work in Fring, and travel three miles to their work.

Mr. Goulder occupies 250 acres in Bircham Magna, and has not a single cottage in the parish belonging to his farm, nor a single person living in the parish working for him; nor can he have, as he cannot procure lodgings for them. He has to go 15 miles off, to Lynn and the neighbourhood, for harvest men. He could permanently employ three or four men more than he does if he had cottages to put them into. What he complains of is, that the cottages are not properly appropriated to the farms.

There is overcrowding in the cottages, and in some cases double families under one roof. They are mostly in good repair, and are being largely and generally improved. All but two belong to Lord Cholmondeley. When the improvements are completed there will be a considerable number with three bedrooms. The rent ranges from 1*l.* 10*s.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* The higher rent is for the better cottages, and includes a quarter of an acre of allotment.

There is a parochial school, supported entirely by Lady Cholmondeley, for the three Birchams, not in connexion with Government, under a trained master and his wife, with 156 names on the register, and about 140 in average attendance.

For 12 years there has been a night school in the winter months, taught by the two clergymen and the schoolmaster, attended by 40 scholars (all males).

The land in Bircham Newton and Bircham Tofts also belongs wholly to Marquis Cholmondeley. There is a short supply both of labourers and of cottages. There are only 16 cottages in Bircham Newton and 22 in Bircham Tofts. In Bircham Newton the permanent demand for labour would be for about 28 men. Labour has to be imported from Docking ($2\frac{1}{2}$ miles off) and from Great Bircham.

In Bircham Newton the cottages are in fair repair. In Bircham Tofts many are very bad, but eight new cottages are in course of erection. When these are finished the worst of the old ones will be pulled down.

At the last audit the marquis's agent stated that in the course of the next three years there are to be built on the estate 30 new cottages, and 15 old ones to be thoroughly repaired. The area of the estate is about 17,000 acres, and extends into 10 different parishes. The average rent of cottages in Bircham Newton and Bircham Tofts is 2*l.* 10*s.*

The school at Great Bircham serves for all the Birchams, and also draws nine children from Bagthorpe and three from Anmer.

In Barmer all the land belongs T. Kearslake, Esq., who resides in the parish. There is only one resident occupier. There are nine cottages in Barmer, recently built and very good, and eight others belonging to the same landlord in the adjoining parish of Syderstone, the tenants of which are considered to belong to the Barmer estate. The landlord subscribes to Syderstone school, and the Barmer children attend there. The distance to the school would be about a mile.

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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In Bagthorpe the land belongs to Rev. S. R. Cattley. There is only one occupier (who was prevented attending the meeting by illness). There is a short supply of labour and of cottages. There are only 10 cottages occupied by labourers; the population is only 69, and there is no school; children attend at Bircham Magna.

The meeting regard the Act recently passed for the regulation of agricultural gangs with great satisfaction, as they are entirely opposed to the employment of mixed gangs, and they consider that the requirement of a licence for the gangmaster will result in placing men of better character in that position, and rescue what might be a valuable organization of labour from the mischievous results which have hitherto attended it.

The meeting think that the labourer would be better with more education than he at present possesses; that that education should be suitable to his probable position in life, and that it should qualify him to read with intelligence, to write a legible hand, and to cast a common shop account.

To secure this result, which it is felt is not attained at present, it is thought that the half-day or the alternate whole day system is impracticable in agriculture; and if any restriction is to be placed upon the employment of boy labour, the gentlemen present were unanimous in thinking that it would be far better, in the interests both of the cultivation of the land and of the education of the child, to secure the regular attendance of boys at school (say) up to the age of 10 years, than to require by any enactment analogous to those in the Factory and Workshop Acts a periodic attendance at school concurrently with employment in the field.

There would be no serious embarrassment to the farmer if (the harvest season excepted) it were made penal to employ boys in the field under the age of 10.

The farmers present were unanimous in saying that they do not desire to see young girls under 16 employed in the fields; they do not want them; and there would be no hardship to them if they were prohibited from employing them.

It is the opinion of the meeting that the physical, moral, and social condition of the labouring class primarily depends upon the condition of their homes, and that the state of some of the cottages inhabited by the agricultural labourer in many parishes is such as imperatively to demand such interference as shall compel their owners to provide them with proper accommodation and to keep them in proper repair, and the powers at present possessed by the sanitary inspector are not considered sufficient to secure the ends for which that officer is appointed.

The meeting would desire to see an efficient night school as an auxiliary to the day school established in every parish.

There is only one public house (closed on Sundays under covenant with the landlord) in the parishes of Great Bircham, Bircham Newton, Bircham Tofts, Houghton, Barmer, Bagthorpe, Fring, and Anmer, and both the clergymen and the farmers present think they can trace a decided improvement in the habits of the people in consequence.

J. R. Winckworth, Curate.
E. W. Kitton.
John Layland.
William C. Hopking.
Alfred John Cutter.
F. C. Goulder.
Jas. Mayo, Curate (since Aug. 1866) of Bircham Newton and Tofts.
Jno. Jarrett, Churchwarden.
James Leftley.
Jno. Martin.

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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No. 41. *Tuesday, September* 17, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Burnham Westgate, for

Burnham Westgate	Pop. 1,094	Acr., 3,048	R.V., 5,474*l.*
„ Deepdale	Pop. 81	Acr., 1,000	R.V., 1,386*l.*
„ Norton	Pop. 1,202	Acr., 1,100	R.V., 1,668*l.*
„ Overy		Acr., 2,298	R.V., 3,337*l.*
„ Ulph		Acr., 1,400	R.V., 2,000*l.*
„ Sutton			
„ Thorpe	Pop. 427	Acr., 2,321	R.V., 3,109*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Burnham Westgate—
- Rev. Dr. Bates, rector.
- H. E. Blyth, Esq., landowner and occupier, magistrate, and churchwarden.
- Mr. R. Evitts, churchwarden and baker.

From Burnham Norton—
- Mr. George Wiseman, occupier of 1,000 acres and overseer.

From Burnham Deepdale—
- Rev. E. G. Blyth, rector.
- Mr. R. Cooke, guardian, overseer, churchwarden, and occupier of 800 acres.

From Burnham Overy—
- Rev. J. S. Ellis curate.
- Mr. R. Dewing, guardian, overseer, churchwarden, and merchant.
- Mr. F. Jickling, churchwarden and occupier of 200 acres.
- Mr. H. Freeman, overseer and occupier of 500 acres.

From Burnham Thorpe—
- Rev. E. B. Everard, rector.
- Mr. Thomas Mack, guardian and occupier of 600 acres.

From Burnham Sutton-cum-Ulph—
- Rev. G. G. Hayter, rector.
- Mr. John Overman, guardian, churchwarden, and occupier of 900 acres.
- Mr. John Bower, proprietor of a classical and commercial school.
- Rev. E. Stallybrass, Independent minister.
- Mr. Martin Rix, innkeeper.
- Mr. John Saintry, manufacturer of agricultural implements.
- Rev. A. Napier, vicar of Holkham.

Burnham Westgate is an open parish. There are three principal and several small proprietors. There is plenty of labour. Many cottages are now vacant, The condition of the cottages differs widely; some are very good, some very bad. Those belonging to resident owners are in much better order than those belonging to absentees. The rent ranges from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* Many in the street have no garden, and yet will let at a higher rent than those out of the town with gardens.

In the opinion of the rector the parish is amply supplied with the means of education. The National schools are intended to serve the parishes of Burnham Westgate, Sutton-cum-Ulph, Norton, and Overy. The extreme distance that any child would have to travel would be two miles. There are dames' schools in some of the outlying districts. There are 150 names on the register, and an average attendance of 95; and the total annual cost is about 130*l.*, which is made up by about 55*l.* Government grant, between 40*l.* and 50*l.* school pence, a small endowment of 6*l.*, 5*l.* from Betton's charity, and the remainder by voluntary subscriptions, which (including collections in church) amount to about 35*l.* There are two night schools, which have been attended by about 30 scholars. There is an infant school attached to the Independent meeting house, attended by about 25 children.

In Burnham Deepdale the whole of the land belongs to one proprietor. There is sufficient labour, and enough cottages. The cottages altogether are in good condition; rent from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*, according to the size of the garden.

There is a parish school, with 30 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 20, under an untrained mistress, maintained by the rector with the help of a subscription of 2*l.* The school fees amount to about 4*l.*, and the total cost to about 17*l.* There has been a night school for several years, attended last winter by about seven scholars.

In Burnham Norton there is one principal landowner. There is enough labour and enough cottages. The cottages belong partly to the landowner and partly to small proprietors. None are absolutely bad, and they are mostly in pretty good condition. There is a good dame's school in the parish, regularly visited by the rector, and partly supported by subscriptions. There are about 30 children in attendance.

In Burnham Overy there are two principal and several small landowners. There is a sufficiency of labour and cottages. The condition of the cottages is generally good, though there are some indifferent ones. Out of the 600 or 700 inhabitants, 50 or 60 are seafaring men. The rents run from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* The larger proportion of the cottages have gardens, about an eighth of an acre in size.

There are two or three dames' schools, well attended, of the ordinary type.

In Burnham Thorpe there is one principal owner (the Earl of Orford). There is no deficiency of labour or of cottages. Almost all the cottages are owned by small proprietors, many of whom are non-resident. There are four or five excellent cottages built by Lord Orford with three bedrooms each, which may be called model cottages. They now belong to a shepherd, who purchased them at Lord Orford's death.

The condition of the cottages in Burnham Thorpe formed the subject of a special report by the medical officer to the board of guardians; but the rector thinks the worst was made of the case, as a description of the state of the cottages as a whole, though there was no exaggeration of the condition of the 12 cottages that formed the special subject of the inquiry. The rent ranges from 3*l.* to 5*l.*, and is considered to be high. With the exception of one block, most cottages have good gardens, and every cottager has an allotment of about a third of an acre from Lord Orford.

There is an endowed school, with an endowment of 44*l.*, and a house and three-quarters of an acre of land. There are 58 children on the books, and an average attendance of 45. The rector adds 5*l.* to the master's salary. The school is entirely free.

There is also an infant school, maintained by Lord Orford, attended by about 30 children, for children between three and six.

There is also a night school, taught by the rector, assisted by the schoolmaster, attended on the average by 17 scholars last winter.

In Burnham Sutton-cum-Ulph the land belongs chiefly to Lords Leicester and Orford. There are also several small proprietors. There is enough labour. The cottages are sufficient, and are generally in fair condition; they have been considerably improved of late years; the rent runs from 3*l.* to 4*l.* 15*s.*

Education is provided for by the National school, which is situated in Burnham Westgate. There is a dame's school attended by about 20 children.

It was the opinion of the principal employers of labour at this meeting that the labour of a boy under 10 years of age *is* of practical value to the farmer. Seven out of eight thought that a boy who begins work in the fields at eight is likely to make a better labourer than one who begins at 10; but, in virtue of higher considerations they would be willing to dispense with the services of boys upon their farms till they had passed an examination and could produce a certificate of ability to read and write with fair intelligence.

It was the all but unanimous opinion of the meeting (only one clergyman present declining to vote)

that the half-day system and the alternate whole day system are impracticable in agriculture, and (with two dissentients) it was considered to be very inexpedient to introduce into the employment of agricultural labour the penal restrictions of the Factory Acts.

The meeting considered that the habitual employment of young unmarried girls in the fields is in the highest degree undesirable. One gentleman present has cultivated 1,200 acres for the last 30 years without employing any such girls, except during the season of harvest, though he admits at some additional cost; but the meeting was not prepared to recommend that it should be restrained by penalties.

It was the opinion of the meeting that every cottage occupied by an agricultural labourer with a mixed family should have three sleeping rooms. It was admitted that the accommodation at present falls far below this standard; but improvement is going on, and it was hoped that under the combined influence of public opinion and the change in the law of settlement the higher standard may be ultimately attained, and a most fruitful cause of the low moral condition of a large portion of the agricultural class removed.

With one exception, that of a clergyman who declined to vote, it was the unanimous opinion of the meeting that the tenure of a labourer's cottage ought to be for a year, terminable on either side by three months' notice at any quarter day.

William Bates, D.D., Rector of Burnham Westgate.
George G. Hayter, Rector of Burnham Sutton.
Rd. Dewing.
Robins Cook.
F. A. Jickling.
Henry C. Freeman.
E. B. Everard.
Thos. T. Mack.
Alex. Napier.
J. S. Ellis.
H. E. Blyth.
Geo. Wiseman.
John Overman.

No. 42. *Wednesday, September* 18, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Thornham, for

Thornham	Pop., 728	Acr., 2,154	R.V., 3,772*l.*
Titchwell	Pop., 146	Acr., 1,521	R.V., 1,961*l.*
Brancaster	Pop., 1,002	Acr., 2,969	R.V., 4,145*l.*
Holme by the Sea	Pop., 305	Acr., 1,100	R.V., 2,590*l.*

Present at the Meeting:

From Thornham and Holme—
Rev. N. Raven, vicar.
Mr. James Sudbury, churchwarden and occupier of 300 acres.
Mr. Harrison, schoolmaster.
From Brancaster—
Rev. O. Sadler, rector.
From Titchwell—
Rev. E. S. Stocker, rector.

In Thornham and Holme the land belongs chiefly to three proprietors. There is a sufficient supply of labour and of cottages. There are about 70 in Holme and 170 in Thornham; about three-fourths in Thornham and nearly all in Holme belong to the landowners. They are reported to be generally in only a moderate condition, and defective in conveniences and bedroom accommodation. The property in Thornham is in Chancery, which may account for some deficiencies. The rent ranges from 3*l.* to 5*l.* 10*s.* Most have gardens in Holme; not so many in Thornham; but in both parishes there are allotments of a quarter of an acre each, for which a rent is charged of 11*s.* in Holme and 15*s.* in Thornham.

There is a parish school in Thornham in an excellent building erected at the cost of the landowner (it is said to have cost nearly 2,000*l.*), in connexion with Government, under a certificated master, an assistant mistress, a pupil-teacher, and paid monitors. There are 138 names on the register, and about 100 in average attendance. The total annual cost is about 160*l.*, of which 60*l.* comes from Government grant, rather over 20*l.* from school fees, and the balance is made up by the landowner.

Norfolk.
Rev. J. Fraser
a.

Mr. Harrison, the schoolmaster, has been in charge for five years. In that period the average age of boys has decreased; during the whole five years the average age at which boys have been taken away from school to work in the fields has been 9½ years. It is a difficulty to keep them up to 11. A boy leaving school at 9½ years of age, who has been fairly regular in his attendance, would perhaps have advanced to the third standard of the Government examinations, and be able to read an easy reading book, but would be scarcely able to write a letter. From his experience of a night school, Mr. Harrison thinks that this amount of knowledge would not be fixed in the boy's mind; and that probably in a twelvemonth after he has left school he would not be able to do more than read in the second standard.

This low standard of attainment is to be attributed to the irregular attendance of the boy, the real attendance seldom amounting to more than two-thirds of the nominal, and Mr. Harrison thinks he could guarantee that a boy who has completed his tenth year, having attended school regularly for the previous four years, should be able to pass in the fourth standard. He would also wish that there should be a prohibition against any child going to work till he has passed in that standard.

There has been a night school in Thornham for the last two winters, conducted by the schoolmaster, a paid assistant, and two voluntary teachers. The attendance was something under 20. The scholars ranged in age from 12 to 19 or 20. Mr. Harrison did not find that it was much appreciated. The elder boys seemed to set most value on it; but the lads who had been taken away from the day school at a very early age, and had forgotten what they had learnt, gave a good deal of trouble, were difficult even to keep awake, and made but little progress.

In Holme there is a school, under a young untrained mistress, not in connexion with Government, attended on the average by about 30 children. The total annual cost is 30*l.*, of which 5*l.* arise from school fees, and the rest is paid by the vicar. For young children the vicar considers it a fairly efficient school.

There is no night school.

There is no private adventure school either in Holme or Thornham.

In Brancaster there is one chief landowner and five or six owning from 100 to 200 acres each. A small proportion of the population at Brancaster (and at Thornham) are seafaring men. There is a sufficiency of labour and of cottages. The cottages belong chiefly to small proprietors, and, though generally in a tolerable state of repair, in many cases are defective in bedroom accommodation. There are instances, though not a great many, of overcrowding. The rent is much the same as at Thornham. Many have no gardens, and there is only an acre of allotment ground in the parish.

There is a boys' and a girls' school in two separate buildings. The boys' school has an endowment of 40*l.* and a house and garden, for which 25 boys are to be educated free. There are 35 on the books, and the average attendance is about 30. It is under non-resident trustees; the rector visits the school, but does not know what his exact position under the trust deed is in relation to it. The boys not on the foundation pay from 2*d.* to 6*d.* a week; the sum charged being left to the discretion of the master.

The school at present, in the opinion of the diocesan inspector, is not in a condition of efficiency, which the master laments, but accounts for by his not

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being in possession of any power to enforce the regular attendance of the children.

The girls' school is in connexion with Government, under a certificated mistress, with about 60 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 40. The total annual cost is about 60*l.*; the Government grant is about 25*l.*; school fees about 8*l.*; voluntary subscriptions about 20*l.* The rector holds himself responsible for any deficiency. The last report of the Government inspector of the condition of the school on the whole was favourable.

There has been a night school for four or five winters, attended by from 20 to 30 scholars, under a paid teacher and one or two volunteers. The rector thinks it has been fairly successful.

There are two private adventure schools in the parish, chiefly attended by very young children; one of them is at the Staith, a distant hamlet and sort of port in the parish.

In Titchwell the bulk of the land belongs to Magdalene College, Oxford, who are lords of the manor; another proprietor owns about 300 acres, another about 80, and there are two or three still smaller owners.

There is not nearly enough labour; it has to be imported from Brancaster and Thornham. There are 32 cottages; more than half have only one bedroom; not one has three bedrooms; all have gardens, but there is no allotment ground. The rent varies from 2*l.* 15*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* About a third are in fair condition, the rest are in very poor order.

There is no school building, but about eight little children are taught by a dame in her cottage. The children pay her 2*d.* a week; the rector supplies her with books and school necessaries; Magdalene College subscribes 1*l.* a year. The old dame cannot make more than 5*l.* a year. When asked by the rector why she kept school, she said "she hadn't head for anything else."

There is no night school nor regular Sunday school in Titchwell.

From some cause that was not explained there was only one employer of labour present, and he did not wish to constitute himself a representative of the opinions of the agriculturalists in these four parishes. The clergy also who were present felt that many of the questions asked were farmers' questions rather than clergymen's, but all united in thinking that the education of the labouring class at present is in an unsatisfactory condition, and would gladly co-operate with any measures that would contribute to its improvement; but it was their hope that no measures would be adopted which would seriously interfere with the cultivation of the land, which it was thought any excessive restriction upon the employment of children, and particularly of boys, would have a tendency to do.

It was considered that the employment of young unmarried girls in field labour is highly undesirable, and might be prohibited below the age of 16 without any serious inconvenience to the farmer.

It was also thought that the condition of the homes of the labouring class is a primary cause of much of the misery and profligacy that exists, and that it would be highly desirable, both on moral and on sanitary grounds, that there should be some effective inspection of cottages, limiting the number of their inmates in proportion to the accommodation and securing conveniences for health and decency.

N. J. Raven.
O. Sadler.
Jas. Sudbury.
Thos. Harrison.

[The Rev. E. S. Stocker was obliged to leave before the conclusion of the meeting.]

No. 43. *Tuesday, September* 19, 1868.

Collective Meeting at Docking, for

Docking - Pop., 1,625 - Acr., 6,332 - R.V., 8,316*l.*
Fring - Pop., 173 - Acr., 1,689 - R.V., 1,992*l.*
Stanhoe - Pop., 468 - Acr., 1,400 - R.V., 2,148*l.*
Anmer - Pop., 142 - Acr., 1,420 - R.V., 1,314*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Docking—
- Major Hare, magistrate, landowner, and chairman of board of guardians.
- Rev. Hugh Hare, curate in charge.
- Mr. Edward Burgis, churchwarden and occupier of 600 acres.
- Mr. Samuel Sharpe, occupier of 700 acres, guardian, and churchwarden.
- Mr. Thomas Pickerel, guardian and occupier of 300 acres.
- Mr. John Freeman, occupier of 1,000 acres and overseer.
- Mr. William Crookham, schoolmaster.
- Mr. Charles Goodwin, parish clerk and carpenter.
- Mr. Isaac Livock, registrar of births and deaths and sanitary inspector.

No one appeared from Fring, Stanhoe, or Anmer.

Docking is a parish of 6,000 or 7,000 acres, belonging chiefly to two landowners. The population is 1,625, the number of houses 333, of cottages about 300. Being an open parish, it is filled with resident labourers who work in the neighbouring parishes of Bircham, Barmer, Barwick, Choseley, &c., which are all "close." The evil of this is very strongly felt, as all the disorderly characters from the surrounding parishes have been poured into it. About 180 able-bodied men, and from 80 or 90 boys would suffice for the cultivation of the land in Docking. Many of the cottages are very indifferent; have neither garden nor any convenience; have no land belonging to them but what the four walls stand upon. Major Hare thinks the parish would be consumed by fever, if the Sanitary Act were not most vigilantly carried out. There is an efficient and sufficient parish school, under Government, taught by a certificated master, with 129 names on the register, and an average attendance of 71. There also four or five private adventure dames' schools, educating perhaps 80 children. For many past winters there has been a night school. Last winter there were 53 scholars on the register, and an average attendance of 35.

The total annual cost of the day school is about 170*l.*, of which the Government grant this year is 42*l.*, the school pence about 25*l.*, and the balance is made up by voluntary subscriptions. The annual subscription list is about 76*l.*

[There was no one present, to give information of the state of things in Anmer, Fring, or Stanhoe.]

Upon the question of the age below which it should be made penal to employ a boy in field labour, there was a difference of opinion in the meeting; one employer of labour thought it might be 10; three, nine; and two, eight. Of the two latter gentlemen, one was entirely guided to his conclusion by considerations of the difficulty that a higher age would throw in the way of the parent's maintaining his family; the other further thought that the boy who begins work at eight is likely to make the most efficient agricultural labourer. It was the opinion of the meeting that the half-day and the alternate whole day systems are impracticable in agriculture, and it was thought that the only instrument that can be practically worked for carrying on the education of boys who have been removed from school at an early age is the night school; and the meeting desired to call the attention of the Government to the importance of encouraging these schools.

It was the opinion of the employers of labour present that the work to which boys are put upon the farm is not beyond their strength, and does not injuriously affect their health or growth.

The meeting felt that it is a most undesirable thing to employ young unmarried girls on the land; indeed they would even wish that such employment were prohibited in the case of girls under 16, if the prohibition could be accompanied with some dispensing

power which should prevent its acting as a hardship upon large families.

Major Hare was strongly of opinion that none but adult women ought to be employed in work which requires such a physical strain as turnip and mangold drawing. Mr. Burgis never employs a young girl on his farm except in harvest time to tie the wheat. Indeed, Major Hare does not believe that there is any injurious employment of girl labour in Docking, but there is—and of Docking girls—in neighbouring parishes, and he has seen its demoralizing and health-ruining effects. One of the worst results perceived to arise from the employment of young girls is their thereby emancipation from parental control, and the independent wilful spirit generated.

The state of the cottages is allowed to be very unsatisfactory; but the question of their improvement is surrounded by difficulties. It was thought, however, that some regulations analogous to those which govern lodging houses might be laid down for cottages generally, limiting the number of their inmates to their capacity of accommodation, and providing for the proper distribution, according to sex, of those inmates. The inspector appointed to discharge this duty ought to be an independent officer, so as to be unaffected by local influences.

It was the opinion of the meeting that generally through the country there are more houses for the sale of beer than are required; that these houses are a fertile source of demoralization; and that instead of additional facilities being given for the issue of licences a much stricter system is to be desired.

H. J. Hare.
Edmund Burgis.
Samuel Sharpe.
Thomas Pickerel.
Hugh J. Hare.
John I. Livock.
William Crookham.

[Mr. Freeman was obliged to leave before the meeting was concluded.]

No. 44. *Friday, September* 20, 1866.

Collective Meeting at North Creake, for

North Creake - Pop., 708 - Acr., 3,640 - R.V., 4,874*l.*
South Creake - Pop., 1,058 - Acr., 3,300 - R.V., 5,534*l.*
Waterden - Pop., 44 - Acr., 800 - R.V., 1,003*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From North Creake—
Earl Spencer, landowner.
Archdeacon Hankinson, rector.
Mr. James Everett, owner.
Mr. Thomas Everett, occupier of 1,200 acres.
Mr. T. D. Dewing, occupier of 250 acres.
Rev. T. Davy, curate.
Mr. George Cooke, occupier of 196 acres.
Mr. Isaac Wasey, occupier of 50 acres.
Mr. James Young, tailor.
Mr. Archbould, occupier of 600 acres.
Mr. Hudson, } of Quarles farm.
Mr. Peter Hudson, }

From South Creake—
Rev. G. Ridsdale, vicar.
Mr. T. J. Seppings, occupier of 1,100 acres.
Mr. James Griggs, occupier of 620 acres.
Sir Willoughby Jones, Bart., landowner and magistrate.

From Waterden—
Rev. C. Stephenson, curate.
Mr. Miles Hamond, occupier of 800 acres.
Rev. Alexander Napier, rector.
Thomas Kerslake, Esq., of Barmer, landowner.
H. Blyth, Esq., of Sussex farm, Burnham.
Rev. James Lee Warner, of Thorpe.
Henry Lee Warner, Esq., of Walsingham Abbey.

Earl Spencer in the chair.

Resolutions.

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Proposed by Mr. Seppings and seconded by Mr. Lee Warner:

That the earliest age at which a boy should be allowed to go to labour should be 10 years.

Carried unanimously.

Proposed by Sir Willoughby Jones, Bart., and seconded by Mr. James Everett:

That it is desirable that the education of children before coming to labour should be tested by an examination and authenticated by a certificate.

Carried unanimously.

Proposed by Sir Willoughby Jones and seconded by Rev. A. Napier:

That it is undesirable that education throughout the country should be enforced by compulsory enactment.

Carried, with one dissentient.

Proposed by Archdeacon Hankinson and seconded by Mr. James Everett:

That it is very undesirable to employ young girls in field labour, unless it be under such superintendence as shall be sufficient to protect them from exposure and temptation.

Carried unanimously.

It was the unanimous feeling of the meeting that "it is advantageous that overcrowding in cottages "and other nuisances connected with cottage property should be brought under legal inspection; "and that it is desirable that the present powers for "doing this should be increased."

The meeting feels that the present regulations regarding beershops require revision; and thinks that all houses allowed to sell beer or spirits should be licensed by the magistrates.

Spencer, Chairman.

The subjoined expressions of individual sentiments and opinions were delivered in the course of the discussions upon the foregoing resolutions, which they will help to illustrate.

Mr. James Everett, thought that the labour of children under 10 could be dispensed with. Confirms and agrees with Mr. Vipan's medical opinion (which was read to the meeting). Mistrusts the adequacy of voluntary effort for the suport of schools; thinks Government not liberal enough; feels it his duty, as an employer, to help to educate the young.

[I was informed by Archdeacon Hankinson that Mr. Everett for many years subscribed 10*l.* a year to the school at North Creake. Subsequently, regretted that, owing to some change in circumstances, he was obliged to reduce his subscription to 5*l.*; and now that he has handed his farm over to his son, and ceased to be a resident, he still subscribes two guineas, and hopes to continue to do so.]

Lord Spencer would like to see every man possess the power of raising himself in the social scale, and he cannot do that without a proper amount of education.

Mr. T. J. Seppings (who has been in the habit of conducting the night school at North Creake, and to whose opinion Lord Leicester told me that he attached much weight,) considered that the value of a boy under 10 to the farmer is *nil;* nor are his small earnings really beneficial to the family, even when large. Has taken great interest in educating his own poor. Mentioned the case of a labourer with a family of eight children, not one of whom were earning anything, but were allowed to run wild. He spoke to the mother and advised her to send four of them to school. She pleaded inability to pay the school fee; but upon his offering to pay for two, if the parents would pay for the other two, she consented to send them, and told him afterwards that she found the profit of the advice, and had saved money by following it.

In his youth labour in this neighbourhood was excessive, pauperism common, and the rates high. Now the supply of labour is about adequate to the demand; there are fewer paupers and lower rates.

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A certain amount of emigration from rural parishes is necessary to prevent their being over-run with labour. But a man *must* stop at home, can't push his way in the world, without education ; so that by opposing education you produce a superabundant population, and that leads necessarily to an increase of pauperism.

Mr. Lee Warner, of Walsingham Abbey, a considerable landowner, lives in an open parish with a superabundance of labour, and consequently a reduced rate of wages. This has been brought about by the large charities of the place, amounting to several hundreds a year, attracting the poor into it. Every owner of a small plot of ground builds cottages on it, and gets them occupied immediately. He has himself twice purchased some ground, once at 400*l.*, the other time at 700*l.* an acre, simply to prevent its being converted into building ground and covered with cottages.

Sir Willoughby Jones, Bart., agreed most cordially with the first resolution, but considered that farmers cannot dispense entirely with the labour of young persons. Believes that a child of 10 properly taught will be able to read, write, and cipher. Thinks compulsory education in England simply impossible. Is in favour of requiring a certificate of attainment, no matter how or where produced, before a child should be allowed to become a bread-earner. Thinks the present school system not the best that could be devised ; the daily school hours are too long, three or four hours a day are sufficient. Considers that there is not more than three months' work in the year for young children. Recognizes the responsibility of the employer to maintain proper discipline and efficient superintendence over the children whom he employs. Considers eight hours a day not exhausting labour.

Archdeacon Hankinson thought that with the present imperfect supply of schools the requirement of a certificate of attainment would be impracticable.

Mr. Hamond thinks it enough to provide schools, and let them attract children by their own merits ; would not attach penalties, would leave the agricultural labourer free.

On the subject of the employment of female labour, and especially of the employment of young girls,

Sir W. Jones stated that fully three-fourths of the affiliation orders he had issued as a magistrate have been in the case of domestic servants, and not of agricultural labourers. Thinks it would do much mischief if it were prohibited to employ girls under 16 in the fields. Many are unfit for domestic service, and if not allowed to work on the farm would be driven into the single woman's ward in the union workhouse, the very worst possible place, he supposed, to which they could go.

Archdeacon Hankinson, among the causes of rural immorality, mentioned the mischief of the annual statute hirings.

Mr. Hamond thought that the field labour of young girls is most undesirable. Can himself do without women's work, except in harvest. If farmers get full man's work, they can do without either women or boys. By discouraging young girls' work in the fields, which has always been his practice, he finds that they go out to service ; they won't stay at home doing nothing.

Mr. H. E. Blyth feels that more responsibility rests upon employers than they are generally willing to recognize. They do not inquire closely enough into the character of those whom they employ.

Mr. Seppings for 20 years has never employed a girl under 16, though he employs from 15 to 20 women throughout the year.

Sir W. Jones thought that a better classification of inmates is imperatively required in workhouses. The best plan for a cottage is to have two chambers above and one sleeping room below. The attempt to get all the sleeping rooms above curtails too much the dimensions of each. Is afraid that many of the beer-houses are little better than brothels. So strong is the competition that many houses keep a loose girl as an extra attraction. Would wish to place these houses under stricter police supervision, to restrain the licensing power wholly to the magistrates, and to make all fines personal, and not attach to the house, and in all cases to levy the full amount.

COUNTY OF NORFOLK : UNION OF SWAFFHAM.

No. 45. *Tuesday, September* 24, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Ashill, for

Ashill	Pop., 696	Acr., 21,990	R.V., 4,802*l.*
Saham Toney	Pop., 1,286	Acr., 3,946	R.V., 6,625*l.*
North Pickenham	Pop., 287	Acr., 1,610	R.V., 1,859*l.*
Houghton	Pop. 49	Acr., 601	R.V., 933*l.*
South Pickenham	Pop., 159	Acr., 1,767	R.V., 1,689*l.*
Threxton	Pop., 80	Acr., 1,059	R.V., 880*l.*
Holme Hale	Pop., 464	Acr., 2,598	R.V., 4,457*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Ashill—
- Rev. B. Edwards, rector.
- Mr. Oldfield, owner and occupier of 600 acres.
- Mr. Hart, guardian and churchwarden, occupier of 450 acres.
- Mr. Seed, occupier of 130 acres.
- Mr. Allcock, schoolmaster.

From Saham Toney—
- Rev. W. H. Parker, rector.
- Mr. Clark, churchwarden, guardian, owner, and occupier of 350 acres.

From North Pickenham and Houghton—
- Rev. W. Ewing, rector.

From Holme Hale—
- Rev. A. Milne, rector.
- Mr. Geo. Andrews, occupier of 200 acres.

From South Pickenham—
- E. A. Applewhaite, Esq., landowner and magistrate and churchwarden.
- Rev. J. U. Campbell, rector.

From Threxton :
- Mr. T. Barton, owner, churchwarden, and occupier of 700 acres.

Rev. B. EDWARDS in the chair.

Ashill is an open parish ; the principal owners are Lord Leicester, Lord Ashburton, E. A. Applewhaite, Esq. There is a sufficient supply of labour and of cottages; some are standing empty at this time. The condition of the cottages varies; some are very good, some the contrary. None have large gardens; some have only small gardens; a few have none. Most of the cottagers who have no gardens attached to their houses have allotments. The rent varies from 3*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* A very small proportion of the cottages belong to the large landowners. In the opinion of the rector, there is a sufficient and efficient school, not in connexion with Government, with 112 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 80. The schoolmaster finds the children taken away from school at an earlier age than they used to be, and certainly before he has done with them what he could wish to do. There are two public gangs in the parish, which are the chief causes of the early withdrawal. When they return, if they ever do return, he finds that much they had acquired is lost, they are not so well-mannered nor so attentive.

There has been a night school for the last seven or eight winters ; it has been fairly successful, attended by about 30 scholars, varying in age from 10 to 20. The schoolmaster does not consider that the night school at all adequately compensates for the early withdrawal from the day school.

The total annual cost of the day school is about 70*l.* The school pence amount to 12*l.*; the deficiency is made up by the rector.

In Saham Toney the land belongs to several proprietors, none of whom owns as large an estate as 1,000 acres; most of them are resident. There is a surplus of labour, parishes six or seven miles round draw their supplies from Saham. There are enough cottages, some of which are very good, others as bad as they are anywhere. The rent varies from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* Mr. Hart thinks some of the rents are too high, and that no labourer can afford to pay more than 4*l.* for his cottage. There is a poor allotment (under the Inclosure Act), the rent of which produces from 150 to 180 tons of coal a year. It is administered upon the rule (laid down in the Act of Parliament) that no coal is given either to paupers or to persons occupying a cottage at a higher rent than 4*l.* It is distributed according to the size of the family, and runs about a ton a year to a large family. This fund is found to operate in the way of making people cling to the parish.

The school accommodation is ample for all the wants of the parish. There is an endowed boys' school; the endowment is about 55*l.*, and there is a house and premises. It is free for all boys resident in the parish, six boys from Watton, one or two from Threxton, of which parish the founder was a native. There are at present about 85 names on the register, and from 60 to 65 in average attendance. The rector considers it to be a fairly efficient school.

There are also a girls' school and an infant school, supported almost entirely by the rector, The parish being scattered, there are two or three small dames' schools, which take in younger children; they just learn to read in them, but nothing more.

There has been a night school for the last four or five years, conducted by the curate. There have been about 30 scholars, admitted free.

There are three or four public gangs in the parish, constantly employed throughout year. They sometimes go six or seven miles to their work.

In North Pickenham and Houghton the land is in the hands of five principal owners. There is sufficient labour in North Pickenham, but not enough in Houghton. There are some cottages in North Pickenham standing empty; too many have only one bed room; most of them belong to small proprietors.

There is a mixed school in North Pickenham, which serves for Houghton, and draws a few children from South Pickenham, with 75 names on the register, and an average attendance of 60. It is not connected with Government, the rector has never liked the Government system. It is taught by a mistress, and the diocesan inspector reports favourably of its condition.

There has been a night school for seven winters, taught by the curate, attended last winter by 17 scholars, aged from 10 to 17. The rector finds that little progress is made; from the length of the interval, the scholars come the second winter knowing little more than they knew at the beginning of the first.

The total annual cost of the day school is about 50*l.*, of which about 10*l.* is produced by school pence. The subscriptions amount to 7*l.*, the deficiency is made up by the rector. There is no gang, public or private, in North Pickenham.

In South Pickenham Mr. Applewhaite is the sole landowner. The resident labour is not sufficent, what more is required is imported from Ashill, Great Cressingham, and North Pickenham. There are 27 cottages in the parish, all belonging to the landowner, let at rents varying from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 3*l.* All have gardens, some quite large gardens; almost all the cottagers have allotments besides, about an eighth of an acre in extent, for which a rent is charged of 4*s.* 6*d.* a year.

There is no day school in South Pickenham, the children attend at North Pickenham; the rector hopes to have a night school this winter if he can secure a room.

Holme Hale is an open parish, with two principal and several smaller owners. There is enough labour and a sufficient supply of cottages. The cottages belong principally to small proprietors; are not generally in good condition. All have gardens, and all legally settled resident poor have a claim to an allotment of 20 rods, for which they pay 2*s.* 6*d.* a year. There is a coal fund in the parish, similar to that described in Saham.

There is a mixed school, under an untrained master, not in connexion with Government, with 72 names on the books and 50 in ordinary attendance. The total annual cost is 56*l.*, of which 30*l.* is provided by endowment, 10*l.* by school pence, the balance by voluntary subscriptions.

There was a night school for several winters, with an attendance of 14 or 15, of whom two or three made considerable progress; the rest did not do themselves much good. It was discontinued last winter, in consequence of no very strong desire being expressed for its continuance, but the rector hopes to revive it this winter.

At Threxton the land belongs to two owners. There is not enough resident labour. The farmers draw supplies from Saham, Watton, and Cressingham. Gang labour (from Saham) is occasionally employed.

There are 12 cottages, all of which are good, with good gardens; the rent is about 4*l.* Mr. Barton lets his on a peculiar system, but it does not make any important variation in the amount of the rent.

There is no school in Threxton, the children attend at Little Cressingham or Watton. There has never been a night school, nor a Sunday school.

It is the unanimous opinion of the meeting that the provisions of the Act lately passed for the regulation of agricultural gangs are not more stringent than the circumstances of the case imperatively required, and the majority are of opinion that the same restrictions, at least as far as the separation of the sexes is concerned, which are laid upon the employment of public gangs should be also laid upon the employment of private gangs.

This meeting is also unanimously of opinion that the labour of a boy under 10 years of age is of no value to the farmer, and that it might be prohibited without inconveniencing him in the cultivation of the land, but such prohibition ought not to extend to the seasons of haysell and harvest, and, unless accompanied with a dispensing power, might frequently operate as a hardship in the case of large families.

The employment of young girls in field labour is admitted to be highly undesirable, but it is not thought that it could be absolutely prohibited, as girls who may not be fitted for domestic service should not be prevented from gaining a livelihood in any other honest way.

Women's labour is generally dear labour, in consequence of the women who go out into the fields seldom being the best class of women, and their requiring so much superintendence. But it cannot be entirely dispensed with, as there are several agricultural operations which men would not be found willing to do.

The home of the agricultural labourer is allowed in too many cases to be such that a mixed family cannot be brought up consistently with decency, but great difficulties seem to lie in the way of applying a remedy, and the new cottages which are being built are generally provided with sufficient accommodation. Improvement is taking place, though slowly. It is found that people do not like isolated cottages, and prefer living in the village street, on account of the additional convenience and cheerfulness.

The meeting would wish to see greater strictness exercised in issuing the licences to houses for the sale of beer; they consider such houses to be a very fertile source of evil, but they would feel no objection to the sale of beer at any licensed shop, provided it were not allowed to be consumed on the premises.

Signed on behalf of the meeting,

B. Edwards, Chairman.

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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No. 46. *Wednesday, September 25, 1867.*

Collective Meeting at Great Cressingham, for

Great Cressingham	Pop., 530	Acr., 2,396	R.V., 2,824*l.*
Little Cressingham	Pop., 243	Acr., 1,826	R.V., 2,043*l.*
Hillborough	Pop., 365	Acr., 3,101	R.V., 2,598*l.*
Bodney	Pop., 117	Acr., 2,614	R.V., 1,216*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Great Cressingham—
- Rev. Chas. Taylor, rector.
- Rev. Edwin Tearle, curate.
- Mr. Goulder, churchwarden and occupier of 900 acres.
- Mr. Brunton, overseer, occupier of 47 acres.
- Mr. Eastick, deputy overseer, baker, and occupier of 24 acres.
- Mr. Reuben Conyers, baker and occupier of five acres.
- Mr. Christopher Sutton, gangmaster.

From Little Cressingham—
- J. T. Mills, Esq., landowner, magistrate, and occupier of 500 acres.

From Hillborough—
- Rev. Chas. Hardy, rector.
- Rev. A. W. Cottee, curate.
- Mr. E. Bunting, of Didlington, guardian, churchwarden, overseer, and occupier of 850 acres.

Great Cressingham is an open parish; the land chiefly belongs to two proprietors, besides whom there are seven or eight owners of cottage property. There are about 85 cottages in the parish; the generality are reported to be in a bad condition, both in respect of repair and of accommodation. There are several cases of overcrowding, but fewer than there were 10 years ago, when the population was 50 in excess of its present amount. There is quite enough labour in the parish, indeed it supplies labour to several surrounding close parishes.

There is a mixed parish school, under a master and two mistresses, not in connexion with Government. There are 100 names on the register, and an average attendance of from 75 to 80. A night school has been tried for several winters, but it has never been found possible to carry it on beyond Christmas, owing to the reluctance of the pupils to attend. It has therefore not produced any marked educational results.

In Little Cressingham the land (except the glebe) wholly belongs to Mr. Mills. The supply of labour is about adequate to the demand. All the cottages belong to the landowner. The rent runs from 4*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* There are no allotments, but almost all the cottages have gardens.

There is a school attended by about 35 children, but no night school. The total annual cost of the day school is about 40*l.*

In Hillborough all the land (except the glebe) belongs to Mr. Mills. There is a fair sufficiency of labour, and about 50 cottages over an area of 3,100 acres. The rent the same as at Little Cressingham.

There is a mixed day school, under a master and mistress (man and wife), not in connexion with Government. There are 60 children on the register, and an average attendance of 35. The total annual cost is about 50*l.*, of which about 6*l.* arises from school pence, the rest from voluntary subscriptions. There has been a night school for several years, open from October till May; the attendance begins with about 17, and drops before the close of the season to six or seven. There is no private adventure school.

In Bodney the whole of the land belongs to Lord Ashburton. The population is only 117 to upwards of 2,600 acres, and only 18 cottages; perhaps, however, 500 acres are uncultivated land.

There is a day school, attended by 25 children, taught in a cottage by a middle-aged woman, who receives 7*l.* a year in addition to the school pence and her house.

The cottages in Bodney are all new and excellent, all are said to have three bedrooms; they have large gardens, and are let at two guineas a year rent.

Sutton's gang is the only one in this group of parishes, and though farmers employ women (on Mr. Goulder's farm they are mostly young unmarried women, in age from 18 to 24) and boys, they do not organize them into private gangs.

Sutton's gang now consists of 20 persons, only one boy of 13 years of age (his own son), only one woman over 18, the rest young girls. Sutton would rather not have any boy or girl under 10, they are more trouble than they are worth.

It is the opinion of the meeting that the cultivation of the land could not be properly carried on without the labour of women and children, but that the provisions of the Act recently passed for the regulation of agricultural gangs are proper and desirable, and are not likely to interfere with agricultural operations.

It is the unanimous opinion of the meeting that, if the legislature interferes with the education of the agricultural child at the same time that it prohibits his employment under a certain age by the farmer, it ought to enforce upon the parent the duty of sending the child to school.

It is the opinion of the meeting that in making provision for the better education of such children, it would be better to fix a higher age than that prescribed by the Factory Acts, below which their employment should be prohibited, and when that age was reached to have them free, than to adopt a similar rule to that enforced under the Print Works Act, which, it is thought, would interfere with their profitable employment.

In virtue of this consideration there would be no hardship, as far as the farmer is concerned, in fixing the penal age at 10; but there are cases in which young children are often taken out with their parents for short jobs, in which their labour is very useful, where such restriction, if made absolute, might operate as a hardship on the parents.

It is admitted that if a young girl once goes into a fields to work, she becomes unfitted and disinclined for domestic service; and (with one dissentient, who objected to prohibition on the ground that he did not see how such girls could be maintained,) it was the opinion of the meeting that the field labour of girls under 16 might be prohibited.

It is strongly felt by the meeting that the condition of the homes of agricultural labourers lies at the root of most of the social and moral evils of their position, and that every farm ought to have attached to it a sufficient number of cottages to house the labourers who are required to cultivate it.

CHARLES TAYLOR, Rector of Great Cressingham.
J. TRUEMAN MILLS.
ROBERT GOULDER, Churchwarden.
MATTHEW BRUNTON.
EDWIN BUNTING.
CHARLES HARDY, Rector of Hillborough.
WM. A. COTTEE.
EDWIN TEARLE.

No. 47. *Thursday, September 26, 1867.*

Collective Meeting at Igburgh, for the parishes of

Igburgh	Pop., 192	Acr., 1,599	R.V., 866*l.*
Langford	Pop., 62	Acr., 1,306	R.V., 727*l.*
Didlington	Pop., 80	Acr., 1,854	R.V., 1,178*l.*
Colveston	Pop., 59	Acr., 861	R.V., 417*l.*
Buckenham Tofts	Pop., 60	Acr., 654	R.V., 300*l.*
Stanford	Pop., 200	Acr., 2,607	RV., 1,082*l.*

Present at Meeting:

Capt. Caldwell, of Langford, agent for Lord Ashburton, and occupier of 900 acres.
Rev. J. Wise, vicar of Stanford.

E. Oldfield, Esq., chairman of board of guardians and occupier at Didlington.

Mr. E. Bunting, occupier of 850 acres at Didlington.

Mr. W. Ford, resident at Didlington, and steward for W. H. T. Amherst, Esq., of Didlington.

Mr. James Rollinson, of Igburgh, occupier of 800 acres.

Mr. John Matthews, of Stanford, occupier of 1,000 acres.

Igburgh and Langford form a consolidated parish. The lands belong to Lord Ashburton and Mr. Amherst. The labourers resident in the two parishes are sufficient for the cultivation of the land, except in harvest and hoeing time. At Buckenham Tofts, the whole of which belongs to Lord Ashburton, there are only two resident labourers upon 654 acres.

The cottages in the three parishes are in excellent order, all of them have at least two bedrooms, and the majority have three. Capt. Caldwell states that the cost of a double cottage, built of flint stone, with brick coins, and the timber foreign deal, with two rooms and a pantry on the ground floor, and three bedrooms, is 200*l.* The rent is only two guineas.

There is an excellent schoolroom at Igburgh, which serves for Igburgh, Langford, and Buckenhan, entirely supported by Lord Ashburton; there are 49 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 40.

There are 18 boys in the school, of whom only two are above 10. One of these, aged 14, is the son of a shepherd, who wishes his son to have a good education.

There are three other boys between 8 and 10; boys frequently leave at 8 to go to work in the fields. The experience of the schoolmistress is that the present unsuccessful results of education are due to the irregular attendance of the children and the early age at which they are removed from school. She thinks that if she could keep the boys till 10, and they attended regularly, she could turn them out with an amount of knowledge that they might be likely to retain; she would not be satisfied with their remaining at school only to the age of 9.

There has been a successful night school in the winter, attended by 15 scholars. It was conducted by the curate, assisted by the schoolmistress.

Didlington and Colveston are consolidated parishes. All the land (but 12 acres) belongs to Mr. Amherst, who resides on his estate. The proprietor cultivates about 900 acres; the rest of the land is occupied by two tenants. There is not enough resident labour. In Didlington there are only two cottages occupied by agricultural labourers; in Colveston there are eight cottages (on 860 acres) occupied by labourers. Mr. Bunting, who farms 600 acres in Didlington, has only two resident labourers, and can only command three cottages; he would wish to have the command of seven or eight cottages, and if he could have so many under his control would be willing to pay a per-centage on the outlay. The cottages that exist are in good order, with sufficient accommodation; the rent varies from 2*l.* to 3*l.* 10*s.*, in all cases including a good-sized garden.

These is a good school at Didlington, which also serves for Colveston, attended ordinarily by 25 children (32 names on the register), entirely supported by Mr. Amherst. There has never been a night school in the parish; but the population is under 140. The schoolmistress's salary is 40*l.* a year, with house and coal.

At Stanford the land belongs chiefly to Lord Walsingham; Lord Ashburton owns about 160 acres. With the exception of harvest, there is a sufficiency of labour; there are 26 cottages to about 1,800 acres of cultivated land.

The cottages are generally in fair order; seven or eight have three bedrooms. The rent varies from 2*l.* 6*s.* to 5*l.* They all belong to the landowners.

There is a school, held in a large room in a cottage, under a mistress, with an ordinary attendance of 20. There are no subscriptions; it is maintained by the school pence and the offertory. The total annual cost is about 15*l.*

The vicar has had a night school in his own house, attended by from 12 to 15 scholars. It has worked well with the younger boys, but it is found that the older boys won't stick to their work.

Upon the general questions proposed to the meeting,—

It was the opinion of the gentlemen present (with one dissentient, who wished all labour to be left free and unfettered, and thought all the labourer wanted was a good cottage and power to take his labour where he pleases,) that if any restriction is placed upon the employment of children in the fields, it would be better that it should take the form of prohibiting that employment below a certain age, and then leave the child free, than to fix the penal age, as in the Factory Acts, at eight, and then take securities for the continued education of the children to as late an age as 13. It was thought also that any such restriction should be accompanied with a dispensing power, which should prevent its operating as a hardship on large families. A case was mentioned of a man with six children (five girls and a boy) under 10, in which the boy went to work at 8; and his employer thinks that it was the poverty of the parents that compelled them to send the child to work.

The same gentlemen finds that, except under the pressure of poverty, the people will not send their children to work; for the last three years he has not been able to get either a woman or a young girl to work on his land.

It was the opinion of the meeting that the employment of young girls in the fields is in the highest degree undesirable, but there was a difference of opinion as to whether it should be prohibited by law to as high an age as 16; those who objected to the prohibition grounding their objection on the possible difficulty that would arise in the case of girls who could not get a place or might be unfit for domestic service.

There is perceived to be a growing indisposition on the part of women to work in the fields. Mr. Rollinson has not been able to get a woman to work for him for the last three years; Mr. Matthews does not employ women at all, and thinks it an expensive and troublesome kind of labour. In the present condition of the labour market, in the point of supply and demand, it is thought that women are quite able to proprotect themselves from unsuitable and exhaustive work.

Upon the question of the best tenure of cottages, whether they should be held direct from the landlord or be let with the farms and placed under the control of the tenant, there was a strong difference of opinion, some thinking that in the interest of the labourer, to enable him to retain his proper independence, the first is the best tenure; others thinking that the second arrangement is the one most likely to give its proper value to the farm.

It was the general opinion of the meeting that a cottage ought not to be held on a shorter term than a year; and that the more consideration and sympathy that is shown to the labourer, the better labourer he becomes in the interests of his employer.

It was the opinion of the majority of the meeting (of four to two) that the rent of a cottage built by a landowner for the use of his estate ought not to exceed a shilling a week.

Signed on behalf of the meeting,

F. E. Caldwell,
Chairman.

No. 48. *Friday, September* 27, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Necton, for

Necton - -	Pop., 948 - Acr., 3,799 - R.V., 5,754*l.*
East Bradenham -	Pop., 399 - Acr., 2,329 - R.V., 3,364*l.*

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Rev. J. Fraser.

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West Bradenham	Pop., 387 - Acr., 1,682 - R.V., 2,871*l.*
Sporle and Palgrave	Pop., 806 - Acr., 4,180 - R.V., 6,186*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Necton—
- Rev. W. H. Walker, rector.
- Col. G. Blomefield, landowner and magistrate.
- Mr. W. Blomfield, occupier of 500 acres.
- Mr. John Whistler, occupier of 400 acres.
- Mr. Barlow Giles, guardian and occupier of 150 acres.
- Mr. W. Fowler, bailiff to Col. Blomefield.
- Mr. Rawling Rayner, guardian and occupier of 100 acres.
- Mr. Dewick, schoolmaster.
- Mr. Jesse Larwood, occupier of 40 acres and assistant overseer.
- Mr. Thomas Dunger, occupier of 300 acres.

From East Bradenham—
- Rev. G. R. Winter, rector.
- Mr. Stebbings, occupier of 250 acres.
- Capt. Adlington, landowner and magistrate.

From West Bradenham—
- Gen. Carthew, C.B., tenant of the Hall.

From Sporle—
- Mr. C. Palmer, vice-chairman of the board of guardians, occupier of 1,300 acres.
- Mr. Thomas Wells, churchwarden and occupier of 700 acres.
- George Copeman, Esq., of Little Dunham, landowner.
- Mr. John Whistler, senr., of Fransham, occupier of 200 acres.
- Mr. Frederick John Thomas, medical officer of the district.

The chair was taken by Col. Blomefield.

In Necton, of the 3,800 acres of land, upwards of 3,000 belong to Col. Blomefield, the remainder belongs to several small owners. The labour is sufficient for the cultivation of the land; there are about 170 cottages; the medical officer considers many of them to be in bad condition and to be quite inadequate in point of accommodation for the families that occupy them, but they are improving. About 60 belong to the chief landowner; the remainder to small proprietors. The rent varies from 2*l.* to 5*l.*; there are only two or three cottages at this higher rate. Most of the cottages have gardens varying in extent from 10 to 20 rods; all Col. Blomefield's tenants have allotments too.

There is ample school accommodation—an excellent building was built in 1866, costing 1,500*l.*, at the sole expense of a resident lady in the parish,—with 190 names on the books, and an average attendance of 120. It is not in connexion with Government. There is an endowment of about 100*l.* a year, which, with the children's pence, is more than sufficient for the ordinary expenditure.

For several past years there has been a night school, conducted by the schoolmaster. Last winter there was an attendance of 20. It was not very successful; the young men did not seem to appreciate it.

In East Bradenham there are three principal owners, two of whom are now resident. There is a sufficiency of labour, and of cottages. The majority of the cottages do not belong to the principal landowners. There are 60 cottages, and, with one or two exceptions, there is not much overcrowding. The rent varies from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*, and would average 3*l.* 10*s.*

Most have good gardens (about 20 rods), and there is a parish allotment.

There is a mixed day school under a mistress, not in connexion with Government (the managers preferring to be independent), which the rector considers quite sufficient for its purpose. There are between 50 and 60 on the books, and an average attendance of about 45. The total annual cost is between 30*l.* and 40*l.*; the school pence amount to 10*l*; the balance is made up by voluntary subscriptions.

There has been a night school conducted by the rector for six or seven years. The rector can obtain no assistance in carrying it on. There was an average attendance of 12 last winter; the elder scholars made some progress; the younger ones showed little interest.

In West Bradenham there are two large proprietors, who are non-resident. There is a sufficiency of labour for the wants of the parish, and of cottages. Some cottages are now vacant. They belong chiefly to small proprietors, and with some exceptions are in fair condition. The rent is much the same as at East Bradenham.

There is a good school in the parish, in a commodious building recently erected with help from Government, under a mistress, with 51 names on the books, and 35 in average attendance. The vicar had a night school at his own house last winter, attended by a few young men.

In Sporle the land belongs to three principal owners, of whom only one is resident. St. Katherine's Hospital in London owns three farms, or in the whole about 2,100 acres. At busy times there is not a sufficiency of labour in the parish; it is imported from Necton and Swaffham. There are about 160 cottages; more than a dozen are now empty. Mr. Thomas (the medical officer) reports them to be in good repair, but with insufficient accommodation for families. A large proportion of them have only one bedroom. They let at rents varying from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* 4*s.* The higher rent is determined chiefly by the size of the garden. The cottages are partly clustered into a street and partly scattered over the whole area of the parish.

There is a day school, held in a moderate building erected about 20 years ago, under a mistress, not in connexion with Government. The mistress is paid 40*l.* a year. There is an endowment of 10 acres of very good land, which lets for about 30*l.* a year. The voluntary subscriptions amount to about 10*l.* The vicar has conducted a night school; it is reported, with fair success.

It was the unanimous feeling of the meeting that it would be better, in the interests of the employers of labour, to fix an age below which it should be prohibited to employ child labour, and then to leave it free, than to take a lower age at which the child might go to labour, such labour to be interrupted by requirements to attend school up to a higher age.

With regard to the age that it would be desirable to fix, 11 were in favour of nine years, and four in favour of 10. The opinion of the majority was determined by consideration of the hardships that the higher age might inflict upon large families, where the maintenance of the children is a matter of difficulty, rather than by any opinion that a sufficient education can be given to a child by that age. Several gentlemen also thought that there was a scarcity of labour at present in the district, and that undue restriction upon child labour would interfere with the cultivation of the land. They would prefer, therefore, that the experiment should start at nine years; and that if found to work successfully, the age might perhaps be raised to 10.

It is the unanimous opinion of the meeting that female labour on the land cannot be wholly dispensed with; but it was also thought that the employment of young unmarried girls is in the highest degree undesirable and ought in every way to be discouraged; but the meeting was not prepared to recommend any restriction upon such employment in respect of age, by reason of the difficulties that such restriction would place, in many cases, upon the maintenance of such girls. They might be unfit for service, yet they could not be allowed to starve; and worse results than accompany their employment might follow from their remaining unemployed at home.

It was the opinion of the meeting that the clause in the Nuisances Removal Act providing against the overcrowding of cottages, which is felt to be a great and pressing source of physical, moral, and social evil, needs to be made more distinct and imperative—at present the interpretation which the Swaffham board of guardians are advised to put upon the clause, and upon which they are acting, is, that it only applies to overcrowding in cottages which are used as lodging houses; and it is highly desirable that the systematic inspection of cottages should be part of the functions of some authorized officer, and that the number of their inmates should be limited in a certain ratio to the amount of their accommodation.

G. Blomefield, J. P., &c. &c.
Chairman.

No. 49. *Monday, September* 30, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Oxburgh, for

Oxburgh	Pop., 225	Acr., 2,519	R.V., 2,903*l.*
Foulden	Pop., 517	Acr., 3,394	R.V., 3,208*l.*
Gooderstone	Pop., 570	Acr., 2,785	R.V., 3,188*l.*
Caldecote	Pop., 39	Acr., 673	R.V., 336*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Oxburgh—
- Rev. Alex. Thurtell, rector.
- Mr. Ambrose Pryer, guardian, churchwarden, and occupier of 500 acres.
- Mr. Pryer Bennett, churchwarden, overseer, and occupier of 400 acres.
- Mr. Andrew Palmer, schoolmaster.
- Mr. Thomas Curties, occupier of 400 acres.
- Mr. Jacob Boyce, occupier of 50 acres and overseer.

From Foulden—
- E. Oldfield, Esq., chairman of board of guardians.
- Rev. Henry Laing curate.
- Mr. John Baker, occupier of 20 acres.

From Gooderstone—
- Mr. Charles Brooks, churchwarden, owner and occupier of 700 acres.
- Mr. James Brooks, churchwarden, owner and occupier of 260 acres.
- Mr. Edward Hodgkinson, surveyor and occupier of 230 acres.
- Mr. Wm. Ford, guardian, owner and occupier of 220 acres.
- Mr. William Carter, occupier of 240 acres.
- Mr. Walter Oldfield, overseer and occupier of 800 acres.

From Caldecote—
- Mr. Henry Oldfield, churchwarden, guardian, and occupier of 1,300 acres.
- Rev. S. Churchill, rector of Boughton and guardian (Downham union).

The chair was taken by Rev. Alex. Thurtell.

In Oxburgh, except the glebe, all the land belongs to Sir Henry Bedingfield, who is resident. The supply of labour is hardly equal to the demand. There is a deficiency of cottages; many have been pulled down. When the rector came here 19 years ago there were about 50 cottages; there are now only 38. It is thought that 50 cottages are required for housing the people who cultivate the land, which extends over 2,500 acres. The cottages have been considerably improved of late, and some new ones have been recently built, roomy, with three bedrooms. The rent ranges from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* They have gardens of about 20 rods.

There is a good day school, under a fairly efficient master, with 54 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 37. The school is adequately supported by an endowment arising from land. The whole cost is about 50*l.* per annum. The school is free, but the schoolmaster does not perceive that that makes any difference in the attendance of the children.

There is also a Roman Catholic day school. On the register, 50; in average attendance, 40.

There has been a night school for 15 years, conducted by the schoolmaster. It was attended last winter by 18 scholars, but has hardly been as successful for the last two or three years as it used to be. The master's experience is that the night school does not carry on the scholars to a point beyond that at which they left the day school, but it helps to prevent their knowledge from evaporating. The night school is perfectly free.

In Foulden the land belongs to three chief proprietors. There is an ample supply of labour and cottages. The condition of the cottages generally is satisfactory, but there are some not fit to live in, which it is hoped may be condemned. The rent of the cottages ranges from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, or a little over.

There is a national school, under a mistress, with 82 names on the books, and an ordinary attendance of between 50 and 60. There is an endowment of 5*l.* (to educate 12 children free); the school pence amount to 15*l.*; the annual cost is about 55*l.*

There has been a night school for the last six winters, taught by the curate, the clerk, and a village carpenter. It was attended by 18 scholars last winter; the elder ones made fair progress, but the younger ones were troublesome. It is considered to have been a useful instrument in the parish.

Gooderstone is an open parish. There are three or four principal and several small owners. The cottages belong chiefly to small owners. The greater part are reported to be in good condition, but there are also several bad ones. There are some standing empty. If everybody living in Gooderstone worked in Gooderstone there would be a considerable surplus of labour. There are men living in Gooderstone who walk five miles a day to their work.

There is a National school, held in a good room, built in 1845, supported by school pence and voluntary subscriptions. The funds are low; the mistress's salary cannot exceed 20*l.* The ordinary attendance is about 40. Some Roman Catholic children attend the school at Oxburgh.

The night school was discontinued last winter, partly owing to a deficiency of funds, and partly to a change of mistress. It is hoped that it will be revived this winter. Mr. Ford has promised to pay for the schooling of any of the workpeople whom he employs.

At Caldecote there is no church, and the children attend school at Oxburgh. There is not a sufficiency either of resident labour or of cottages. The land belongs to Sir Henry Bedingfield, and the whole parish is only part of a single farm. The effect of the change of the law of settlement has been in this parish that Mr. Henry Oldfield under the old system paid 1*l.* a quarter in rates, and now he pays 9*l.* a quarter. The poor rate for the union last year was 2*s.* in the pound.

On the light lands in this part of the union two cottages to the hundred acres would be an ample supply. On a farm of 800 acres in the parish of Gooderstone, occupied by Mr. Walter Oldfield, there is only one double cottage, and the labourers come 2½ miles to their work; and the consequence is that Mr. Oldfield gets an inferior class of labourers.

At Gooderstone there is a public gang, varying in number according to the season from 12 to 30, but there is no private gang employed in the four parishes.

It was the unanimous feeling of the meeting that, as farmers, they could do without the labour of boys under 10 years of age, but cases were mentioned which sufficiently showed that an absolute prohibition of such labour would operate as an exceeding hardship upon large families. Mr. James Brook instanced a labourer of his own, earning 13*s.* a week, with six children, the eldest (a boy) a month over 10, the next a boy of eight. These two boys earn nearly 10*l.* in the year, and the man says that if this labour were

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prohibited, he could not maintain his family. The Rev. Henry Laing, of Foulden, found upon inquiry that similar feelings prevailed among the large families in his parish. It was the hope, therefore, of the meeting that if any restrictive legislation takes place on this subject, it would be accompanied by some dispensing power which would provide for such cases, which would otherwise become cases of hardship. It was the opinion, however, of the employers of labour present that the evil was being gradually corrected by moral and natural influences; that the employment of young children is growing more rare; that kindlier feelings are prevailing between employers and employed; that parents are beginning to set a higher value on education; that the schools generally are adequate to the work they have to do, though not always adequately supported; that the present generation possess much more learning than their fathers; and they therefore question the desirableness of legislative interference at all.

The labour of girls is not required before they are 12 years of age, and the employment of young unmarried girls is unanimously allowed to be most undesirable, and is a thing which all the employers of labour present wish to discourage; but they are not prepared to recommend its absolute prohibition, inasmuch as girls who could not get situations in domestic service must be allowed to maintain themselves.

There is observed to be a diminution in the number of women employed in farm work, and those who undertake it are found to be generally able to protect themselves. It was the unanimous opinion of the employers that women should not be employed with thrashing machines; but there is no other kind of work upon which they are employed which is considered unsuitable for them.

The cottage of every labouring man with a family ought not to contain less than three sleeping rooms; the rent ought not to exceed 4*l.*; the cottages ought to go with the farms, and in number to be in proportion to the acreage of the farm. An efficient inspection, which would prevent the evil of overcrowding, would be very desirable, if practicable.

ALEXANDER THURTELL, Chairman.
(On behalf of the meeting.)

No. 50. *Wednesday, October* 2, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Beechamwell, for

Beechamwell	Pop., 356	Acr., 2,995	R.V., 2,339*l.*
Shingham	Pop., 62	Acr., 975	R.V., 399*l.*
Cockley Cley	Pop., 263	Acr., 4,012	R.V., 1,867*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Beechamwell—
- Rev. John Holley, curate in charge.
- Rev. H. Dugmore, tenant of the Hall.
- Mr. Jas. Chambers, churchwarden and occupier of 1,400 acres.
- Mr. John Chambers.
- Mr. Wm. Smith, occupier of 60 acres.

From Shingham—
- Mr. John Newman, churchwarden, guardian, and occupier of 900 acres.

From Cockley Cley—
- Rev. S. C. Campbell, rector.
- T. R. Buckworth, Esq., landowner and magistrate.
- Rev. S. G. Read, rector of Barton St. Mary's.
- Mr. George Read, occupier of 900 acres in Barton.
- Rev. W. Blyth, rural dean, rector of Fincham.
- Rev. C. W. Sidney, rector of Gooderstone.

The chair was taken by Mr. BUCKWORTH.

The land in Bechamwell belongs to one proprietor, who is non-resident. There is about a sufficient supply of resident labour and of cottages; at least 20 cottages have been built within the last 10 years, and there has been an increase of 50 in the population since 1851. This is in consequence of the cultivation of a rabbit warren of some 2,200 acres. The cottages, especially the new ones, are in good order; the new ones have three bedrooms; the rent varies from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 3*l.* All have good gardens; some are held from the tenants, but the greater number from the landlord.

There is a school which serves for Beechamwell and Shingham, not in connexion with Government (owing to the scantiness of funds), with about 46 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 35. The mistress's salary is 30*l.*, the annual subscriptions amount to 21*l.*

The land in Shingham (except the glebe) belongs to the same proprietor as Beechamwell. There is only one farm in the parish, which contains about 1,100 acres. The land is chiefly sand, with chalk lying very near the surface. It is a capital sheepwalk. There is a deficiency of cottages; a good double cottage is now in process of erection, each tenement to have three bedrooms. The older cottages are of a bad description, dilapidated, and many of them overcrowded. They are built of clay lump. The rent is the same as at Beechamwell, though the cottages and gardens are both inferior.

There was a night school for Beechamwell and Shingham last winter, with 25 scholars. It was not very successful, and some of the pupils were disorderly. It was managed by Mr. and Mrs. Holley, assisted by two or three volunteers.

In Cockley Cley the greater part of the land belongs to Mr. Buckworth; Sir H. Bedingfield, Bart., owns 300 acres. There is quite enough labour, and a sufficiency of cottages. The rent varies from 2*l.* to 3*l.* They are held on a fortnightly tenure from the landlord.

There is a school in Cockley Cley, with 50 names on the books, and an average attendance of 40. It is under a mistress, who is paid 35*l.*, with a house. The pence amount to about 8*l.*; the remaining expenses are made up by the landowner.

The rector has had a few boys and youths (from 10 to 14) at his house in the evening during the winter months; with some of the pupils he has had a satisfactory measure of success.

It is the opinion of the meeting that it would not interfere prejudicially with the cultivation of the land if it were prohibited to employ a child under 10 years of age, but it was thought that this prohibition would not operate with due effect in favour of education, unless security were at the same time taken that such children were sent to school. One gentleman present considered that if this security took the form of requiring a certificate of having passed an examination, a boy who succeeded in passing the examination at an earlier age than 10, ought to be allowed to go to work and add to the earnings of the family.

It is further the opinion of the meeting that the employment of women, and especially of young girls, in the fields is not desirable, though in the present state of the labour supply it cannot always be dispensed with. But there is perceived to be a growing disinclination in some parishes on the part of women to work in the fields. Mr. Buckworth farms 1,500 acres in Cockley Cley without employing a single woman or girl, even in harvest, though he occasionally has a gang from Swaffham to do his weeding and single mangolds.

The meeting, however, is not prepared to recommend that any prohibition should be placed by law upon the employment of females in the fields, though they would desire that such employment should be so far regulated as to bring it under proper supervision, and to prevent the intermixture of the sexes.

All the new cottages that are built by the landowners in this neighbourhood are improvements upon the old cottages, and the operation of the change in the law of settlement is certain to operate in a favourable direction, both as regards the improvement of the cottages and their distribution. The meeting would desire

that no cottage occupied by a mixed family should contain less than three bedrooms.

Signed in behalf of the meeting,
T. R. BUCKWORTH, Chairman.

No. 51. *Thursday, October* 3, 1867.

Meeting at Narborough, for

Narborough	- Pop., 387	- Acr., 3,376	- R.V., 3,320*l.*
Narford	- Pop., 123	- Acr., 2,377	- R.V., 1,375*l.*
Newton	- Pop., 84	- Acr., 1,062	- R.V., 1,485*l.*
Southacre	- Pop., 92	- Acr., 2,292	- R.V., 2,365*l.*

Present at the Meeting:

From Narborough—
Rev. W. E. Allfree, vicar.
Mr. James Fuller, occupier of 320 acres.
Mr. Joseph Cross, occupier of 85 acres.
Mr. Wm. Petch, clerk to Messrs. Marriott, merchants.
Mr. George Heyhoe, occupier of 170 acres.
From Narford—
Mr. Jacob Finch, occupier of 1,500 acres.
Mr. Richard Sorby, occupier of 300 acres.
From Southacre—
Mr. W. B. Clark, churchwarden, overseer, and occupier of 1,030 acres.

The chair was taken by the REV. W. E. ALLFREE, vicar of Narborough.

The land in Narborough belongs to four principal and several small proprietors. The employers present consider that there is not a sufficient supply of labour resident in the parish to work the land. There are a bone mill, a flour mill, several malthouses, and a large coalyard in the parish, which employ a considerable number of hands.

There are about 60 cottages in the parish, belonging chiefly to the landowners. The condition of the majority is reported to be good, very superior to most parishes, but there are six or seven inferior ones. The cottages are not well distributed in relation to the farms, nor are the farms adequately supplied with cottages. One farm of 800 acres has only two cottages; another of 320 acres has only two also, and in one of these, which has no upper story, and only two rooms on the ground floor, each only 7 ft. by 10 ft. in size, there were 13 people lodging during the late harvest.

There is a parochial day school, not in connexion with Government, hitherto under a mistress, but on the point of being placed under a master, with 70 names on the register and an ordinary attendance of 55. It serves for the united parishes of Narborough and Narford. Some of the children have to travel two miles to school. The total annual cost hitherto has been about 30*l.*, but it is likely to be doubled under the new organization. The school pence have amounted to 18*l.* or 20*l.*; there is an endowment of about 3*l.*, the rest is made up by annual subscriptions.

There has been a night school, attended by about 20, conducted by the vicar and churchwarden. It was fairly successful, and the young men were found desirous to avail themselves of the opportunity.

All the land in Narford, except about 30 acres, belongs to Andrew Fountaine, Esq., who is resident. There is a deficiency of labour and of cottages. About a dozen labourers are constantly imported from neighbouring parishes. The cottages all belong to the landowner, and are in good order; they are regularly inspected by his agent, and there is seldom a case of overcrowding. The rent is 3*l.*, including a quarter of an acre of land. With the exception of three, which go with Mr. Finch's farm, they are all held direct from the landlord.

In Southacre all the land belongs to Mr. Fountaine. There is at present a deficiency of resident labour and of cottages. There are about 2,000 acres of cultivated land, and only 13 cottages, 12 of which are occupied by agricultural labourers. The deficiency of labour is made up from the parish of Castleacre, an open parish about three-quarters of a mile distant. The rent of the cottages is about two guineas, including good gardens.

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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The day school at Castleacre admits children from Southacre and Newton.

Mr. Fountaine is also the chief proprietor in Newton; Lord Leicester and Mr. Martin also own land there. Newton, like Southacre, has partly to depend for its supply of labour upon Castleacre. The condition of the cottages in respect of accommodation is reported by the relieving officer to be bad. There are several cases of overcrowding.

Public gangs are employed in these parishes, and Mr. Finch has on his occupation about eight or ten women and girls who do their work under the superintendence of an elderly labourer.

In the opinion of the meeting there would be no hardship, as far as the farmer is concerned, in prohibiting the employment of a child in field labour under the age of 10 (except in the seasons of haysell and harvest). It is thought that such prohibition would sufficiently allow for the education of such boys, and would operate far more successfully than requirements of attendance at school concurrently with employment in work. It would be the business of the legislature to see that such restriction, if enforced, should be so regulated as to prevent its bearing too hardly upon large families. Such prohibition also ought to be accompanied with provisions which should have the effect of securing the attendance of such children at school.

It is the opinion of the meeting that the employment of young girls and women in the fields ought to be placed under proper supervision; but the employers present stated distinctly as the result of their experience that the best superintendence of a gang of women is exercised by a respectable elderly man. A woman can neither direct their labour nor control their tongues.

It is very strongly felt by this meeting that the condition of the home of the agricultural labourer lies at the root of the influences affecting his social condition. There are not enough cottages in many parishes, and most cottages are deficient in accommodation. No cottage occupied by a mixed family ought to have less than three bedrooms. The insufficiency of cottages also affects their tenure. If a farmer has only two or three cottages at his command, a tenant on yearly tenure might occasion him very considerable inconvenience; otherwise the ordinary weekly tenure does not give sufficient protection to the labourer. It is the general custom in this part of Norfolk to hire the yardman, the team man, the shepherd, and the bailiff by the year; other labourers are hired by the day, but the statute hirings are dying out, and are little more now than pleasure fairs. It is the decided opinion of the meeting that houses licensed to sell beer should be closed on Sundays, except in the case of *bonâ fide* travellers.

Signed on behalf of the meeting,
WILL. EDW. ALLFREE, Chairman.

No. 52. *Friday, October* 4, 1867.

Meeting at Swaffham, for the parish of

Swaffham - Pop., 3,558 - Acr., 7,550 - R.V., 14,632*l.*

Present at the Meeting:

Rev. Salisbury Everard, vicar.
Rev. John Howard, curate.
Rev. C. V. Summer, resident magistrate.
Rev. B. Houchen, chaplain to the Swaffham union house and gaol.
Mr. C. Palmer, vice-chairman of board of guardians.
Mr. Finch, occupier and merchant.
Mr. E. Reeve, surgeon.
Mr. Jas. Balling, occupier of 300 acres.

Norfolk,
Rev. J. Fraser.
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Mr. George Clarke, occupier of 600 acres.
Mr. Thos. Lindsey, grocer and draper, and proprietor of 180 acres.
Mr. Wm. Pheasant, national schoolmaster.
Mr. T. Withers, occupier of 800 acres.
Mr. Durrant Dutchman, occupier of 600 acres.
Rev. T. H. Blome, vicar of Castleacre.
Mr. B. Marriott, medical officer of the union.
Mr. Wm. Gould, bookseller.
Mr. C. Southall, bank manager.
Mr. James Fuller, occupier of 120 acres.

The chair was taken by Rev. Salisbury Everard, vicar of the parish.

Swaffham is a market town, containing about 3,800 inhabitants. There are three large proprietors (Mr. Hamond, Mr. Fountaine, Mr. Wayland), and several smaller owners. It is purely an agricultural town; the area of the parish is about 7,500 acres. The population is clustered chiefly into the town; there are not above 25 outlying cottages out of a whole number of 500. The supply of labour is adequate to the ordinary demand, but some of the employers present find a deficiency in harvest time. The bulk of the cottages belong to small proprietors; the medical officer reports that many of them are deficient in proper bedroom accommodation. The rent varies from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 6*l.*; the tenure differs, some are held by the week, others by the quarter, others (and these the majority) by the year. There is a general deficiency in the gardens. There are about 40 allotments of 20 rods each. The people are very eager to possess them. The rent is 4*s.* 6*d.*

There are National boys' and girls' schools, and a large infant school, wholly supported by pence and subscriptions. The total annual cost of the boys' and and girls' schools is about 160*l.*; of the infant school, about 60*l.* The school pence of the boys' and girls' schools amounted last year to 33*l.*, subscriptions and collection after sermon to 60*l.*

There are several private adventure dames' schools.

The rule of the National boys' and girls' school (not of the infant school) is that the children who attend it are also required to attend school and church on Sundays.

There has been a night school for several winters, conducted by the schoolmaster assisted by volunteers. Last winter there were 70 names on the books; the greatest number present any one night was 53; the ordinary attendance, 26. With the regular attendants it was as successful as could be expected. The older scholars profited most by the opportunity. One scholar of 24 years of age who came knowing nothing of reading, writing, or ciphering, in the course of a single winter had advanced sufficiently to pass the Government examination in Standard I. in writing and ciphering, though he failed in reading.

There are 114 boys and 90 girls on the register of the day school, with an average attendance of 72 boys and 50 girls. The attendance of boys is half as good again in the winter as in the summer, in consequence of boys who had been withdrawn for summer work returning to school. It is very rare that a labourer's son stays at school till 10; they mostly leave at 8. The latter often come back for three months' schooling in the winter. It is a very uncommon case for a boy of 11 to so return. The greater number leave before they reach the first class; in consequence of irregular attendance, they can rarely be presented for examination higher than the second standard.

The schoolmaster thinks that in the interest of education he would rather have a boy constantly at school for four years, from 6 to 10, and believes he could do more for him, than if he were taken away at eight, and only returned for three or four months' schooling during the winter, even to the age of 13.

Mr. Everard fears that by neither method would any permanent results be secured.

The general failure of education is considered to lie in the want of proper control and discipline exercised over children by their parents.

The meeting feel that it is desirable, both in the interests of education and on other grounds, to limit the age below which children should go to field work.

The Factory Acts place this limit at 8; the meeting would be content to see it raised to 10, and then leave the employment of such children free, as they consider that both the half-day and the alternate whole day systems are impracticable in agriculture, and in the case of large families the maintenance of children beyond the age of 10 would be a matter of considerable difficulty. Indeed, in some cases great difficulty would be experienced by parents in sending their children to school even to the age of 10, and in legislating on this subject the circumstances of such parents ought not to be lost sight of.

It is further the opinion of the meeting that nothing would be gained, but, on the contrary, much would be lost, by merely prohibiting children from labour unless at the same time security were taken that they should attend school. Thriftless improvident parents are so numerous that they require some strong motive to induce them to send their children to school.

It is the unanimous feeling of the meeting that the employment of young girls in the fields is in the highest degree objectionable. The meeting would even desire to see it prohibited under the age of 16, when the parent ceases to be liable for her maintenance, were it not that in some parishes, where, owing to a deficiency of cottages, there is an inadequate supply of labour, the cultivation of the land would often be seriously interfered with but for the employment of female labour. Where girls are unable to get into domestic service, or unfitted for it, a licence might be granted enabling such girls to gain their livelihood by working in the fields.

The condition of the cottages is considered to be one of the most important influences affecting the social condition of the agricultural poor. The bedroom accommodation is too often insufficient, and the freedom with which the tenant admits lodgers aggravates the evil. Something in the nature of a systematic inspection of cottages, limiting the number of their inmates to their power of accommodation, is thought to be the only adequate remedy for the evil.

The meeting would desire to see the power of licensing houses for the sale of beer reserved to the magistrates; such licence only to be granted upon a certificate of good character, and to be withdrawn if the house becomes disorderly. The number of beer-houses in Swaffham is far in excess of the legitimate requirements of the place.

The gentlemen present would also desire to see houses for the sale of beer closed on the Sunday, except in the case of *bonâ fide* travellers.

Signed in behalf of the meeting,

Salisbury Everard, Chairman.

County of Essex: Halstead Union.

No. 53. *Monday, October* 14, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Halstead, for

Halstead	- Pop., 6,917	- Acr., 5,039	- R.V.,	20,402*l.*
Gosfield	- Pop., 620	- Acr., 3,000	- R.V.,	4,897*l.*
Pebmarsh	- Pop., 653	- Acr., 2,024	- R.V.,	3,379*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Halstead—

Sam. Courtauld, Esq., landowner and manufacturer.
John R. Vaizey, Esq., magistrate, lord of the manor, landowner, and occupier of 300 acres.
E. Hornor, Esq., magistrate, owner, and occupier.
J. T. Adams, Esq., resident gentlemen.
— Cardinal, Esq., solicitor and guardian.
R. E. Greenwood, Esq., landowner and occupier of 160 acres.
Mr. John Blomfield, occupier of 280 acres and member of board of health.
Dr. Borham, medical practitioner.

Rev. E. N. Stott, curate in charge of St. Andrew's.
Rev. J. Gleaves, assistant curate.
Rev. D. Fraser, incumbent of Holy Trinity Church and rural dean.
Rev. W. H. Gough, curate.
Rev. J. Kew, curate of St. James, Greenstead Green.
Mr. John Bunn, relieving officer.
Mr. Thomas Ray, miller and occupier of 140 acres.
Mr. Joseph Everitt, baker.
Mr. R. C. Hughes, postmaster.
Duncan Sinclair, Esq., practising surgeon, and medical officer of the union.
Mr. Haiden, occupier of 200 acres.
Mr. John Sudbury, owner of houses and occupier of 150 acres.
Mr. G. D. Green, occupier of 250 acres and butcher.
Mr. Henry Candler, baker and member of Board of Health.

From Gosfield—
Mr. A. Ferguson, steward to S. Courtauld, Esq.
Mr. John Savill, occupier of 470 acres.
Mr. Walter Whitlock, occupier of 300 acres.
Rev. S. W. Dowell, vicar.

From Pebmarsh—
Hon. and Rev. E. H. Grimston, rector.

Samuel Courtauld, Esq. was invited to take the chair.

Halstead is an open parish; the principal proprietors are J. R. Vaizey, Esq., B. Sparrow, Esq., and Mrs. Honywood. The population is about 7,000; the acreage rather over 5,000. There is a sufficient supply of agricultural labour in the parish; in the town itself the poor are crying out for more cottages. A large proportion of the population are employed in manufactures. The condition of the cottages varies; some are very good, others very bad. There are some very bad cases of overcrowding. The rent ranges from 1*s.* to 2*s.* a week. All the outlying cottages have gardens, but the greater proportion of those in the town have only little strips. There are about 50 acres of allotment, divided into lots of from 20 to 40 rods a-piece, letting at from 6*d.* to 9*d.* and 1*s.* a rod.

There are three sets of National schools attached to the three churches, a large British school, and a mixed school in one of the suburbs supported by Mr. Hornor.

There are three night schools for males connected with the three churches, and a mixed night school attached to Mr. Courtauld's factory. Mr. Fraser has also a female night school. Altogether the parish is abundantly supplied with the means of education.

In Gosfield the land chiefly belongs to Mr. Courtauld and Mr. Sparrow; there are also about half a dozen small proprietors of land or cottages. There is scarcely enough resident labour, and an insufficient supply of cottages. Many of the labourers reside in Halstead, and some in Hedingham, and some of them have to come three miles to their work. The cottages belonging to Mr. Courtauld are, many of them, newly erected and in good condition, and have three bedrooms with separate entrances, and two of the three with fire-places. Other cottages are indifferent, and some miserably bad, "not fit for human habitation," and in the opinion of Dr. Borham, who is acquainted with them, a prolific source of rheumatism, followed in many cases by consumption. The rent of the new cottages is from 1*s.* 4*d.* to 1*s.* 9*d.*, with from 16 to 25 rods of garden. There are allotments of from 25 to 30 rods, which let at from 4*d.* to 6*d.* per rod, according to the quality of the land.

There are two day schools in the parish, one connected with the church, the other, supported by Mr, Courtauld. non-denominational in its character. The ordinary attendance at the former is 35, at the latter. 80. The church school is fairly supported at an annual cost of about 40*l.*; the vicar, however, feels it somewhat a heavy burden. The yearly cost of Mr. Courtauld's is upwards of 100*l.* Neither school is in connexion with Government.

Mr. Courtauld also supports a night school for males and females, attended by from 25 to 30 scholars. Gosfield, therefore, is amply provided with the means of education.

The land in Pebmarsh belongs to three or four principal owners. There are about 2,800 acres. There is a sufficiency of resident labour, and and adequate supply of cottages. There is generally sufficient chamber accommodation, and Mr. Grimston thinks that most of them have three chambers. The rent is about 1*s.* 6*d.* a week; those that have not gardens have allotments, for which they pay 6*d.* a rod.

There is a day school, connected with the church, but not with the Government, under the rector's management, taught by a mistress, with 50 names on the register, and an attendance of about 40. The total annual cost is about 45*l.*, of which the children's pence produce 7*l.* There is an endowment of 7*l.* 15*s.*; the rest is made up by voluntary subscriptions contributed by the lady of the manor, the rector, and the farmers. The rector considers the school as efficient as he would wish it to be.

There has been a night school for several past winters, attended by about 20, mostly young men. It has been conducted entirely by the schoolmistress, a married woman of 35, with the assistance of another female. They have had no difficulty in maintaining order. The chief attraction that draws the young men to the school is the desire to write.

The farming of this part of Essex is chiefly arable; the soil is variable, but principally a stiff loam; some very poor, some very good. The poor land lets at from 15*s.* to 25*s.*, the better at from 25*s.* to 2*l.* The smaller occupations are the higher rented.

Female labour is scarcely known in the district, not even in haymaking or harvest; but they occasionally do a little stone picking, and also drop wheat at sowing time; they also pick the hops grown in the district and the peas that are grown for the early spring London market. Women mostly employ themselves in their homes in straw plaiting and slop work. When the trade is good a good hand would earn from 4*s.* to 5*s.* a week clear profit; at the present moment there is an utter deadness in the straw-plait trade, and no profits are to be made. In consequence for the last few weeks women in several parishes, both married and single, have sought work in the fields, where they would earn from 8*d.* to 1*s.* a day. But female labour is not required here in the fields, and it is discouraged. Male labour is considered cheaper and better.

Boy labour is largely used in the district; but the relieving officer does not know of a case of a boy being employed under 8. On Mr. Courtauld's occupation of 700 acres there are employed only one boy under 11, one between 12 and 13, and three between 13 and 14. Their work in spring would be to tend sheep and prepare food for cattle, always under superintendence; in summer and autumn, tending stock, and leading horses in haymaking and harvest; and in winter still tending stock. There would be no slack time in the year of which advantage could be taken to send such boys to school. But in this part of Essex they are not wanted on the land very young. Mr. Savill, who farms 470 acres, employs no women (except at a rare job of stone picking, and then for the surveyor of the roads), and has only three boys under 16, aged 11, 13, and 15 respectively.

The present rate of wages round Halstead is 11*s.* a week for the ordinary labourer, and 12*s.* to 13*s.* for the horsemen and shepherds. A twelvemonth ago, the ordinary wage was 10*s.*, and a year before that 9*s.* Mr. Blomfield remembers the time when it was only 7*s.*

The harvest is paid for sometimes at per acre (this year at 13*s.* per acre), sometimes for the job. The man would earn either way from 6*l.* 15*s.* to 7*l.* for the month. The task work is chiefly hoeing turnips and

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wheat, turning manure, thrashing by the flail (when done). It is the opinion of the employers present that an able-bodied man working regularly and not hindered by weather, including his task work, earns at the rate of 12*s.* a week, *plus* his harvest; and therefore under such circumstances his total earnings would be from 35*l.* to 36*l.* The steady able-bodied labourer is hardly ever out of work, but of course there are a number of unsteady or unhandy men who only get occasional employment and whose earnings therefore must be considerably below this mark.

A boy of 10 would earn about 6*d.* a day; of 12, 8*d.*; of 14, 9*d.* or 1*s.*, according to his qualifications.

The cottages in the district are constructed either of brick, or of lath and plaster; some of clay daub. Each mode of construction produces a good cottage; the lath and plaster cottages are warm and more comfortable than those with thin 9-inch brick walls.

An institution which used to prevail in the district, and still exists, though dying out, is the braiding school, kept by a dame as a private adventure, to which the children bring their straw and are taught to plait it, diversifying their work with a reading lesson two or three times a day. The charge is from 1½*d.* to 2*d.* a week.

It is the unanimous opinion of this meeting that the present educational condition of the agricultural labourer in this district is unsatisfactory. But in order to improve it, it was not considered that the principles of the Factory Acts could be applied to agricultural labour, with which they would seriously interfere. The meeting would wish to see an age fixed below which a boy should not be employed in field labour at all; but when gone to work, to allow him to work freely throughout the year. A majority of nine were in favour of fixing this age at 10; a minority of four would have preferred raising it to 11.

[At this period of the meeting Mr. Courtauld was compelled by an engagement to leave the chair, which was taken by Mr. Hornor.]

It is, however, the opinion of the meeting that but little advantage would be gained to education by merely fixing a limit of age below which children should be prohibited from working, unless security were at the same time taken for the regular attendance of such children at school. But the meeting would wish to leave it to the wisdom of Parliament to devise that form of compulsion, whether direct or indirect, which should best secure the end in view.

The meeting consider that the employment of women, and particularly of young unmarried girls, in the fields is highly undesirable, and in this district it is neither required nor known.

It is unanimously felt that some independent surveillance of cottages is absolutely required to prevent the numerous instances of overcrowding which now exist; and it was suggested that an annual return of all the cottages of their district might be prepared by the overseers of each parish and regularly sent to an officer independent of local influences appointed to receive it, and empowered, in case of need, to take action upon it.

The meeting would also desire to see a much stricter supervision exercised over houses licensed to sell beer, which at present are felt to be fruitful sources of poverty and crime, and to be one of the most demoralizing influences that affect the condition of the working man.

Signed on behalf of the meeting by
EDWARD HORNOR, Chairman.

No. 54. *Tuesday, October* 15, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Castle Hedingham, for

Castle Hedingham - -	Pop., 1,203 - Acr., 2,500 - R.V., 5,459*l.*
Sible Hedingham - -	Pop., 2,123 - Acr., 5,289 - R.V., 9,655*l.*
Great Maplestead - -	Pop., 462 - Acr., 1,940 - R.V., 3,292*l.*
Little Maplestead - -	Pop., 325 - Acr., 1,000 - R.V., 1,701*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Castle Hedingham—
- Rev. H. Wilkinson, incumbent.
- Rev. S. Steer, congregationalist minister.
- Mr. John Stubbing, guardian, surveyor, and occupier of 200 acres.
- Lewis Majendie, Esq., magistrate and landowner.

From Sible Hedingham—
- Rev. Thomas Naish, curate.
- Mr. Thomas Ely, churchwarden, occupier of 100 acres, corn mills, and malthouses.
- Mr. Timothy Maver, overseer and resident gentleman.
- Mr. Thomas Rayner, occupier of 500 acres.
- Mr. George Goodchild, guardian, owner and joint occupier of 1,200 acres, resident at Great Yeldham.
- Mr. G. Goodchild, jun.

From Great Maplestead—
- Rev. E. S. Corrie, vicar.
- Mr. Henry Myhill, churchwarden, guardian, and overseer and occupier of 250 acres.

The chair was taken by MR. MAJENDIE.

In Castle Hedingham three-fourths of the land belong to Lewis Ashurst Majendie, Esq., the remainder to five or six other proprietors. The acreage is about 2,400 acres. There is just about enough resident labour; there is employment for able-bodied men throughout the year. There are enough cottages, but they have not sufficient accommodation for their inmates, and there are many instances of overcrowding. A reason alleged for better cottages not being built is that much of the land is copyhold, and speculators have not been inclined to build on that tenure, while the late landowner, just deceased, was more inclined to pull down than to build. Some old buildings have been converted into cottages, but no new cottage on a fresh site has been built within the memory of any gentleman present. Many of the existing cottages are in bad condition, both as regards repairs and accommodation; in fact, there are very few with accommodation sufficient for the families that inhabit them. About half belong to small proprietors. The rent varies from 2*l.* 12*s.* to 4*l.*; most are held on a yearly tenure, with six months' notice. Generally speaking, the cottages are not let with the farm, but are held direct from the owner. Mr. Stubbing, who rents under Mr. Majendie, has one cottage at his command; but he believes that that is the only cottage on that estate let with the farms. There are about 10 acres of allotments.

There is a parochial school, the building vested in the lord of the manor (who is also lay rector), the incumbent, and churchwardens; not in connexion with Government; under an untrained mistress; about 110 names on the books, and an average attendance of 80; supported at a total annual cost of 60*l.*, of which 25*l.* comes from school pence, 2*l.* 10*s.* from Betton's Charity, and the remainder from voluntary subscriptions. The incumbent considers that the school is sufficient for the wants of the parish. There is also a private adventure school attended by from 20 to 25 girls; and another under a certificated master, attended by about 20 boys—a kind of lower middle school.

A night school has been held for five winters, taught by this certificated master, assisted by the incumbent and other occasional volunteers. Last winter it was attended on the average by 36 scholars, mostly lads of from 10 to 17 years of age; the attendance was not very regular, to which fact the incumbent attributes the only partial success of the school.

In Sible Hedingham there are over 5,000 acres of

land; the largest proprietor owns about 800; there is a great number of small proprietors; almost every occupation has a different owner. Many of the occupations are very small. There is sufficient resident labour, but none to spare; all the able-bodied men that are worth anything can get employment throughout the year. Many of the labourers leave the parish in the summer to work in the eastern hundreds of the county, where labourers are scarce and wages are higher.

The cottage accommodation generally is very unsatisfactory; "Some of them are deplorable; the "only wonder is how they stand." There are about 350 cottages, of which not more than 20 can be called good. There are a great many large families in the parish, and consequently a great many cases of overcrowding. The cottages belong to a great number of small proprietors, who do not seem to think anything about improving them; substantial repairs are seldom attempted. The rent ranges from 2*l.* 12*s.* to 4*l.* There are a good many cottages in the street which have no gardens. There is abundance of water in the parish, but many cottages have neither pump nor well, and the people have long distances to go to get their supply. There are 102 allotments in the parish.

There is a National school, unconnected with Government, under an untrained master and two mistresses, with 113 names on the register and an average attendance of 75. The total annual cost is about 100*l.* It is becoming more efficient than it was, but still is not what it should be. It is built in a bad situation, three miles from some parts of the parish, consequently there are many children in outlying parts of the parish who do not attend school at all. One side of the parish, containing about 400 people, is entirely destitute of the means of education.

The Sunday school is very effective, and there has been a night school, but speaking from the experience of three winters, the clergyman considers it to have been a failure. Last winter there were only six scholars. The distance the scholars had to come was the chief cause of the failure.

There is a good private adventure school, attended by 15 or 16 children; and there are five or six plaiting schools. Not more than three of the five teach reading, and then only for about an hour a day, and that often with great irregularity. There are not believed to be 150 children in the parish under efficient education.

In Great Maplestead the land is chiefly arable, and belongs to three principal and three smaller proprietors. The population is 440, the acreage 2,000. There is enough labour, but more cottages are wanted. The landlords have pulled down cottages without building others in their room. Young people who want to marry can't find homes. There are a few very bad cottages; but, speaking generally, there is not much cause for complaint. Rent from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* At present there is a deficiency of allotment ground, and some of the cottages have no garden.

There is a National school in an admirable building, erected five years ago by a benevolent lady, and presented to the parish. It is connected with Government and taught by a certificated mistress, who receives 45*l.* and a house. There are 58 children on the register, and an average attendance of 35. The attendance is most irregular, the parish being very scattered. The school is thoroughly adequate to the wants of the parish, if it were more regularly attended.

There has been a night school for several winters, taught by the clergyman and a paid assistant. Last year there were 14 scholars regularly attending; the year before the attendance was 20. Mr. Corrie considers that it has had a good effect, and is satisfied with its results on the whole.

Wages in these parishes are 10*s.* a week at present. They generally fall 1*s.* a week in the winter. There is, however, a good deal of piece work done by the best men.

The meeting felt that the condition of the agricultural labourer in respect of education is not what they would desire it should be. There was, however, a great difference of opinion as to the best mode of improving it.

Six gentlemen present were in favour of leaving things just as they are, as far as compulsion is concerned, which they considered, if applied, would inflict hardship on large families, though they would wish to see good schools placed within the reach of every family, of which parents could avail themselves for their children at their pleasure. Six other gentlemen considered that an age should be fixed below which a child should be prohibited from working in the fields.

[At this point of the meeting Mr. Majendie was called away by an engagement, and the chair was taken by Mr. Wilkinson.]

On the supposition that restrictive legislation takes place, there was a further difference of opinion; some gentlemen would prefer that the prohibited age were fixed at eight (as in the Factory Acts), and security taken for further education during a portion of the year up to the age of 12; others thought the better plan would be to fix the age below which children should not be allowed to work at 10, (two gentlemen would wish to see it raised to 11), and to leave their further education to the will and power of their parents. Two gentlemen declined expressing an opinion on the point, and considered that the settlement of it had better be left to the wisdom of the legislature.

The meeting, however, felt that nothing would be gained to education by merely fixing a limit of age below which children should not be allowed to work, unless security were taken that during the prohibited period such children attended school.

It is a rare thing in this district to employ women in the fields, even in harvest; there is a sufficiency of adult male labour without them. Most of the women and girls are employed in straw plaiting, which is an idle, gossiping form of work, and in the case of girls is found to have a very demoralizing effect upon family order, and really to make the parents subject to their children.

But the root of the evils that affect the condition of the agricultural labourer lies in the state of his home; and it is thought that little will be done for the permanent improvement, either physically or morally, of that condition, till the possibility of the overcrowding which now exists to so lamentable an extent is removed. The periodical inspection of cottages by an officer independent of local influences, if practicable, would be very desirable.

The opinion of the meeting was very strongly expressed on the subject of beerhouses. Two inspectors of the county police who were present testified to the evils arising from this source, particularly from the permission now so freely granted to open a house for the sale of beer not consumed on the premises; and the meeting generally felt that the beerhouses are "the curse of the country," and a powerful agent in demoralizing and pauperizing the labouring man. In Sible Hedingham, with a population of 2,100, there are 17 houses for the sale of beer; in Castle Hedingham, with 1,200 inhabitants, there are 13. The meeting hope that the attention of the legislature will be directed to the lessening of this great and growing evil.

Signed in behalf of the meeting,

HENRY WILKINSON,
Chairman.

[N.B.—There was no one present to represent Little Maplestead, a parish with a population of 325 and without a school.

The police inspectors, one of whom had been in the force 25 years, testified to a decrease in *drunkenness*, though they thought there is still a good deal of drinking; so that there is an improvement in the manners, if not in the morals, of rural society in this neighbourhood.]

Essex.

Rev. J. Fraser.

a.

No. 55. *Wednesday, October* 16, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Great Yeldham, for

Great Yeldham	Pop., 696	Acr., 1,550	R.V., 3,287*l.*
Little Yeldham	Pop., 307	Acr., 850	R.V., 1,397*l.*
Ridgwell - -	Pop., 715	Acr., 1,600	R.V., 3,090*l.*
Tilbury - -	Pop., 232	Acr., 850	R.V., 1,474*l.*
Stambourne -	Pop., 537	Acr., 1,500	R.V., 2,801*l.*
Toppesfield -	Pop., 1,045	Acr., 2,800	R.V., 5,057*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Great Yeldham—
- Mr. F. Whitlock, guardian, churchwarden, and occupier of 800 acres.
- Mr. James Scotcher, churchwarden, woolstapler, and occupier of 20 acres.
- Mr. Samuel Ray, occupier of 270 acres.
- Mr. Wm. Playle, surveyor and assessor, occupier of 84 acres.
- Mr. Thomas Goodchild, representative of an occupier of 300 acres.
- Mr. Daniel Bartrup, labourer and parish clerk.
- Mr. Edward Fentiman, master of the endowed school.
- Mr. John Sefton, overseer and occupier of 30 acres.
- Mr. Edmund Hardy, bricklayer.
- Miss M. Hopkins, schoolmistress.
- Mr. W. Ince, surveyor.

From Little Yeldham—
- Rev. John Gaselee, rector and rural dean.
- Mr. Alfred Smith, guardian, churchwarden, and occupier of 320 acres.
- Mr. John Angel, bailiff on a farm of 96 acres.

From Ridgwell—
- Rev. F. T. Hurst, vicar.

From Tilbury—
- Lewis John Way, Esq., magistrate, landowner, and occupier of 270 acres.
- Rev. C. J. Fisher, rector.

From Stambourne—
- Rev. J. Forster, rector.
- Mr. Wm. Ruffle, landowner and occupier of 130 acres.

From Toppesfield—
- Mr. Robert Hutton, guardian and owner and occupier of 1,000 acres.
- Mr. Charles Golding, surveyor, owner and occupier of 140 acres.

The chair was taken by the Rev. John Gaselee.

The land in Great Yeldham belongs to several owners. There is a sufficient supply of resident labour. There is a fair supply of cottages, about 100 in number, two or three are vacant. They are scattered over the parish and lie conveniently to the farms. They have been improved of late years, but there is still a want of sufficient bedroom accommodation. The older cottages are of clay daub; the new ones chiefly of brick. Mr. Whitlock has recently built two single cottages of brick, the one thatched, the other tiled, with a keeping room, kitchen, and pantry on the ground floor, and three chambers above, at a cost of 70*l.* and 85*l.* respectively. He lets them, with 20 rods of garden ground on weekly tenure at a rent of 1*s.* 6*d.* a week in the summer and 1*s.* 3*d.* a week in the winter. In the summer the tenant has his garden produce to help him to pay his rent, and likes a variable rent better than a fixed one.

The gardens generally attached to the cottages are not very large, varying from 10 to 20 rods. Some have no gardens. There are a few allotments let at from 4*d.* to 6*d.* per rod. The rent of the cottages varies from 2*l.* 5*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* A few where there is a good garden, rise as high as 5*l.*

There is an endowed free school for 10 free boys nominated by trustees at their option. The master is allowed to take other boys on his own account. The annual value of the endowment is about 70*l.* a year. Fifty years ago it was the only school in the neighbourhood, and when Mr. Whitlock was a scholar there it had upwards of 70 boys. The master believes that the number of free boys is at the discretion of the trustees. The free boys at present are the sons of tradesmen, &c., and the school is treated as a middle school, and for the benefit of the district.

There is also a parochial school, supported by voluntary subscriptions, held in a building the property of the rector, under a mistress, an ex-pupil teacher, with 55 names on the register and an ordinary attendance of 40.

There are one or two straw plaiting schools in the parish, and the parents are found to prefer them, on the ground that the children can earn something. The children are allowed to bring their own plait to the parochial school three afternoons in the week, but there is no one to give them instruction in the art.

There has been a night school twice a week in the winter, conducted by the rector with the assistance of two volunteers. It was not very successful, and it was not held last winter.

In Little Yeldham the land belongs to various owners. There is enough resident labour. The cottages are in fair repair, but very few, if any, have three bedrooms, and many have only one. They mostly belong to the owners of the land. The rent 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* They have small gardens, but there are no allotments.

There is a parochial school built with Government assistance, but not receiving annual grants, under a mistress, an ex-pupil teacher, with 45 children on the books, and an ordinary attendance of 35. The rector considers it fully adequate to the wants of the parish, but there is a difficulty in keeping the children sufficiently long in attendance. The straw plait interferes with education more than field labour.

There is a plaiting school in which the children are taught to read as well as to plait. Plaiting is allowed in the parochial school in the afternoons.

The rector has had a night school, conducted by members of his own family and the schoolmistress. The attendance has been about 10, and the scholars have made fair progress.

In Tilbury there are three or four landowners, and five farms. There is enough labour. There are about 30 cottages, generally in fair order, but only a few with three bedrooms. Rent from 2*l.* and 3*l.* to 4*l.* Most have no gardens; but there are allotments let separately. The cottages are collected into two chief clusters.

There is a parochial school, receiving annual aid from Government, under a mistress, attended by 30 or 35 children in the summer, and not more than 12 or 15 in the winter.

There has been a night school for the last six winters, conducted by the rector and his curate, attended by about eight scholars on the average.

The total annual cost of the day school in 35*l.*

In Ridgwell the land is in the hands of several proprietors; St. John's College, Cambridge, being the principal, owning 350 acres out of 1,720. There is a large population in proportion to the acreage. Years ago the men used to plait as well as the women, but now they are wholly employed on the land. Some of them migrate in the summer in search of work; and others are employed in the adjoining parishes.

The cottages vary in condition, the older ones are in bad order; the recently erected ones are fair. The latter have more bedroom accommodation, and some have three chambers. The rent is from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* The older ones have not good gardens. They chiefly belong, not to the large landowners, but to independent proprietors owning small parcels of land. They are let mostly on yearly tenure; but in several cases there has been a change to weekly tenure, owing to the greater certainty of obtaining the rent, and the vicar thinks that the weekly tenure is likely to predominate.

There is a school, receiving annual aid, under a

certificated mistress, supported at an annual cost of about 45*l.* There are 75 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 65. The cottages are clustered round a green, and are favourably placed in relation to the school.

There has been a night school for several winters, conducted by the vicar and his pupils (when he has had them). Attended by about 15, mostly biggish lads. The vicar thinks it has been fairly successful. Those who attended did so regularly, and took great pains.

The prevalence of straw plaiting is considered to be the greatest interference with education in this parish.

In Stambourne, there are a great many owners, chiefly small, not many of them occupying their own land. The acreage is about 1,800 acres. There is a sufficiency of labour, and a sufficiency of employment. The cottages want more bedrooms, but are generally in tolerable repair. The rent is 40*s.*, 60*s.* and 80*s.*, varying according to size of cottage and of garden. There are a few allotments, let at 4*d.* per rod.

There is a day school, not in connexion with Government, under an untrained mistress, with 30 children on the books, and an ordinary attendance of 22 to 25. Poverty, want of clothing, and straw-plaiting operate unfavourably on the school attendance. The parish is sequestered, and the cottages lie far away from the school, and the parents do not take an interest in the education of their children. The plaiting schools are full. The rector offered to introduce plaiting into the school, and went round to every cottage to announce his intention, but there was no addition to the number of scholars in consequence. Mr. Ruffle and Mr. Hutton believe that many of the parents also object to their children being taught in a church school. Dissent has been long seated in Stambourne, and there is an endowed meeting house.

The rector has had a night school for four winters out of the last five. He began with 40 scholars and dwindled to 10. The school was free, but scholars could not be induced to attend. The rector had no assistance in teaching.

A night school is maintained in connexion with the meeting house, two or three nights a week, both winter and summer, but no one present could give particulars respecting it.

In Toppesfield the land is divided among several owners, of whom Messrs. H. Sperling and S. Sampson are the principal. There are about 3,500 acres of land. There is a sufficiency of resident labour; there used to be a surplus. In the winter there may be a few unemployed, who mostly emigrate elsewhere during the summer. There have been several new cottages recently erected, very good, but many of them in outlying parts of the parish are inferior, though not worse than in other parishes. The rent ranges from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* There are about eight acres of allotment let in parcels of 40 rods at 4*d.* a rod. The property is a bequest to the church, and the rent is spent on the repairs of the fabric. There is no church rate in consequence.

There is a day school both for boys and girls, connected with Government, attended in the summer by about 100 children. No one could give accurate information about it. Straw plaiting is not allowed in this school, which has the effect of diminishing the attendance.

There is a night school every winter conducted by the master of the day school, attended on the average by 20 or 30 scholars.

The ordinary wage at present of the able-bodied day labourer in this district is 10*s.* Horsemen, stockmen, and shepherds would receive 12*s.* The harvest is got in at per acre. This year the price was 12*s.* per acre, including everything, which would average to the man about 5*s.* a day.

There is very little employment of women in this district, nor of girls either; though when the plaiting trade is bad, a few women are glad to take field labour. There is a considerable employment of boys; and there is said to be always a job for them if they like to come after it. Mr. Whitlock would take them at as early an age as five, and he considers that a boy taken to work at five would be worth twice as much when he is 12 as a boy not taken to work before 10.

It was carried by a majority of 11 votes to seven that it is not desirable to limit by restrictive legislation the age at which children should be allowed to go to work on the land.

If a restriction is placed upon age, ten gentlemen were in favour of the limit being placed at 10, under the idea that the child is afterwards to be free. One gentleman would wish the limit to be fixed at eight, the remainder of the meeting declined voting.

The employment of young children in the plaiting schools is considered by the meeting to be very mischievous physically as well as educationally. There are sometimes 40 to 50 children collected in a small cottage-room, crowded as thickly as they can sit; and they would be working in this close atmosphere for from six to eight hours a day. On physical grounds there ought to be some legislative interference to prevent overcrowding in schools of this kind.

The meeting is unanimous in thinking that the source of greatest evil, as regards the condition of country villages is the multiplication of houses for the sale of beer. The number of them is felt to be far in excess of the legitimate wants of the community, and the number of respectable houses is decreasing in consequence of the competition with houses of a lower class.

The straw plait is also found to have a very mischievous effect upon the condition of the women employed in it. It indisposes them for domestic service; they acquire no housewifely knowledge, and rapidly become independent of parental control.

Signed on behalf of the meeting,

JOHN GASELEE, Chairman.

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56. *Thursday, Oct.* 17, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Earl's Colne, for

Earl's Colne	Pop., 1,540	Acr., 2,996	R.V. 5,900*l.*
Colne Engaine	Pop., 627	Acr., 2,400	R.V. 4,262*l.*
White Colne	Pop., 400	Acr., 1,350	R.V. 2,459*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Earl's Colne,
- Rev. J. B. Carwardine, lord of the manor and landowner.
- Rev. S. Blackall, vicar.
- Mr. O. Barnard, churchwarden, occupier of 2,300 acres.
- Mr. W. Matthews, landowner and occupier of 200 acres.
- Mr. W. Woodward, occupier of 160 acres and landowner.
- Mr. John Taylor, medical officer.
- Mr. Harris Hills, occupier of 180 acres and landowner.
- Mr. N. Stutter, guardian, owner, and occupier of 330 acres.
- Mr. R. B. Pudney, occupier of 45 acres.
- Mr. James A. Tawell, tradesman.
- Rev. H. Hall, curate.
- Mr. Joseph Monk, assistant overseer and parish clerk.
- Mr. Mantle, schoolmaster.

From Colne Engaine—
- Rev. W. Webster, rector.
- R. Hills, Esq., magistrate and landowner.
- Mr. E. J. Mayhew, owner and occupier of 250 acres.
- Mr. John Firmin, churchwarden, owner and occupier of 360 acres.
- Mr. Francis Sewell, owner and occupier of 120 acres.

Essex.

Rev. J. Fraser.

a.

G. D. Vaizey, Esq., magistrate, owner and occupier of 700 acres.

From White Colne—

Rev. Geo. Taylor, incumbent.

Rev. Arthur Hanbury, rector of Bures, Suffolk.

It was voted that the Rev. Samuel Blackall should take the chair.

[To consult the convenience of several gentlemen present at the meeting, the general questions were proposed first, and the particular facts of each parish gathered afterwards.]

In this district women and girls are scarcely ever employed on the land, except in the season of hay-making. They occupy themselves either in straw plait or net embroidery. This non-employment of girls and women leads to a somewhat larger employment of boys, who do what in other counties would be women's work.

Though the labour of boys under nine is frequently of use in many agricultural operations, the employers present would be prepared, in virtue of higher considerations, to dispense with boys' labour up to that age, but they would object to the restriction being raised to 10; and the restriction even to the age of 9, it was feared, if made absolute, would operate with great hardship upon parents with large families.

If the legislature should think proper to take the same age as is fixed in the Factory Acts, viz. 8, below which children are to be prohibited from field labour, and should desire to make provision for the education of such children beyond that age, of the various modes applied under the different Acts directed to this object, the meeting would prefer that which would require a certain amount of school attendance during the previous year as a condition of such employment, the period of that attendance to be left to the option of the parent and to be capable of adaptation to the agricultural necessities of the district. Or instead of a period of school attendance, a certificate of a certain amount of proficiency, tested by examination, might be taken as attaining the desired end, which would allow of the education being given either at a night school or in the parents' own home. But though the meeting suggest this plan, they cannot disguise their fear that in working, it would be found to be surrounded by very serious practical difficulties.

It was the opinion of a large majority of the meeting that inasmuch as any restrictions of this kind presuppose the existence of an efficient school in every parish, some relaxation of the present rules governing the distribution of the Government grant is certainly required in order to bring that grant more within the reach of rural parishes, and they would wish the merits of each school to be tested by, and rewarded for, simply its results.

The condition of cottages generally is felt to be highly unsatisfactory both on moral and on sanitary grounds, and the meeting would be glad to see the introduction of more effective inspection than exists at present, in order to prevent the evil of overcrowding and to secure proper sanitary arrangements.

There was a unanimous feeling that the greatest pest in a rural parish is the beer-house; that these houses abound far in excess of the actual wants of the neighbourhood; that they are under no sufficient restriction or inspection, and that the licences for opening such houses are granted with far too great facility.

The three Colnes are all of them open parishes. There is a sufficient supply of resident labour. Very few men are out of employ, even in the winter. A few years ago there was a deficiency of labour, but several men who then emigrated have since returned. The women are almost exclusively employed in straw-plait and tambour-work.

There is a sufficient supply of cottages, but very few have more than two bedrooms. The rent ranges from between 1*s.* to 2*s.* a week. The tenure is generally by the year, with three months' notice. Most of the cottages have gardens, and there are allotments in Earl's Colne and White Colne. In Colne Engaine, where there are no allotments, the gardens are proportionately larger. The daily wage is raised this week to 12*s.* The harvest would bring a man in from 6*l.* to 7*l.* The gentlemen present paid for this last harvest 10*s.* 6*d.* an acre, allowing 10 acres to a man, with three bushels of malt and three lbs. of hops.

There are schools in all the parishes; in Earl's Colne, in particular, there are five schools, one of them an endowed grammar school, and great interest has been taken in the education of the people. In White Colne there is a British school, with an average attendance of 65, which is supplied with scholars from several surrounding parishes.

Signed in behalf of the meeting by

SAMUEL BLACKALL, Vicar of Earl's Colne.

COUNTY OF ESSEX: WITHAM UNION.

No. 57. *Tuesday, October* 22, 1867.

Collective meeting at Witham for

Witham	Pop. 3,455	Acr., 3,633	R.V., 13,840*l.*
Great Braxted	Pop. 384	Acr., 2,631	R.V., 3,788*l.*
Little Braxted	Pop. 111	Acr., 563	R.V., 878*l.*
Fairstead	Pop. 351	Acr., 1,853	R.V., 2,709*l.*
Faulkbourn	Pop. 143	Acr., 1,115	R.V., 2,060*l.*
Terling	Pop. 902	Acr., 3,206	R.V., 5,244*l.*
Rivenhall	Pop. 445	Acr., 3,557	R.V., 6,343*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Witham—

Lieut.-Col. Shakespear, R.A., magistrate.

Captain Savill, resident gentleman.

Rev. H. Litchworth, curate.

A. G. Proctor, Esq., medical officer of the district.

Mr. T. Beadel, chairman of board of guardians.

Rev. J. Dewsnap, Congregationalist minister.

Mr. Carrington Wilson, ironmonger.

Mr. R. S. Cheek, librarian.

Mr. Joseph Foster, of Blunt's Hall, occupier of 500 acres.

Mr. William Butler, grocer and occupier of 40 acres.

Rev. John Bramston, vicar, magistrate, and rural dean.

Rev. J. Finch Smith, curate.

J. Howell Blood, Esq., solicitor and clerk to the board of guardians.

From Great Braxsted—

Rev H. Calthrop, rector.

From Little Braxsted—

Rev. B. S. Clarke, rector.

From Fairstead—

Rev. R. Marsh White, rector.

Mr. R. Balls, guardian, churchwarden, owner and occupier of 300 acres.

From Faulkbourn—

Rev. F. Spurrell, rector.

From Terling—

No representative.

From Rivenhall—

Rev. J. Barton, curate.

The chair was taken by COLONEL SHAKESPEAR.

The land in Witham (about 3,600 acres) belongs to about half-a-dozen chief proprietors. Till within the last two years there has been a sufficiency of labour, but now there is scarcely an adequate supply. For some few years past there has been an emigration chiefly of the young men in search of more remunerative employment in London and elsewhere. In the cottages, where the families are large, the medical officer considers the accommodation to be insufficient. The rent of cottages outside the town is about 4*l.* a year; inside, or nearer to, the town, it rises as high as 5*l.*, the rates being paid by the owner. There are

at least 20 acres of allotments in the parish, which are let at from 6*d.* to 1*s.* per rod. Wages of the able-bodied labourers are raised this week from 12*s.* to 13*s.*, with an unlimited supply of small beer (a bushel of malt to a hogshead of water). The men would prefer the beer allowance to an extra 1*s.* a week. A man this year made from 6*l.* 10*s.* to 7*l.* (exclusive of his allowance of beer) by his harvest. It was set at 13*s.* 6*d.* per acre. When the beer was compounded for, it was either reckoned at three bushels of malt and three lbs. of hops, or at 4*s.* in the 1*l.* on the earnings. It is a rare thing to find young unmarried girls employed in the agriculture of this district; they either go out to service or find employment at home, and the farmers do not encourage them to work on the land. In fact, there is very little employment of female labour in the neighbourhood, and in the parish of Witham there is hardly any such employment at all. Within the last 10 years peas have been largely grown in this district for the London market, and during the four weeks that the season lasts women and children are employed to pick them. The payment is 1*s.* a bag of 2½ bushels, and a woman with a couple of active children would earn 4*s.* to 5*s.* a day. The work is very exhausting in many cases. The pickers will occasionally travel five or six miles to their work, starting at 4 o'clock in the morning and not returning till 8 or 9 at night. In some cases they do not even return at night, but sleep in a barn contiguous to their field of labour. They are not employed by the farmer, but by the man who buys the peas.

The straw-plait has nearly died out in this district, and though a little slop-making remains, even that is getting superseded by the sewing-machine.

A woman when employed in field labour works from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., including an hour for dinner, and would be paid 9*d.* or 10*d.* a day. 4*d.* a day would be the lowest rate of wage for a boy between 10 and 12 years of age. Boys under 10 are rarely employed, and are not considered to be of much value for general purposes. At the board of guardians the chairman never knew an objection taken to a boy, in the case of a family receiving out-door relief, stopping at home till the age of 10.

This general description of the agricultural condition of the district applies without much variation to all the parishes represented at the meeting. The variations are, that in some of them rather more female labour is employed in spring and summer, and that more when wages are low than when they are high. The rent also in some of the parishes is lower. In Great Braxted the cottages belonging to Mr. Du Cane are let at 1*s.* a week; at Fairstead the average rent is 3*l.* 10*s.* or 3*l.* 15*s.*, with a good garden.

In Great Braxted the land chiefly belongs to C. Du Cane, Esq., M.P. There is scarcely enough resident labour, nor sufficient cottages. The cottages are in fair condition, though rarely with more than two bedrooms. There is a good school in connexion with Government; the only voluntary subscribers are the squire and the rector; the total yearly cost is about 45*l.*, and it is attended by about 40 children. In Little Braxted the land belongs to one principal owner. There is hardly enough resident labour. The cottages are not in good condition. There is a school under diocesan inspection, but not connected with Government, attended by about 28 children. There is an endowment of 5*l.*, and the voluntary subscriptions amount to about 20*l.*

In both the Braxteds the night school is at present in abeyance, owing to the difficulty of finding a competent teacher.

[At this point Colonel Shakespear was obliged to leave, and the chair was taken by Rev. H. Calthrop.]

In Fairstead Lord Rayleigh is the largest proprietor. Generally there is a sufficiency of labour. The cottages are in pretty good condition, but the rector and the medical officer doubt if there is one with three bedrooms. There is both a day and night school in Fairstead, not in connexion with Government, held in a large room in a cottage, attended by from 40 to 50 children; taught by a mistress at a total annual cost of about 30*l.* The night school is taught by the rector, with the aid of the schoolmistress.

In Faulkbourn the two chief proprietors are Mr. Bullock and Mr. Du Cane. There is not enough labour, and more cottages are required. The existing cottages are hardly in good condition, though some have three bedrooms.

There is a day school in a separate building erected for the purpose, not connected with the Government, owing to the smallness of the population. The resident landowner, the rector, and the farmers all subscribe to the school, which costs about 28*l.* in the year. The rector tried a night school for one year, but gave it up for several reasons; he could get no teaching help; it was a mile distant from his house, and the results were not sufficiently encouraging.

In Terling the land chiefly belongs to Lord Rayleigh. There is a sufficient supply of labour except in the summer months. The cottages are not "very "grand."* There is a good school, but not in connexion with the Government. It is entirely supported by Lord Rayleigh, and is taught by an excellent schoolmaster. The diocesan inspector considers it to be a thoroughly efficient school. There is also a night school.

It is the unanimous opinion of the meeting that the labour of a boy under 10 upon the land is of no value to the farmer. As far as the employer is concerned, therefore, there would be no hardship in prohibiting the employment of such children, if only a dispensing power could be provided to accompany the prohibition, and to prevent its inflicting hardship upon large families.

If legislation is to take place with a view to the improvement of the education of the child of the agricultural labourer, the meeting would desire to see an age fixed beyond which the labour of the child should not be interfered with, rather than apply to his case what are deemed, in the case of agriculture, to be the unsuitable regulations of the Factory, or the Printworks', or the Workshops' Regulation Acts.

Upon the further question how best to secure the attendance at school of children during the prohibited age, there was a considerable difference of opinion. Some gentlemen would prefer the motive of reward; others objected to the idea of rewarding parents for doing no more than their duty. Another suggestion was that children should not be allowed to go to labour even when they had reached the permitted age, unless they could produce a certificate of attainment, provided that the restriction from labour was not extended beyond two more years. Other gentlemen thought that the mere prohibition to labour would act as a sufficient motive on the parents to send their children to school, and would be sorry to introduce the principle either of reward or punishment, or of compulsion, whether direct or indirect, into the system at all.

It has been already stated that women are not largely employed in the agriculture of this district, but the meeting would not desire to see such labour prohibited, and consider that the women generally are fully able to protect themselves. It is believed that field labour, for a moderate number of hours and in suitable kinds of work, is rather healthful than mischievous to the female constitution. It is the unanimous desire of the meeting to see the employment of young unmarried girls in the fields discouraged in every possible way.

The meeting quite feel the importance, both in a physical and a moral point of view, of providing the

* NOTE.—The condition of Terling, in respect of sanitary arrangements, has received a painful illustration since the date of this meeting, in the terrible outbreak of typhoid fever, originating, it is believed, in the poisonous matter which had been allowed to penetrate from the cesspools into the walls, which attacked upwards of 250, and carried off in a few weeks about 35, persons, out of a population of 900.

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farm labourer with a proper home; they feel also that the present state of things in this respect is not satisfactory, but they believe that both the difficulty of getting tenants where there is an insufficient supply of labour, and of getting labourers when they cannot be provided with decent homes, will induce landowners, without the necessity of further legislation, to build cottages of a proper size in proportion to the extent of their estates.

As the law stands, the existence of houses licensed to sell beer, whether to be drunk on or off the premises, is a source of great demoralization to the agricultural poor, as well as a great nuisance to the neighbourhood in which they are situated, but the meeting were divided in opinion as to the best mode of remedying the evil, and contented themselves with expressing the hope that this very important question would receive the serious consideration of the legislature.

Signed in behalf of the meeting,
HENRY CALTHROP, Chairman.

No. 58. *Wednesday, October* 23, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Wickham, for

Wickham Bp's.	Pop., 616	Acr., 1,534	R.V., 3,059*l.*
Hatfield Peverel	Pop., 1,311	Acr., 4,929	R.V., 11,094*l.*
Ulting	Pop., 169	Acr., 1,141	R.V., 2,142*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Wickham Bishops—
- Rev. C. Burney, rector.
- Mr. Herbert Leigh, churchwarden, overseer and occupier of 300 acres.
- Mr. Joseph J. Smith, guardian and occupier of 500 acres.
- Mr. R. W. Dixon, owner and miller.

From Ulting—
- Mr. Thos. Aldham, guardian, churchwarden and occupier of 430 acres.

From Hatfield Peverel—
- No representative.
- Mr. Harvey Foster, of Great Totham, owner and occupier.
- Rev. John Bramston, vicar of Witham.

It was voted that the Rev. C. Burney should take the chair.

The land in Wickham Bishops belongs to several owners, the largest owns a leasehold for three lives (of about 400 acres), held under the Ecclesiastical Commission, being part of the property of the see of London. There is a sufficient but not a redundant supply of labour. The cottages are reported to be in a fair condition; the older ones seldom have more than two bedrooms, the more recently erected ones have three. The rent ranges from 3*l.* to 5*l.* Many of them are copyhold; very few belong to the land, and go with the farms. They are generally held on yearly tenure, with a quarter's notice. There are no allotments, and not many of the gardens would reach 20 rods.

There is a parochial school, on the point of being connected with Government, in two departments, under a mistress and female assistant. Boys are not kept after 10, the mistress disliking to manage older boys. If there are any such, they are recommended to go to the schools at Witham or Maldon, which are from two to three miles distant. The total annual cost is about 80*l.*, the salary of the head mistress is 52*l.* There is no endowment, and the school pence are at the rate of 1*d.* a week. The balance comes out of the pockets of the rector, there are at present no other subscribers. It was thought that subscriptions might be obtained if they were applied for.

There has been no night school, in consequence of the difficulty of getting teachers.

In Ulting there are four owners, one of whom is resident. There is not half enough resident labour, owing to the deficient supply of cottages. There are 24 cottages, and at the rate of 3½ cottages to the 100 acres, there ought to be 40. Labourers have to be imported from the neighbouring parish of Hatfield, and have to travel from 1½ to 2 miles to their work. The cottages that exist are not in first-rate order, and are deficient in sleeping accommodation. There is not believed to be one in the parish with three bedrooms. The rent ranges from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* All of them have fair gardens; and there is about 1½ acres of allotment, but it is inconveniently situated and is not all taken up. It is let at 6*d.* per rod.

There is a parish school, not under Government, opened in 1866, taught by a mistress, attended by 35 children (on the books), not all of them belonging to the parish. The annual cost is about 35*l.*, 20*l.* of which comes from a single subscription, the widow of the late vicar. The same lady maintains and teaches a night school, which was attended last winter by from 12 to 14 scholars, principally young men.

In Hatfield Peverel there are several proprietors, four or five of whom are resident. There is an ample supply of resident labour. Some of the cottages are very bad, and the drainage of the parish is deficient, owing to natural difficulties. The parish is frequently visited by fever, and when fever settles there it is apt to stay. There are considerable charities in the parish, and there are almshouses largely endowed, where the allowance to an old couple is 18*s.* a week. The trustees would be glad to diminish the amount of the allowance and increase the number of the almspeople; but hitherto have been unable to effect the change.

There is a school, under a master, liberally supported, and the schoolmaster has kept a night-school on his own account.

The cultivation in these parishes is chiefly arable; the soil mixed, the larger proportion a light loam; 500 acres would be considered a large occupation. The best land lets at 2*l.*, the poorest at 20*s.* an acre. The rate of wage at present is 12*s.* a week and beer which may be reckoned as worth another 1*s.* About half the labour on the farm is done by piece work. About 4½ men is the proportion of labour for 100 acres; 35 years ago 3½ was considered amply sufficient, and that at a time when hardly any machinery was employed. To cultivate a farm in the best way the labour would cost from 30*s.* to 35*s.* per acre in the year at the present rates.

Generally speaking the difference in value between the labour of two men, one more skilled than the other, can only be rewarded by piece work. It would not be possible to show the employer's sense of that difference in the payment of daily wages. Mr. Foster had a man of remarkable ability as a labourer, who earned last year, single-handed, 50*l.* Work is found for able-bodied steady labourers throughout the year. They are only the shifty men who are out of work in the winter time.

Female labour is not encouraged, and the land can be kept clean without it. Mr. Foster farming 500 acres did not employ one woman last year. The women generally are indisposed themselves to go out to field labour, and the young girls go out to service. Twitch is got rid of by the plough and harrow, and by men forking it. On sandy soil, such as that in Norfolk, this would perhaps not be sufficient for its extirpation. In this district, there would be a boy employed to about every 70 acres. The exception is to find boys going to work at as early an age as 10, and then chiefly in the case of large families. The more usual age for boys going to work is 11 or 12.

The meeting are not prepared to say that the labour of a boy under 10 is of no value to the farmer, but they think that in virtue of higher considerations the farmer should dispense with it. They would not object to a law which should prohibit the employ-

ment of child labour under the age of 10, but if such prohibition were established there would be no gain, but rather a loss to the social condition of the neighbourhood, unless such children attended school.

The meeting, however, are not disposed to recommend or to approve of any direct system of compulsion; and they consider that the compulsion enforced under the Factory Act stands upon an entirely different footing, where the children by the hypothesis are earning wages, from that on which it would stand if applied to children who, also by the hypothesis, are prohibited from labour. The meeting believe that the operation of the ordinary moral and social influences, which are gradually producing a stronger sense of the need of education, will suffice without having resort to compulsion.

The condition of agriculture in this district is such as regards the employment of women, that any restriction upon that employment is wholly unnecessary.

With regard to the Government mode of assisting education, the meeting would desire to see the requirement of a certificate in the teacher abolished, and that all schools should be judged and rewarded simply according to the results they can produce.

In conclusion, the meeting desire to express the very strong feeling they entertain, with regard to the facilities that are given for obtaining a licence to sell beer, particularly in the cases where such beer is not to be drunk on the premises.

Signed on behalf of the meeting.

CHARLES BURNEY, Chairman.

No. 59. *Thursday, October* 24, 1867.

Meeting at Coggeshall, for

Coggeshall - Pop., 4,108 - Acr., 3598 - R.V., 11,010*l.*
Markshall - Pop., 42 - Acr., 834 - R.V., 1,115*l.*

Present at Meeting:

Rev. W. J. Dampier, vicar.

Rev. Chas. Raymond, curate.

Mr. Wm. Whitehead, member of the school committee, house occupier.

Capt. W. Howorth, R.N., resident gentleman, school manager.

F. A. Pattison, Esq., magistrate, landowner, and occupier of 300 acres.

Mr. W. Appleford, miller, landowner and occupier.

Mr. Francis Aldous, parish clerk.

From Markshall.

Rev. W. J. Bennett, rector.

Christopher Dampier, Esq., landowner in Canterbury Settlement, New Zealand.

Coggeshall is consolidated as a benefice, but is divided into two districts for poor law purposes. Great Coggeshall contains 3,690 people and 2,596 acres of land. Little Coggeshall, 418 people and 1,002 acres of land.

In Great Coggeshall there are about a dozen owners of land, in Little Coggeshall, the land is in six or seven hands. In Great Coggeshall there are 30 or 40 occupiers, many of whom are seed growers. The seeds grown are flower seeds and agricultural seeds; perhaps 100 acres are occupied for this purpose. This mode of cultivating the land requires more labour than ordinary farming, and younger labour. If six "hands" are required per 100 acres on a farm, at least 25 would be required for the same quantity of land on which seeds are grown.

There is a sufficient supply of resident agricultural labour, indeed Coggeshall supplies labour to several surrounding parishes. There are other branches of industry which employ a third of the male population and a majority of the female; straw plait, tambour lace making, velvet weaving, gelatine making, malting, brewing, tanning, &c. The consequence of this is that women, whether married or unmarried, are seldom employed on the land, and their place is more or less supplied by boys.

The cottages, as compared with many other parishes, are roomy and good. Many of the employments of the people require room, and the presence of a loom or a frame in a cottage prevents overcrowding; but the cottages occupied by the agricultural labourer generally present a greater appearance of cleanliness and comfort than those occupied by the manufacturing population. On the whole, the agricultural labourer is thought to be equally well off with the weaver, while he is more provident in his habits.

There is an abundant supply of good water; the drainage of the town is fairly good; and the general health of the population is satisfactory. This is attributed to the general roominess of the cottages.

The average rent of the cottages is 2*s.* a week. Those in the town, in many cases, have very small, if any, garden; and there are no allotments.

The town is sufficiently supplied with the means of education. There is an endowed Church of England boys' school, educating 30 boys free. There is a national school in two departments with about 200 names on the register, and an average attendance of 150.

There is also a British school for boys, not in connection with Government, attended by 80; an infant school under the same management, with about the same number of children, and in connection with it is an evening school attended by 50 scholars.

There was a church night school last winter, with 60 names on its register, but a very irregular attendance. The winter before it was much more successful; and the comparative failure of last year is attributed to the deficiency of teachers. It was taught entirely by volunteers. Both the National and British schools are maintained by a considerable effort, and the managers of the former are not satisfied with the amount of support that it receives. There was a threat of the reduction of the Government grant, unless the condition of the school improved. The voluntary subscriptions amount to about 50*l.* a year. The subscriptions and collections for the support of the British school amount to about 75*l.* The Government grant earned by the national school varies from 70*l.* to 80*l.*; about 30*l.* is derived from church collections.

In Markshall all the land belongs to one proprietor, who is resident. There are four farms. The labour supply has to be imported from Coggeshall, and many of the men have to travel three miles. There are only five cottages to the 830 acres, of which three only are occupied by agricultural labourers. Several cottages were pulled down 30 or 40 years ago, and there is no known intention of replacing them. The farmers complain of their labourers having to come so far to their work.

Of course, there is no school; and the few children who reside in the parish attend either at Coggeshall or Earl's Colne, a distance in each case of three miles.

In the parish of Coggeshall, the distant labourers do their walk to their work in their master's time, and leave off work at a proportionally earlier hour.*

With regard to the points involved in this inquiry —It was the opinion of the meeting that the education of the agricultural labourer's child could be best improved by (1) prohibiting the employment of any child in field labour under the age of 10; and (2) by requiring a certificate of a certain amount of elementary attainment, the power to read with facility and intelligence being the most important thing to secure, as a condition of being so employed.

The meeting considered that provisions of this kind would effect the desired object more successfully than the methods embodied in the Factory and other similar acts, which seemed to them inapplicable to the case of agriculture.

* This remarkable and exceptional statement was made by two or three gentlemen present; was strictly scrutinized; and was adhered to.

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As female labour is scarcely, if at all, used in this district, the meeting were not prepared to make any recommendations with regard to it. It is found that the farms can be satisfactorily cultivated without such labour, and in this district, the women themselves are indisposed to work on the land.

In behalf of the Meeting.

W. J. Dampier, Chairman.

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60. *Friday, October* 25, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Kelvedon, for

Kelvedon	Pop., 1,741	Acr., 3,167	R.V., 9,133*l.*
Inworth	Pop., 202	Acr., 1,555	R.V., 2,520*l.*
Feering	Pop., 804	Acr., 3,232	R.V., 6,885*l.*
Messing	Pop., 725	Acr., 2,698	R.V., 4,129*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Kelvedon—
- Rev. H. C. Lory, officiating minister.
- Mr. John Fuller, churchwarden and grocer.
- Mr. William Siggers, churchwarden, maltster, brickmaker, occupier of 30 acres.
- Mr. George Dockwra, miller and occupier of 200 acres.
- Mr. Thomas Butler, occupier of 200 acres.
- Mr. John Nicholls, occupier of 170 acres and agent for Sir Thomas Western.
- Mr. George Dockwra, jun., occupier with his father of 200 acres.
- Mr. Samuel Bennett, occupier of 150 acres.
- Mr. H. Isaac Sadler, cabinetmaker.
- Mr. W. Braddy, carpenter and joiner.
- Mr. Jabez Braddy, cabinet maker.
- Mr. William Peck, resident gentleman.
- Mr. Joseph Polley, painter.
- Mr. Charles Bateman, innkeeper.
- Mr. Joseph Humphrey, cooper.
- Mr. John Aust, British schoolmaster.
- Mr. A. Constable, resident gentleman.
- Mr. Charles Noble, national schoolmaster.

From Messing—
- Rev. E. Musselwhite, curate.
- Mr. John Moss, jun., occupier of 240 acres.

From Feering—
- Rev. A. Snell, vicar.
- Mr. Edward Catchpool, occupier of 900 acres.
- Mr. J. C. Raven, occupier of 120 acres.
- Mr. Elijah Quilter, occupier of 270 acres.
- Mr. C. Everett, churchwarden and occupier of 40 acres, miller.

The meeting voted that Rev. H. C. Lory should take the chair.

The meeting unanimously admit that at present the education of the agricultural labourer's child is continued for too short a period, and is too irregular even during its nominal continuance to allow of satisfactory results being attained.

The main difficulties which any attempt to improve the existing state of things in this respect would have to encounter are, (1) the poverty of the parents, making in many cases every penny that either they or their children can earn a matter almost of necessity to them, though in too many cases this poverty is merely the result of improvidence; (2) the scattered houses of the agricultural population in many places, rendering the direct application of the principles of the Factory Acts to their circumstances almost impracticable; (3) the fitful character of agricultural operations, depending so much as they do on the lateness or forwardness of the season and the state of the weather, making a half-day or an alternate whole-day system of schooling impossible; (4) the thriftless character of many parents seeming almost to necessitate a system of compulsory education, and yet the difficulty of carrying out any such system generally or absolutely without inflicting hardships. Bearing these difficulties in mind, the meeting are prepared to recommend, as the best solution of the problem, the fixing of an age below which children should not be permitted to engage in field-work.

It was carried (with two dissentients, Mr. Catchpool and Mr. J. C. Raven, who would have preferred 9) that the best age to fix would be 10, and that after that age the education, if carried on, should be carried on through the agency of the night school.

The meeting desire to press upon the Government the duty of encouraging night schools by every effort in their power.

In the event of children being prohibited from going to labour under the age of 10, the meeting feel that there would be no gain to the cause of education unless during some portion of the prohibited period such children were required to attend school, and they would suggest that such school attendance should be required from all children between the ages of 6 and 10.

In these parishes the employment of young unmarried girls on the land is very rare, with the exception of hay-time, pea-picking, and harvest. With regard to the desirableness or otherwise of such employment the opinion of the meeting were divided; 12 gentlemen present considering it undesirable, while seven others could see no more harm or danger in it than in many other employments into which such women would be driven if debarred from labouring on the land; but the meeting unanimously desire to leave this question to the moral sense of employers and parents, and would be sorry to see the employment of such girls prohibited by law.

Farmers are beginning generally to entertain the opinion that the nearer the labourer lives to his work the better, and it is believed that if landlords would supply their farmers with the cottage accommodation that they require, the tenants would be glad to remunerate them at a fair per-centage for their outlay. The preponderating opinion of the meeting was that cottages on farms should be at the disposal of the tenant of the farm, and not be held direct from the landlord.

The meeting desire to express their opinion that the sleeping accommodation in many cottages is much below the requirements in regard of decency of the families occupying them, and they think that a cottage occupied by a mixed family ought not to contain less than three bedchambers.

The questions were raised whether there should be a national system of education secular and non-denominational, or whether the present denominational system should be maintained; whether also schools should be supported, as at present, by voluntary effort or by rate; whether, in event of a rate being levied, it should be raised out of the general taxation of the country or on the real property of each locality; but the opinions of the meeting being nearly equally divided on the several points raised, no definite result was reached.

The discussion on these previous points having occupied upwards of four hours, the meeting could not be longer detained, and no detailed information respecting the condition of the several parishes represented at the meeting was collected, but it was stated generally that there were no special circumstances of difference between this district and the neighbouring ones in respect of labour supply, wages, or employment of women and children, except that in Kelvedon and Feering it was believed that the cottage accommodation is superior to what it is in many other districts.

Henry Lory,
Officiating minister, and chaplain, R.N.,
Chairman, on behalf of the meeting.

County of Sussex: Horsham Union.

61. *Saturday, November* 2, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Slinfold, for

Slinfold	Pop., 755	Acr., 4,357	R.V., 3,970*l.*
Itchingfield	Pop., 377	Acr., 2,470	R.V., 2,170*l.*
Warnham	Pop., 1,006	Acr., 4,832	R.V., 4,590*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Slinfold—
- Captain Bunny, landowner, magistrate, and churchwarden.
- Rev. Charles A. Rosser, curate.
- Mr. Thomas Child, landowner and occupier of 580 acres.
- Mr. Charles Child, churchwarden, timber merchant, and occupier of 30 acres.
- Mr. James Puttock, overseer, and occupier of 300 acres.
- Mr. Alfred Knight, occupier of 100 acres.
- Mr. James Grinstead, road surveyor and owner and occupier of 12 acres.
- Mr. Robert Mills, guardian, owner and occupier of 250 acres.
- Mr. Philip Puttock, occupier of 300 acres.

From Itchingfield—
- Rev. J. H. Milne, rector, and occupier of 70 acres of glebe.
- Mr. Nathaniel Knight, churchwarden, and occupier of 250 acres.
- Mr. Robert Knight, guardian and joint occupier with his father.
- Mr. Matthew Birdfield, churchwarden, and occupier of 100 acres.

From Warnham—
- Rev. James Wood, vicar.
- Mr. William Churchman, guardian, and occupier of 330 acres.
- Mr. William Wood, guardian, and occupier of 254 acres.
- Mr. Edward Churchman, of Rudgewick, occupier of 180 acres.

It was proposed and seconded that CAPTAIN BUNNY should take the chair.

In Slinfold the land belongs to several proprietors. Two of the chief landowners (Captain Bunny and N. P. Simes, Esq.) are resident. The acreage is upwards of 4,000 acres, and there are about 25 farmers. There are about 100 cottages. There is just about an adequate supply of labour; very little extra labour is hired in the summer, and none but shifty men are unemployed in the winter. The cottages generally are in a creditable state of repair; many of them are converted farm-houses, in consequence of the consolidation of small occupations. They have generally sufficient chamber accommodation, and as there are very few large families in the parish there are scarcely any instances of overcrowding. Many have three chambers, and most have two. About 30 years ago eight cottages were built on some land given for the purpose by subscription in order to provide homes for widows and disabled poor. Some of their occupiers live rent-free, and the highest rent charged in any case is 1*s.* a week. Most of these cottages have a sufficient amount of garden; in this stiff clay soil 20 rods is considered to be as much as a man can profitably cultivate. The rent of a good cottage with garden would be 5*l.*

There is an annual cottage garden show (flowers and vegetables), at which prizes are awarded for the best cultivated garden. Those that have a moderate-sized garden are generally found to carry off the prize. Prizes are also given to encourage botanical tastes in the school children. There is a mixed parochial school, at present not in connexion with Government, under an uncertificated mistress. It is sufficient for the wants of the agricultural labourers' children, but there are reported to be about a dozen children of small farmers and tradesman who now travel four miles a day to a school, who, in the opinion of one gentleman present, would be sent to this school if it were under a master.

The mistress's salary is 35*l.*, and the total annual cost is about 50*l.* There are 57 names on the register, and the average attendance is 44. An infant school is about being started by Captain Bunny in an outlying portion of the parish. There has been a night school for several past winters, which has just been resumed; it is taught by the curate and such volunteers as he can procure.

At Itchingfield there are 8 or 10 owners of the land. There is enough labour; no one has been out of work even in the winter for several past years. Thirty years ago there was a great redundancy of labour. Men now do not work for so many hours a day as they used to do, and "it takes three educated "men to do two ignorant men's work." There is a sufficient supply of cottages, but some of them are out of repair. They nearly all belong to the owners of the land. Several have three chambers, and there is only one cottage with a single chamber. Rents range as at Slinfold. There is a mixed school, not in connexion with Government, under an untrained mistress, with 48 names on the register, and an average attendance of 36. There is an endowment of about 14*l.* a year; the voluntary subscriptions are 12*l.*; the school pence 8*l.*; the annual cost is about 45*l.* There is no night school.

In Warnham there are three large and a few small proprietors. There is a sufficiency of labour. The cottages are generally good; the majority of them belong to small proprietors; they are chiefly clustered in a village street. The generality of them have not more than two chambers, and those not very large; a few only have three bedrooms, and there are a few with a single chamber. All the cottages have more or less garden, from five rods to 20. Rents average 4*l.* 10*s.*

There is a mixed school, under a certificated mistress, receiving Government aid. There are 80 children on the books, with an average attendance of 60 The annual cost is about 80*l.*; the mistress's salary is 55*l.*, with a house rent-free; the school pence amount to 20*l.*, and the Government grant to about 30*l.*

There is no night school. The experiment has been tried in previous winters, but owing to the indifference of the people it was not successful. A competent master was hired from Horsham, but he could not make it succeed.

The land in this district is a stiff, wet clay, requiring thorough draining. It will grow good wheat and oats, but is too strong for barley. The four-course husbandry is pursued. About 20 per cent. is permanent pasture; there are very extensive woodlands. To cultivate 100 acres requires the constant employment of four able-bodied men, a lad of 16 or 17, and a boy to drive plough from 12 to 14. The cost of labour in the year would be about 30*s.* an acre, not less. About 2½ cottages to the 100 acres is considered to be a sufficient supply. The custom still remains, though it is dying out, of taking young single men to lodge in the farmhouse. They are hired for the half-year, and are found in board and lodging. A young man of 20 would be paid 10*l.* to 12*l.* in the year; 6*l.* to 8*l.* for the summer half, and 4*l.* for the winter. It is thought to be a dear kind of labour. They sleep in the farmhouse, and the young fellows are found to dislike the restraint, and hence the custom is dying out.

The present rate of standing wages for day labour is 13*s.* a week, but the farmers prefer putting out all the labour they can by the piece. An able-bodied man's earnings in the year amount to from 45*l.* to 47*l.* In the spring the men are allowed to go felling and stripping timber, ("flawing," it is called), which lasts about a month, during which they will earn perhaps 5*l.*, with a perquisite of broken wood worth another 1*l.*

Women are occasionally employed to weed, &c. in the spring, and they work with their husbands in harvest, but there is not one tenth part of the employment of female labour in the fields now that there was 20 years ago; the women are indisposed to work in the field; their husbands can keep them without. Their place has been taken to some extent by machinery. It would be quite an exception to find a young unmarried girl at work in the fields; the farmers present don't wish to see it encouraged. The young

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girls who do get out to work on the land are fit for nothing else. The labour of a boy under 10 is of no value to the farmer, but at about that age he ought to be getting out upon the land along with his father, if he is ever to make an efficient agricultural labourer. Boys in this district, with its stiff soil, are absolutely required to drive plough. The plough is ordinarily drawn by three horses in line. Attempts have been made to work the land with two horses abreast, but they have universally failed.

The rates in the district are heavy. In Itchingfield last year the poor and county rate exceeded 30*s.* a head of the population; and the rate for the district for the year was 4*s.* 4*d.* in the 1*l.* on the rateable value.

It is the unanimous feeling of the meeting that if the Legislature attempts to deal with the employment of agricultural labour in the way of restriction and for educational purposes, the mode of approaching the question that would be most satisfactory would be to fix an age below which children should not be allowed to work upon the land, taking security at the same time that the children attended school, and then to leave the labour free, and not to fix originally upon a lower age, say 8, and then restrict or interfere with the employment of children, say to the age of 13, by any of the modes adopted in the Factory Acts, which are considered to be inapplicable to agriculture. The meeting are prepared to recommend that the age at which such restrictions should cease should be 10.

The meeting would desire to see every labouring man possess the power to read and write; and they hope that regular attendance for five years up to the age of 10 in a fairly efficient school would produce such results.

The meeting do not desire to see free schools. They believe that the poor value education for their children at a higher rate from the very fact that they in part contribute to its cost. They do not see that a rate-supported system of schools would remedy the chief evil of the present system, which is, not that the schools are inefficient, but that there is no machinery for securing the regular attendance of the children. If children are prohibited from being sent to work, the meeting would desire to see a mild form of compulsion adopted, which should not inflict unnecessary or intolerable hardship upon large families, yet which should have the effect of bringing them to the school.

In this district it is neither necessary, nor desirable, nor usual to employ young girls on the land; and therefore no legislative restriction is required.

The employment of married women also is so rare and so occasional, that the meeting, speaking only for their own neighbourhood, do not consider it necessary or desirable to interfere with it by law.

The tenure upon which cottages are held varies very much in the district; some are held by the week, some by the month, some by the quarter, some by the half year, and a few by the year. Each form of tenure has its advantages; but most labourers are found to prefer the half-yearly tenure. Some cottages are held directly from the landlord; others are let with the farms, and the tenants pay their rent to the occupier.

The evil of overcrowding is not sensibly felt in this district; and the cottages are not very defective in a sanitary point of view.

The meeting deplore the prevalence of drunkenness among the labouring class; and they believe that the most effective measure that could be adopted to diminish it would be to give every man the power of brewing his own beer, which at the present price of malt is practically impossible.

Signed in behalf of the meeting,
EDW. J. BUNNY, Chairman.

Nov. 2, 1867.

No. 62. *Monday, November* 4, 1867.

Meeting at Ifield, for

Ifield	- Pop., 1,307	- Acr., 3,200	- R.V., 5,770*l.*
Rusper	- Pop., 590	- Acr., 3,036	- R.V., 2,160*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Ifield—
- Rev. R. N. Blaker, vicar.
- Mr. W. Wood, churchwarden and occupier of 500 acres.
- Mr. M. Muggeridge, churchwarden and occupier of 137 acres.
- Mr. M. King, blacksmith.
- Mr. Thomas Voice, publican, and owner of 8 acres.
- Mr. Edward Penfold, parish clerk, assistant overseer, and surveyor.

From Rusper—
- Rev. H. J. Gore, rector.
- Mr. G. C. Knight, guardian, owner, and occupier of 120 acres.
- Mr. G. T. Coleman, owner and occupier of 15 acres.

The chair was taken by Rev. H. J. GORE, rector of Rusper.

Of the land in Ifield about 1,700 acres belong to one proprietor (the Rodney estate); there are eight or nine other land owners. The population is increasing rapidly at the end of the parish in proximity to the railway, and is believed now to amount to nearly 1,500. There has been, however, a decrease in the number of agricultural labourers, but there is still a sufficiency for the cultivation of the land.

The supply of cottages is rather short; an empty cottage is almost unknown. There are some cases of overcrowding; but generally the cottages have a fair amount of accommodation. Several have three bedrooms, and the vicar cannot remember more than half a dozen with only one chamber. The overseer thinks there are about 120 cottages in the parish letting under 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. Few of the gardens would exceed 10 rods; there are 2 acres of allotment, let in parcels of 10 rods each, at 3*d.* a rod. The cottage rents run from 1*s.* 6*d.* a week to 2*s.* 6*d.* When the cottage is on the farm the ordinary rent to a labourer working on the farm is 1*s.* 6*d.*; the higher rents are paid for detached cottages. The proportion of cottages to the hundred acres is less in this district than it otherwise would be, in consequence of the custom, now dying out, of the farmer taking young single men, who were hired by the half year, to live in his house. It is considered that to cultivate the land in a proper way, there ought to be three men and a boy to 100 acres of land. The greater part of the cottages in Ifield are owned by small proprietors.

The size of occupations in Ifield varies widely. There are about 20 farms above 30 acres. There are three or four farms varying from 300 to 500 acres; 10 or 12 between 100 and 300; and the remainder below 100 acres. The land is varied; some being a useful loam, and the other a very stiff clay. The rent would range from 10*s.* to 30*s.* an acre. An average crop of wheat produces six to seven sacks per acre; in Rusper it would not average more than four or five in consequence of the inferior style of farming.

There are four schools in Ifield;—a National school, in the more thickly peopled part of the parish, with about 170 names on the register, and an average attendance of 120. It is a school in two departments, under untrained teachers; not in connection with Government, the managers preferring to be independent. In the centre of the parish there is an infant school, with 60 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 45. The total annual cost of these two schools is about 135*l.*, of which about 55*l.* comes from school pence, and the rest is raised by voluntary subscriptions. The schools are not in debt, and no difficulty is experienced in maintaining them. Near the National school is a British school, believed

to be attended by not more than 40 children. There is also a small Roman Catholic school of 20 or 25 children, in connection with a Franciscan monastery established about seven years ago.

The school fee at the National school is 2*d.* a week, which includes the use of all school materials.

There has not been a night school for some years. The difficulty felt has been the want of competent and adequate teaching power.

In Rusper there are 8 or 10 landowners, of whom the principal are Mr. Broadwood, Mr. Hurst, and the Duke of Norfolk. There is a large range, perhaps 500 acres, of woodland. There is a short supply of agricultural labour. There is a sufficient supply of cottages for the resident population. The farms are small, not averaging more than 100 acres a-piece; there are only three farms exceeding 200 acres. In consequence of the smallness of the holdings, a large number of the labourers, mostly the single men, emigrate in search of work during the hay season, turnip-hoeing, and harvest, leaving a short supply at home. They return after harvest, and generally find plenty of employment in the woods during the winter and spring. The soil is too stiff for growing roots; and so the men go away to get a job of hoeing, and then are induced to stay through the hay season and harvest.

The cottages are mostly old, built of brick and timber; not in a good state of repair. Many of them belong to small owners, who can hardly afford to put them into better order. They are pretty roomy, and have mostly a fair piece of garden-ground. The rent ranges from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. The principal landowners do not reside in the parish, but two of them live in the neighbourhood.

The school at present is not in a satisfactory condition. The teacher is an untrained elderly woman. About 40 children attend out of 70 on the register. The difficulty is to raise the necessary funds. One large landowner is anxious to raise an endowment. The school is at present supported by him and the rector. The total cost is about 25*l.*, of which half arises from school pence. There is a private dame's school, with about a dozen children, mostly of a superior class, who pay 6*d.* a week. There is no night school. The population is scattered, and there would be difficulty in procuring superintendence and teachers.

It is the opinion of the meeting that a boy is of very little use to the farmer under 10 or 11 years of age; he could not stand a day's ploughing, which, with a furrow 12 inches broad, is 8¼ miles' walking.

There is not a sufficient supply of boys in the district to allow of the half day or the alternate whole day system being applied to agriculture.

It is also thought that it might be a hardship upon parents to require them in all cases to keep their children at school during the winter period of the year to as high an age as 13.

The meeting would desire to see the age of 10 fixed upon as that below which children should not be allowed to work in the field, in the hope that in the five preceding years, with regular attendance at school, they will receive a sufficient education for their station in life.

It is quite an exceptional case in this neighbourhood to find an unmarried girl working in the fields; they mostly go to service. Women are employed, chiefly in weeding, and in the hay season and harvest. Their wages are 1*s.* a day. But they are less disposed than they used to be to undertake fieldwork, though this year, in consequence of the high price of provisions, more of them than usual were induced to go out. It is not thought that the work required of them is such as to demand any legislative interference; "they will take care that they don't hurt themselves."

Female labour, except in hay-making, is considered to be dear labour.

The meeting would desire to see every cottage occupied by a mixed family, provided with three bedrooms; but in many cases nothing would be gained in the interests of decency by the addition of a third chamber, unless the landlord exercises sufficient superintendence over the inmates to see that they are properly distributed, and to prevent the intrusion of lodgers.

In conclusion, the meeting, recognizing drunkenness as the fruitful parent of poverty and wretchedness, and regarding the beer-houses as the greatest curse of the country, and considering that the system has failed as a protection to the public against monopoly, most of the beer-houses having passed into the hands of the large brewers, would desire to see the present facilities for obtaining a licence largely restrained, either by removing the licensing power from the excise to the magistrates, or by requiring the signatures of ratepayers of at least 30*l.* a year before a licence is granted, or by prohibiting, in such houses, the consumption of beer on the premises. The meeting feel that the question is surrounded by difficulties, and, as may be seen, were not unanimous in their suggestions of a remedy; but they are decidedly of opinion that the present state of things is mischievous in the extreme.

Signed on behalf of the meeting,
H. J. Gore, Chairman.

Nov. 4, 1867.

No. 63. *Tuesday, November 5,* 1867.

Collective Meeting at West Grinstead, for

West Grinstead - Pop., 1,403 - Acr., 6,483 - R.V., 6,900*l.*
Shipley - Pop., 1,091 - Acr., 7,549 - R.V., 6,250*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From West Grinstead—
- Rev. T. W. Langshaw, rector.
- Mr. Henry Sayers, churchwarden, owner, and occupier of 450 acres.
- Mr. Edward Luckin, guardian, waywarden, and occupier of 180 acres.
- Mr. H. Mitchell, parish schoolmaster.

From Shipley—
- Rev. H. L. Cooper, incumbent.
- Mr. James Vincent, churchwarden and occupier of 140 acres.
- Mr. Henry Nailand, churchwarden and occupier of 470 acres.
- Mr. M. H. Bristow, guardian, owner, and occupier of 240 acres.

It was proposed and seconded that the Rev. T. W. Langshaw should take the chair.

In West Grinstead there are several landowners, of whom the principal are Sir Percy Burrell, Bart., M.P., and the Rev. John Goring. The farms generally range from one to two hundred acres; 400 acres would be quite a large occupation in this district. The rent is very various; from 7*s.* 6*d.* to 40*s.* per acre; the depth as well as the staple of the soil varies proportionably. The bulk of the land is of inferior quality. The best land will produce from eight to nine sacks of wheat per acre; the worst not more than three or four.

The population when the census was taken in 1861 was temporarily increased by the presence of a considerable body of railway labourers; it is believed at the present date to be under 1,300 and not to be increasing. For the ordinary wants of the parish there is a sufficient supply of resident labourers; the extra demand in the summer is met by chance men travelling through the country.

There is a fairly adequate supply of cottages, the greater part of which belong to the landowners, and are generally let with the farms. They are mostly occupied on a six months' tenure, at varying rents, 1*s.* 3*d.*, 1*s.* 6*d.*, 1*s.* 9*d.*, and 2*s.* a week; 20 rods is considered to be an adequate size for a garden. There are no allotments now; there were some, but the people gave them up of their own accord. In the neighbourhood of Partridge Green Station there has

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recently sprung up a group of new cottages, built by small proprietors, with two bedchambers each, which are considered by the people themselves superior to the old cottages in other parts of the parish, many of which are ruinous, inconvenient, and ill-provided with sleeping accommodation.

The water supply is deficient in many parts of the parish, and the people have chiefly to depend on ponds. In some places spring water can be reached at a depth of 15 or 20 feet; at others not before you reach 60 or 70.

There is a parochial school, not in connection with Government, under the management of the rector, taught by a master and mistress, mixed, with about 90 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of from 60 to 70. The schoolmaster finds that he can keep a boy occasionally up to 10 or 11; but most boys leave before they reach 10 years of age; those that stay longer are generally the children of the better-off families. Even girls are taken away at an equally early age to help their mothers at home. The parents in many cases do not set a high value on education, and the school attendance is very irregular in consequence. The total annual cost is about 50*l.*, of which about 9*l.* or 10*l.* come from school pence. Only one landowner in the parish contributes towards the cost of the school, and his subscription is 2*l.* It costs the rector upwards of 30*l.* a year.

There are three private adventure dame's schools in the parish attended in the aggregate by 50 or 60 children, and there is a small Roman Catholic school with less than a dozen scholars.

At present there is no night school. The experiment has been tried, but when the novelty wore off, it did not succeed. The scattered condition of the population and the state of the roads and paths in the winter are very unfavourable to the maintenance of a night school.

In Shipley the two principal landowners are Sir Percy Burrell and the Hon. Mrs. Vernon Harcourt; this lady is also lay impropriatrix. There are also several other owners of farms varying in size from 100 to 400 acres.

There are in the parish 250 houses, of which 200 are cottages. Except in harvest, there is a sufficient supply of labour. There are several empty cottages at this moment. Some of the cottages are in a very bad state of repair, and deficient in bedroom accommodation. Five very good double cottages, housing about 50 people, with three bedrooms each, have been recently erected by Mrs. Harcourt; they go with the farms, but by special agreement with the tenants, are let at 1*s.* a week. The cost of such a double cottage would be about 400*l.* The ordinary rent of cottages in Shipley is much the same as at West Grinstead. The greater number of the cottages belong to the landowners. Most of the cottages have good gardens, from 20 to 30 rods in size.

There are two public schools, one a boys' school endowed with 40*l.* a year, of which the trust is vested in the churchwardens and overseers. It is for the free education of "such poor children of the "parish of Shipley as the trustees consider to be "proper objects of charity." In practice the school is restricted to boys. The endowment is of about 40 years standing. The incumbent has no right of visiting, though he has permission to do so. The school is under a middle-aged man, and is attended by from 20 to 30 scholars.

There is another school, under a mistress not connected with Government, ostensibly for girls but including boys from six to eight years of age. There are 75 names on the register, and an average attendance of 45. The total annual cost is 55*l.*, of which 18*l.* comes from school payments; the voluntary subscriptions amount to about 30*l.*; and the incumbent makes himself responsible for deficiencies. The payments vary according to the station of the parents, from 1*d.* to 1*s.* a week. The difference of payment makes no difference in the quality of the instruction. Several farmers' and tradesmen's children attend this school, which the incumbent thinks to be thoroughly efficient.

There is no night school in Shipley. It has been tried, but it failed "from dirt and distance."

There is also a small private school, attended by about 20 children.

The present rate of wages in these two parishes is 13*s.* a week; a good deal of work is done by the piece. The harvest is generally taken at so much per acre to cut, and is carted at per day. The ordinary rate of cutting wheat per acre would be 10*s.* to 14*s.*, and the day work in harvest would be paid at about 1*s.* per day in excess of ordinary day work. Turnip hoeing, when the land is gone over twice, is paid at the rate of 10*s.* to 14*s.* per acre. Thrashing, when done with the flail, is also piece work; paid in the case of wheat, at 4*s.* or 5*s.* a quarter; for peas or beans 2*s.*; oats at about 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* Hedging and ditching is paid at the rate of 6*d.* per rod, and faggots are tied at from 3*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* per hundred.

The men are often allowed to earn money at "flawing" in the spring of the year. They are then employed not by the farmer but by the timber merchant. The job lasts about a month; it is piece-work; they fell the timber, strip it, and set up the bark, the whole of which operations are included in the local term "flawing." Faggoting the lop, and scraping and "hatching" the bark, are distinct jobs. The scraping is done chiefly by women and children. A man will earn at flawing from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 6*s.* a day. They are paid by the timber merchant at the rate of 3*l.* 15*s.* to 4*l.* per load of bark (45 cwt.)

Besides the employment of women in barking, they are employed to some extent in weeding in the spring, in haymaking, and (at their own pleasure) helping their husbands to reap in harvest.

On 240 acres of land (of which 52 are pasture) out of a total sum paid for labour from 29 Sept. 1866 to 29 Sept. 1867 of 339*l.* 15*s.* only 24*l.* 11*s.* 5*d.* was paid to boys and women. On this occupation, there are constantly employed six ordinary labourers, two carters, and three boys, aged respectively 10, 12, and 15—(Mr. Bristow's farm).

Young girls are scarcely ever employed except in dropping peas or beans after a dibbler. The hole is dibbled by a man, who takes a job of so much land at per acre, and engages the service of as many children as he thinks necessary. The ordinary number a man requires to follow him dibbling, is five or six. They are either boys or girls, not working separately, and ranging in age from 7 to 10. The job generally lasts about a month, in February and March.

It was unanimously considered by the meeting that any restriction upon the employment of child labour on the land to as high an age as 13, the age contemplated in the Factory Acts, would seriously interfere with the cultivation of this district, where boy labour is absolutely necessary, and is by no means redundant. But the labour of a boy is of no use here till he is old and strong enough to drive a plough, and that rarely would be before he has reached the age of 10 or 11.

It is believed that the best mode of improving the education of children in an agricultural district would be to secure their regular attendance at school up to this age.

It is found that boys who leave school at an early age to work, and then return for occasional short periods, introduce a very unmanageable element into the school. Managers also would not like to be *compelled* to receive such boys, independently of all consideration of their behaviour and character.

The amount of education which the meeting would desire to see every agricultural labourer possess is the power to read and to write and to work a sum in the first four rules of arithmetic. It is believed that the vacancy of mind produced by inability to read is one of the chief inducements that lead men to the public house. In both these parishes there is a large circulation of cheap newspapers and periodicals,

and they are found to be generally taken in by the soberest men. In Shipley Mr. Cooper states that there is a fortnightly issue of some 40 volumes from the lending library chiefly to families of the steadiest labourers. There is also a considerable circulation of books of the same kind in West Grinstead.

It is not thought that there is any necessity to interfere by legislation with the employment of females in this district. Under the present system of cultivation it cannot entirely be dispensed with; while the women themselves are sufficiently independent to refuse to undertake any work which is unwelcome or unsuitable to them. A woman has never been seen by any gentleman present engaged where corn is being thrashed out by steam.

The meeting unanimously think that a main element in any attempt to improve the condition of the agricultural labourer is to provide him with a decent home; and they consider that too many of the cottages in which the labourer lives are deficient in such accommodation as will enable him to bring up his family in habits of decency and morality.

They also think that a change in the law which should enable the poor man to brew his own beer at a reasonable cost at home, would materially diminish the amount of drunkenness and the number of beerhouses. They are thankful for the recent enactment which prohibits credit being given for beer sold by retail.

Signed on behalf of the meeting.

T. W. LANGSHAW, Chairman.

Nov. 5, 1867.

No. 64. *Thursday, November* 7, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Horsham for

Horsham	Pop., 6,747 - Acr., 10,707 - R.V., 26,140*l.*
Nuthurst -	Pop., 767 - Acr., 3,187 - R.V., 2,990*l.*
Lower Beeding	Pop., 1,149 - Acr., 10,707 - R.V., 5,140*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Horsham—
- Rev. J. F. Hodgson, vicar.
- Mr. William Lintott, churchwarden.
- Mr. R. Botting, churchwarden.
- Rev. F. G. Mount, minister of St. Mark's.
- Rev. J. A. Scott, curate of Horsham.
- Rev. G. G. Maclean, curate of Horsham.
- Thomas Sanctuary, Esq., magistrate and occupier.
- Major J. Aldridge, magistrate.
- Lieut.-Colonel Sir George Pocock, Bart.
- Mr. Henry Figg, guardian.
- Mr. John Stanford, landowner and guardian.
- Mr. Alfred Agate, occupier of 400 acres.
- Mr. H. Michell, brewer, landowner, and occupier of 300 acres.
- Mr. Thomas Gull, chemist.
- Mr. Richard Gates, assistant overseer.
- Mr. John Brown, owner of cottage property.
- Mr. R. Cragg, usher of free grammar school.
- Rev. A. H. S. Barwell, incumbent of the district of Southwater.

From Nuthurst—
- Rev. J. O. M'Carogher, rector and guardian.
- Mr. John Leppard, occupier of 100 acres.
- Mr. James Pronger, churchwarden and occupier of 900 acres.

From Lower Beeding—
- Rev. J. H. Masters, vicar.
- John Vans Agnew, Esq., landowner.
- Rev. E. W. Parsons, curate.
- Mr. John Kay, agent to W. E. Hubbard, Esq.
- Mr. John Nelson, agent to J. Vans Agnew, Esq.
- Rev. J. O. W. Haweis, landowner.
- Edward Bigg, Esq., magistrate and landowner.

The chair was taken by EDWARD BIGG, Esq.

The land in Horsham is in several hands. Most of the landowners are resident. There is probably a sufficient supply of agricultural labour, but it might be better distributed. In some parts of the parish a larger supply of cottages is required to bring the labourers nearer to their work. There are men living in Horsham who travel three or four miles to their work. There is no particular effort being made at present to supply the distant parts of the parish with cottages. The condition of the cottages naturally varies considerably. The rent of cottages in the town is high; from 3*s.* to 4*s.* a week; in the rural districts it is 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* The cottages are often very much crowded with lodgers. In the country parts of the parish the cottages belong chiefly to the landowners; in the town they are principally owned by small proprietors.

There is sufficient school accommodation, it is believed, for the parish. Besides the schools in the town, there are five outlying schools, which are considered to bring the means of education sufficiently within reach of all children. Cases were mentioned of children who have to travel two miles to their school, but the regularity of their attendance is not found to be affected by that circumstance. Two such children have recently received prizes at Southwater school for regular attendance.

One of the schools mentioned was thought not to be adequately supported by the landowners of the district, but, speaking generally of the parish, no difficulty has been experienced in supporting them on the voluntary system, and the vicar believes that any appeal made on their behalf would be liberally responded to. There is a British school in the town, attended by 80 or 100 scholars, and a small Roman Catholic school, with about 20. There are several private adventure schools. At present the only school in the parish under inspection and drawing aid from the Government grant is the National boys' school. There is a grammar school, founded in the time of Henry VIII., of which the Mercers' Company are trustees, specially, by the founder's instructions, "for "three score poor boys whose parents could not "afford to pay for their education" (though no Horsham boy was to be excluded), the endowment of which is about 500*l.* a year, which is now educating 80 scholars free (20 having been added in 1857), some of whom are children of tradesmen and farmers, and some of labouring men.

There are three night schools in the parish, well attended. In one of them there are 140 boys and between 30 and 40 adults. There is also a girls' night school. Some of the teachers are paid, and some are volunteers.

There are four principal landowners in Nuthurst, of whom only one is resident in the parish. There is not sufficient resident labour, and there is a deficient supply of cottages. The cottages belong mostly to the landowners; they vary in condition. Most have sufficient gardens. The rent ranges from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* There are not believed to be any special instances of overcrowding.

There is a parochial school, connected with Government, under a certificated master, assisted by a sewing mistress, with 60 names on the register, and an average attendance of 40. Some of the children have to come a long distance, and the state of the roads and paths is unfavourable to regular attendance. The total cost is 90*l.*, of which 30*l.* come from Government grant, 10*l.* from school pence, and the remainder from voluntary contributions. There has been a considerable debt on the school, which was cleared off by special effort last year.

There is a night school for the five winter months; at present there are 12 scholars.

There is an infant school, supported by Mrs. Dickins, on the outskirts of the parish, which is attended by the younger children in that neighbourhood.

In Lower Beeding there are three principal landowners. It is a wide, scattered parish of 10,000 acres, sparsely peopled, with 4,000 acres of uncultivated and wood land. The length of the parish is about nine

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miles from N.W. to S.E. There are three churches in the parish, and two Government schools, besides Mrs. Dickins's school already referred to.

The Government schools are both under certificated masters. There are about 200 children under education, and the schools are liberally supported by the landowners.

There are two night schools, attended by about 50 scholars. Within the last six years much has been done to civilize and educate the people in this wild district, which once, by a singular arrangement, formed part of a parish 15 miles away. It was separated and made a distinct district in 1837.

The condition of the cottages at the south end of the parish is fair, and there is not much overcrowding, but at the north end there is a great scarcity; their condition is bad, and they are often too crowded. In 1801, 3,000 acres of St. Leonard's Forest, in the centre of the parish, (which was then a rabbit warren), was let on 100 years' lease, and several cottages, turf huts, were allowed to be run up by the lessee, of a very inferior condition, which were let with an acre of land at 1*l.* a year. About a dozen of these cottages still remain in their original condition, about half of which are occupied by Irish families.

It is the opinion of the meeting that the best mode of securing an education for the child of the agricultural labourer would be to limit the age at which a child should be allowed to work, at 10, and to secure the regular attendance of such child at school up to that age.

Considering, however, the various difficulties with which the question is surrounded, the majority of the meeting would regret to see the labour of such children restrictively interfered with after that age, though 11 gentlemen present would be glad to see security taken that children taken to work at 10 should be required to attend school for a certain period, either consecutive or at defined intervals, for the following two years, in order to prevent the loss of the learning they had previously obtained.

Women's wages in this district at the present time are 1*s.* and 1*s.* 4*d.* a day; they are employed for eight hours in the day. The employment is not believed to be such on any ground as to make the legislative restriction of it desirable. The women are found able to protect themselves.

With regard to the employment of young girls on the land, the meeting would desire to see it prohibited in the case of girls between 13 and 18, except when working under the supervision of their mother or natural guardian.

The meeting are of opinion that the operation of the clause in the Nuisances' Removal Act, enabling boards of guardians to deal with the case of overcrowding in cottages, is highly unsatisfactory, and that some effective prevention of this great evil is absolutely required.

The meeting are decidedly and unanimously of opinion that the facilities now placed in the way of obtaining a licence to sell beer are mischievous in the extreme. A case was mentioned in which a beer-house had recently been opened in the district of Southwater against the wishes of those in the immediate neighbourhood by a man who had no difficulty in obtaining the requisite number of ratepayers to sign his petition in Horsham.

The meeting would wish to see that, previously to issuing any licence to sell beer, sufficient inquiry should be made into the character of the man proposing to open a beer-house; that opportunity should be given to residents in the neighbourhood of the proposed beer-shop to express their wishes in respect to it; and that the system should be brought under more effective police control, and be subject to the jurisdiction of the magistrates.

On behalf of the meeting at Horsham, 7 Nov. 1867.
E. M. Smith Bigg, Chairman.

County of Sussex: Union of Hailsham.

No. 65. *Tuesday, November* 12, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Warbleton, for

Warbleton - Pop., 1,400 - Acr., 5,763 - R.V., 4,359*l.*
Heathfield - Pop., 1,892 - Acr., 7,970 - R.V., 6,331*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Warbleton—
- Rev. G. E. Haviland, rector.
- George Darby, Esq., landowner and magistrate, one of the Inclosure Commissioners of England.
- Mr. R. W. Pitcher, chairman of board of guardians, churchwarden, and occupier of 400 acres.
- Mr. R. Message, road surveyor and occupier of 100 acres.
- Rev. J. Darby, curate.
- Mr. T. J. Hopkinson, occupier of 80 acres.
- Mr. J. Daughtry, schoolmaster.
- Rev. W. A. Dearsley, rector of Bodle Street Green.
- Mr. G. Calder, medical officer.

From Heathfield—
- Rev. W. Jackson, vicar.
- Mr. W. Deadman, certificated schoolmaster.

The chair was taken by G. Darby, Esq.

The land in Warbleton belongs to several owners. The manor and about 1,000 acres belong to Smith's charity. Four of the landowners are resident. There is hardly a sufficient supply of resident labour, and there is said to be a deficiency of boys. Upwards of 200 acres are under hop cultivation. The purveying of poultry for the London market employs a considerable number of the people. The cottages are sufficient for the accommodation of the people; they are both clustered into groups and dispersed over the area of the parish. It is not the general habit in the parish to attach them to the farms. There are not many instances of overcrowding. The old cottages are roomy. Many of them are in the hands of small proprietors. The worst cottages are those which were built about 40 years ago. They are either of brick, or of weather tile, or weather boarding, plastered inside. The rent ranges from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a week. Most of the cottages, except about a score, built 40 years ago, have gardens; 20 rods is considered to be a sufficient size for a garden. There are nine acres of allotment, divided into parcels of from 20 to 40 rods apiece, let at 1*l.* an acre, tithe and rate free. The people are found anxious to have them, and the lots are very well cultivated.

There is a parochial school, in two departments, under a master and mistress, not in connexion with Government, with 90 names on the register, and an average attendance of 70. The attendance of the boys is very irregular, in consequence of the frequent demands upon their labour either at home or on the farms. Boys and girls are of use in hop-pole shaving at as early an age as 7, and they are often taken to work on the farms at 8 or 9. In consequence of this state of things, the schoolmaster cannot produce results that are satisfactory to him.

There has been a night school in the winter months twice a week for the last 16 years, taught by the rector and the schoolmaster. It is felt to be very valuable, but still not fully to repair the deficiencies of the day school.

There are two private adventure dames' schools in the parish, with about a dozen children in each, which, as infant schools, are found to be useful.

There is also a National school, under a certificated master and uncertificated mistress, receiving Government aid, at Bodle Street Green. There are 104 names on the register, and an average attendance of 68. It is said to be an excellent school, but there is generally a deficiency of from 20*l.* to 25*l.* in the accounts, which is made up by the incumbent. There is no night school in this district.

The people generally are found to be anxious to avail themselves of the opportunity of education for their children, and in the last three years, upon a nearly equal number of names on the register, the average attendance has improved from 52 to 68.

In Heathfield there are four principal and a great many small proprietors. There is a sufficiency of labour, but not a surplus. Nine years ago Mr. Jackson remembers that there were many cases of men unemployed in the winter; such a thing is nearly unknown now. About 100 acres are under hop cultivation, and both in Warbleton and Heathfield there is an increase in the acreage thus cultivated. The description given of the Warbleton cottages will nearly apply to Heathfield, except that they are more scattered. About 1,900 acres of the parish are woodland, on which there would not stand more than a dozen cottages.

There are no allotments, most of the cottages having fair gardens.

The school is under Government inspection; mixed, under a certificated master and uncertificated mistress. There are 115 names on the register, and the average attendance last year was 75. The total annual cost is about 100*l.*; the voluntary subscriptions are 35*l.*, and there is usually a deficiency of 10*l.*, which is made up by the vicar.

The boys are taken away at a very early age, and the attendance, even while they are nominally at school, is very irregular. There is not believed to be more than a third of the population within a radius of a mile, and the two largest hamlets, each containing about 300, are 2½ miles distant. An additional school is being erected in one of these hamlets.

There are three or four dames' schools, and one considerable private adventure school, attended by between 50 and 60 children; the fee is 4*d.* and 6*d.* a week. The rate at the parish school is 2*d.*

There has been a night school, but it is not being attempted this winter. Owing to the scattered character of the population, it is very difficult to secure regular attendance.

The soil in this district is very various; some is a stiff clay, other a light sand. The rent varies from 5*s.* an acre to 20*s.* The best land would produce eight sacks of wheat to the acre; the inferior about four. A good deal of the land is not suitable to the cultivation of wheat. It is not generally very prolific of weeds, though, if left to itself, it will grow a good crop of thistles. The large farms would have perhaps four acres out of every 100 under hops. The farms range in size from 500 acres (which would be a very large occupation) down to 20, and even smaller holdings. In Heathfield 15 acres is a very common holding. About three men and a boy is considered a sufficient supply of labour per 100 acres on the larger occupations; on the smaller farms the proportion of boy labour is larger. The smaller holdings are worked entirely within the family, and this is found to be a great difficulty in the way of school attendance. Almost all the small occupiers are chicken-fatters, and this again employs the children.

On a farm, with the usual proportion of hops and arable land, the annual cost of labour would be about 30*s.* an acre, including harvest, hop-tying, and picking.

Wages for day labour are now 13*s.* 6*d.* a week, but hop-digging, hop tying and picking, pole-pulling, hop-drying, hedging and ditching, wood-cutting, mowing and reaping are done by piece-work, so that it is estimated that a skilled able-bodied agricultural labourer in constant employ would earn on the average 16*s.* a week.

Boys are required to go with the teams, to drive the plough, and to lead the horse in hoeing the hop-gardens. Much of the heavy land requires to be ploughed with four horses in line. Ordinarily such a boy would be of 11 years of age, but sometimes the carter has a son of his own, whom he brings on at an earlier age. Such boys begin at 2*s.* 6*d.* or 3*s.* a week. Hop-pole shaving employs both boys and girls at a very early age in the winter. They earn 5*d.* or 6*d.* a day, but are paid by the 100 poles. Hop-tying is done entirely by females, and occupies them at intervals from six to eight weeks in the year. It is done by piece-work, and the women earn at it about 1*s.* a day. This is the usual day wage of a woman.

On the largest farm in this district (500 acres) female labour is only employed in the hop garden; the hay is got in without any women's help.

A woman's day is from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with an hour for dinner.

Women are less disposed to work on the land than they used to be, and young unmarried women are seldom employed on the land at all.

No foreigners are introduced into these parishes to pick hops, but many of the people go into other districts for this purpose, generally the more thriftless families, and the moral consequences are not satisfactory. The whole family migrates for the job; the house is locked up, and often girls in delicate health are obliged to accompany their parents, and being exposed to all sorts of lodging during their absence from home have been known to return with the foundations laid of not unfrequently fatal disease.

The meeting feel that the question proposed to them, as regards the best mode of improving the education of the agricultural labourer's child, is surrounded with difficulties, rendering the application of any of the principles of the Factory Act to the case a matter requiring the greatest possible caution. The value of the child's labour to the parent in the case of large families is too great to be easily dispensed with. The work to which children are put is not exhaustive, or otherwise physically injurious. There is a considerable improvement in the schools, and a growing desire on the part of the people to avail themselves of the means of education. Mere restriction of age, without any accompanying requirement to attend school, would lead to no good results. A compulsory system of education, besides the hardships that would occur under it, would be contrary to the sentiments of the people, and would be likely to be so extensively evaded as to be practically inoperative; so that, taking all these circumstances into consideration, the meeting feel themselves unable to come to any definite resolutions.

Nov. 12, 1867. G. Darby, Chairman.

No. 66. *Thursday, Nov.* 14, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Hooe, for

Hooe	Pop., 496	Acr., 2,448	R.V., 2,824*l.*
Wartling	Pop., 1,000	Acr., 4,690	R.V., 5,196*l.*
Ninfield	Pop., 587	Acr., 2,491	R.V., 2,226*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Hooe—
- Rev. N. Maning, vicar.
- Mr. E. Goldsmith, churchwarden, and occupier of 200 acres.
- Mr. Joseph Cuthbert, overseer, and occupier of 160 acres.
- Mr. Francis Dodson, collector of taxes.
- Mr. Joshua Lemmon, occupier of 72 acres.
- Mr. Frederick Hewlett, certificated schoolmaster.
- Mr. Wm. Pettett, overseer.

From Wartling—
- Rev. E. C. Graham, vicar.
- Mr. Wm. Tickner, guardian and occupier of 600 acres.
- Mr. Wm. Hickes, overseer and occupier of 300 acres.

From Ninfield—
- Rev. Geo. Rainier, vicar.

The Chair was taken by the Rev. N. Maning, vicar of Hooe.

In Hooe there are four or five large landowners, none of whom are resident in the parish, and six or seven small proprietors.

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There is hardly enough resident labour in the parish; and the deficiency was particularly felt this summer in consequence of some extensive building and other operations going on in the neighbourhood which drained away the hands. There is scarcely ever an able-bodied man out of employ, even in the winter.

The majority of the cottages belong to the landowners, and in most cases are let with the farms. They are generally occupied on weekly tenure, at rents ranging from 1*s.* 4*d.* to 2*s.* a week. Many of them are reported to be not in good repair, indifferently provided with offices, and deficient in bedroom accommodation, and there is no move on the part of the landowners in the direction of improvement. Most of the cottages have gardens averagiug 20 rods in size, but there are no allotments.

There is a mixed parochial school managed under a trust deed by the minister and churchwardens receiving aid from Government, under a certificated master, assisted by a sewing mistress. There are 68 names on the register, with an average attendance of 35. The total annual cost is 70*l.*; the annual subscriptions are 10*l.* or 12*l.*, the school pence 15*l.*, the Government grant last year was 36*l.* The vicar does not consider that the school is adequately supported: One large landowner subscribes nothing. The vicar considers himself responsible for deficiencies. The school fee is 2*d.* a week per child, and 3*d.* a week for children in the first class. It is not believed that these terms are too high for the means of the parents.

There is a dame's school attended by 20 or 30 younger children.

There has been a night school for seven years. For the last five years it has been in connexion with Government. It has varied in its results; last year, when it was most successful it was attended by 40 scholars. This year there are at present only 11. It is taught by the schoolmaster alone; the charge is 3*d.* a week; the age of the scholars varies from 14 to 26. They are anxious to learn, and about half the number can read fairly well; and six out of the 11 could probably write a letter. The schoolmaster considers that these young men are above the average of the young men in the parish in point of attainments.

The two largest owners in Wartling are the Earl of Ashburnham and Mr. Curteis, who own three-fourths of the land. There are perhaps at least 20 small proprietors. There are about 400 acres of woodland. There is barely a sufficient supply of labourers resident in the parish for the proper cultivation of the land. There are from 80 to 100 acres of hop garden, which require ten times the amount of labour that arable land requires. The cost of cultivating a hop garden would be from 20*l.* to 30*l.* per acre, arable land would cost from 25*s.* to 40*s.*

The cottages in Wartling are "good, bad, and indifferent." They principally belong to the large landowners and are often let with the farms. There are not many instances of overcrowding. The rent is much the same as at Hooe. There are no allotments, but nearly all the cottages have gardens.

There is a national school managed by the vicar and churchwardens, receiving Government aid, under a certificated master assisted by a mistress. There are 60 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 45. The cost last year was 80*l.*; one large landowner subscribes liberally, another refuses to subscribe or to do anything in support of the school. Most of the farmers subscribe. The total amount of annual subscriptions is 30*l.* The vicar makes himself reponsible for deficiencies. The population is widely scattered, and the church and school are at one corner of the parish. This produces irregularity of attendance. Many children of the parish, however, attend the school at Bodle Street Green. There is no private adventure school.

There has been a night school in previous winters, but it is not at work at present. The vicar hopes to re-establish it. The scattered character of the population is unfavourable to a night school.

The two chief land-owners in Ninfield are Lord Ashburnham and Mr. Brassey. Ordinarily there is a sufficient supply of labour, but at present a large number of hands are employed in the erection of a mansion for Mr. Brassey in the parish. There are 700 acres of woodland and 12 acres of hop garden. The majority of the cottages belong to small proprietors. Their condition is much the same as at Wartling; some are very bad, deficient both in sleeping and other accommodation. The rent mostly is 2*s.* a week, and almost all have gardens. There are no allotments.

There is a national school, mixed, not in connexion with Government as regards annual grants, though built with Government aid. It is held in a capital room and is taught by a trained mistress who is reported to be admirably qualified. There are 90 children on the register and an ordinary attendance of at least 60. The total cost is 54*l.* per annum. It is not adequately supported by the landowners, one of whom does not subscribe at all. The school pence amounted to 16*l.* (at 2*d.* a scholar, a second child from the same family paying 1*d.*). The annual subscriptions, some farmers contributing, are 26*l.* The vicar, besides subscribing 5*l.*, makes good deficiencies.

There is a private adventure school attended by about a dozen children, mostly of a superior class.

The vicar used to maintain a night school, but has not done so for the last two or three years in consequence of difficulty in getting a teacher. The desire felt for one also was not such as to encourage him.

Boys at Ninfield can be rarely kept at school after 9. At Hooe, at present, there are only four boys above 10. At Wartling it is thought that they often stay till 10. Girls stay at school till 12 or 13.

The land of the district is very variable, letting at from 5*s.* to 30*s.* per acre. There is marsh land used for feeding stock which lets as high as 3*l.* an acre. The land in occupation is about equally divided between arable and pasture.

Standing day wages at present are 13*s.* 6*d.* a week; shepherds and team-men get 14*s.* and a cottage rent free. Including "great work" and harvest, an able-bodied man would average 16*s.* a week throughout the year.

Women are employed in hay-making, harvest and hop-picking, and also to weed in the spring. The rate of employment would be one woman to 100 acres, but they are not very willing to work on the land. It would be an exception to find single young girls (except during hay-making, hop-picking and harvest) at work on the land. The hop-picking in these parishes is entirely done by resident labourers. Boys are required to drive ploughs and go with the team-men, and do other light work on the farm; ordinarily a boy is of not much use under 11 or 12. Those are considered the best boys who are the strongest and most intelligent. Intelligence in this district is regarded as a valuable quality in a labourer. A good deal of machinery is used in this district; corn is mostly thrashed by steam; grass mowers are used. There is here and there a reaper, and there has been one steam-plough.

It was the unanimous feeling of the meeting that, if legislation is attempted on this subject, the best mode of improving the education of the children of the agricultural labourer, would be not to introduce any of the systems which regulate labour under the Factory and similar Acts, which it is thought would cause much embarrassment to all parties: but to take a reasonable limit of age, say 10 years, below which children should be prohibited from working on the land, to make provision for their regular attendance at school up to that limit, but when they have reached that age not to shackle them with any further restrictions in respect of school attendance.

In fixing the required amount of school attendance for each year, the meeting would not desire so high a rate to be taken as would entirely preclude the occasional employment of children under 10 years of age. If any mode of compulsion is employed to secure school attendance, the metting consider that the best

form of such compulsion would be to require a certificate of ability to read, as a condition precedent to being allowed to work.

In view of the circumstances of this district it is not considered that any legislative restriction is required on the employment of female labour on the land. The women are found quite able and disposed to restrict themselves.

Attention was called to the fact that in this neighbourhood beer and spirituous liquors are frequently sold in unlicensed houses; and the existence of such houses in a parish is felt to be most mischievous.

Signed in behalf of meeting.
N. MANING, Vicar of Hooe,
Nov. 14, 1867. Chairman.

No. 67. *Friday, November* 15, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Hailsham, for

Hailsham	Pop., 2,098	Acr., 5,283	R.V., 10,414*l.*
Arlington	Pop., 427	Acr., 4,989	R.V. 4,931*l.*
Hurstmonceux.	Pop., 1,180	Acr., 5,039	R.V., 6,119*l.*
Chiddingly	Pop., 992	Acr., 4,394	R.V., 3,809*l.*
Hellingly	Pop., 1,304	Acr., 6,016	R.V., 5,470*l.*
Laughton	Pop., 742	Acr., 4,993	R.V., 4,613*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Hailsham—
- Rev. George Love, curate.
- Mr. Thomas Burfield, twine manufacturer, and owner of house property.
- Mr. Breton, Vice-chairman of Board of Guardians, and occupier of 300 acres.
- Mr. Samuel Wenham, twine maker.
- Mr. James Parkes, twine maker.
- Mr. John Burfield.
- Mr. C. H. Crutch, certificated schoolmaster.

From Hurstmonceux—
- Mr. Edwin Smith, guardian, churchwarden, and occupier of 500 acres.
- Thomas Arkcoll, Esq., magistrate and landowner.

From Chiddingly—
- Rev. James H. Vidal, vicar.

From Arlington and Laughton—
- No representatives.

From Hellingly—
- Rev. H. Geldart, vicar.
- Mr. Edwin Akers, churchwarden and occupier of 430 acres.
- Mr. Henry Holman, one of the medical officers of the union.

It was moved that Thomas Arkcoll, Esq., should take the chair.

[In consequence of the number of parishes represented at the meeting, only a summary account of the condition of the district in respect of the supply and employment of labour, the ownership of the land and cottages, and the supply of and demand for education was attempted to be taken.]

All these parishes are open parishes. A few proprietors, such as the Earl of Chichester and H. N. Curteis, Esq., own upwards of 2,000 acres of land; but the bulk of the land is owned in parcels of less than 1,000 acres. The majority of the landowners are non-resident. In some of the parishes the non-residence of the proprietors is not found to operate disadvantageously, either as respects the condition of the cottages or the support of the school; in others (as at Hellingly) the case is different. The land in the district is very variable in quality, and the rent ranges from 10*s.* to 40*s.* an acre. There is some valuable marsh land in Hailsham and Arlington, which lets at from 40*s.* to 60*s.* an acre.

For the style of farming in the district there is believed to be a sufficient supply of resident labour. The occasional deficiency at harvest is made up by stragglers, who, having finished the earlier harvest on the downs, pass through this district on their way to the hop-gardens in East Sussex and Kent. The hops in the district are picked by resident labourers and their wives and children.

Women are not much employed in the district, and they are found to be generally indisposed to field-work.

Hops are almost entirely tied by women, at so much per acre. A difficulty is experienced in getting women, which has raised the price in the course of the last seven years from about 7*s.* to 12*s.* per acre. A quick woman, assisted by a girl, would earn perhaps 2*s.* 6*d.* a day at this job.

The residences of the labourers are clustered into small groups, and are situated in most cases in convenient proximity to the farms. It is reported that within the last 10 years there has been a considerable improvement in the condition of the cottages, and many new ones have been erected; but still, in many cases the cottages are out of repair, and are deficient in sleeping accommodation. In Hellingly, where the cottages chiefly belong to small proprietors, this is particularly the case; but in Hurstmonceux some of the worst cottages belong to owners who could afford to improve them.

It is not believed that any money has been borrowed under the Land Improvement Act, by landowners in this district for building cottages, and only in very few cases for draining land. The conditions under which the money is lent, and the peremptory requirements of the Commissioners as regards depth of drains, &c, which are applied to all qualities of land alike, are believed to operate disadvantageously in the way of applying the Act. To avail himself of this opportunity the landowner is often put to a needless and excessive expense.

The earliest work to which boys are put is to tend birds in spring and autumn, and to shave hop-poles in the winter. For these purposes they are often removed from school at as early an age as 7 or 8. They are also required to help their parents in corn-harvest and hop-picking; and this second harvest (hops) coming after the first, occasionally obliges the summer holidays to be prolonged to nine weeks. But for the ordinary operations of the farmer, such as driving plough, &c., a boy is not of much use before 10 or 12. There is a scarcity of boys to work on the land in the neighbourhood of Hailsham, in consequence of the number employed in the twine manufacture; and boys who can drive plough are worth from 6*d.* to 10*d.* a day, according to their age. There is a distinct preference shown now in hiring labourers to take a man who has two or three boys coming on.

The custom of taking lads and young men to live in the farmer's house has almost expired in this district.

The district is fairly supplied with schools; but owing to the scattered character of the population, in many cases the children have to travel from two to three miles to their school. It is not believed that any particular strain or difficulty is experienced in maintaining the schools; though the schools in receipt of Government aid find that aid very much diminished in amount by the prevalent irregularity of attendance.

The night schools in the district have not been generally successful; and the meeting feels that it is a point worthy of all consideration how to make the night school a permanent feature of the educational organization of a rural parish. In Hailsham, Mr. Burfield has had for 20 years two night schools for the five winter months for the benefit of the boys employed in his twine manufactory. These schools are now attended by 85 scholars.

As far as the cultivation of the land is concerned, it would cause no embarrassment to the farmer if the law were to prohibit the employment of a child under 10 years of age; but as there are many employments in this district in which children below that age may be very useful to their parents in contributing to the amount of earnings of the family, any absolute restriction of child-labour up to that age would, in some

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cases, be productive of much hardship; in particular where there was a large young family.

In order to remedy this possible hardship, the meeting would desire to see children exempted from such restriction as soon as they could produce a certificate, granted by some competent examiner, of ability to read. It was thought that in many cases such ability might be attained by children at as early an age as 9; and the remission of the restriction thus obtainable would operate as an additional motive on the parents to send their children regularly to school.

There is no employment of girls on the land, except in harvest or the hop-picking season.

The watering-places on the coast create a demand for household service, which is as much as the district can do to supply; and though women occasionally engage in work which seems unsuitable to them, the circumstances of the district are not considered to require any restrictions being laid upon them.

With regard to cottages, the feeling of the meeting was against their being built in large blocks; single or double cottages, with 20 or 30 rods of garden ground attached, was considered to be the most suitable arrangement.

Most cottages in this district are let on weekly tenure. Those belonging to the landowners are generally let with the farms.

Signed on behalf of the meeting,
THOS. ARKCOLL, Chairman.

Nov. 15, 1867.

COUNTY OF SUSSEX: WEST HAMPNETT UNION.

No. 68. *Tuesday, November* 19, 1867.

Meeting at Yapton, for

Yapton	- Pop., 589.	- Acr., 1,699	- R.V., 4,140*l.*
Barnham	- Pop., 125.	- Acr., 730	- R.V., 1,790*l.*
Middleton	- Pop., 80.	- Acr., 859	- R.V., 630*l.*
Felpham	- Pop,, 592.	- Acr., 2,254	- R.V., 4,020*l.*

Present at the Meeting:

From Yapton—
- Rev. T. S. L. Vogan, vicar.
- Mr. Wm. Cronch, churchwarden and occupier of 300 acres.
- Mr. George Baker, churchwarden and occupier of 220 acres.
- Mr. James Suter, guardian and occupier of 150 acres.
- Mr. Frank Luker, overseer and occupier of 340 acres.
- Mr. Henry Bateman, assessor and tradesman.
- Mr. Thos. Davis, national schoolmaster.

From Barnham—
- Mr. R. Ellis, relieving officer.

From Middleton—
- Mr. R. Redford, owner in Middleton, and owner and occupier of 200 acres in Yapton.

From Felpham—
- No representative.

The chair was taken by the Rev. T. S. L. Vogan.

In Yapton there are four or five principal landowners, of whom only one (owning 170 acres) is resident. There are several small proprietors.

There is abundance of resident labour, indeed Yapton sends labour into the adjacent parishes of Binstead, Climping, Ford, Barnham, and Middleton. A considerable number of hands, varying from 20 to 40, find constant employment in connexion with thrashing machines, of which six (in addition to drills and other implements) are kept and let for hire by one machinist residing in the village.

There would be a redundancy of cottages and of people in Yapton were it not that it supplies labour to so many adjacent parishes. It is a popular parish for lodgers, and consequently many of the cottages are overcrowded.

Many of the cottages belong to the landowners and are let with the farms, the tenant of the farm having the nomination to them; but the majority belong to small proprietors. The rent varies from 1*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week; the average would be 1*s.* 9*d.* They have all got gardens; and about three acres of the glebe are let in 18 or 20 allotments. The gardens would average 10 rods; of land of this quality 20 rods is considered as much as a man can properly cultivate as a garden. It does not answer to a labouring man to hire labour.

There is a national school, not receiving Government aid, under an untrained master and mistress, mixed, with 62 names on the register and an average attendance of 50. The total annual cost is about 58*l.*, of which 22*l.* comes from a charity; 20*l.* from school pence, and the remainder from voluntary subscriptions. Only two landowners subscribe; but there is no debt on the school, and its expenditure is met without difficulty. In fact the vicar does not know what he should do with more money if he had it. He considers the school perfectly efficient, and sufficient for the circumstances of the parish. Two or three small adjacent parishes have no school; and the elder children attend here. There are children from a coastguard station (aged respectively 11, 12, and 14) who come a long three miles to school, and these are amongst the most regular attendants. There is one small private adventure dame's school, attended by six or eight children.

The schoolmaster carried on a night school for three winters, but has not attempted it this year in consequence of his health not being equal to this additional strain. When going, it was attended by about 20 scholars, the majority of whom were regular in attendance and anxious to learn. No volunteers offered to teach. The charge was 6*d.* a week, and it was held in the schoolmaster's house.

In Barnham, the principal owner (of about 500 acres) is resident, and occupies his own land. The Duke of Richmond owns about 200 acres. There are two owners of about 25 acres each. There are about 25 cottages. A railway station has been recently formed at a corner of the parish, which has led to the erection of several new cottages, and a considerable increase of the population, which is now estimated at 160.

The relieving officer considers that the condition of the cottages in Barnham is above the average; and he does not know of any case of overcrowding. The rent varies. One landowner lets his at 1*s.* to the men whom he employs; another proprietor lets his at 2*s.* 6*d.* Some of the cottages are short of garden. Barnham draws some of its labour from Yapton.

There is no school in Barnham; but the school in the neighbouring parish of Eastergate (now temporarily closed on account of the master's death), serves the purpose of both parishes.

In Middleton, there are two landowners, who are not resident. There is a short supply of labour; and there are only seven cottages for labourers. Out of the the seven, three are in very indifferent condition. There is a group of eight cottages occupied by the coastguard.

There is no school, and the children attend either at Yapton or Felpham.

There was no one present at the meeting to represent Felpham, but the following facts were furnished by the relieving officer.

There are seven or eight owners of from 50 to 400 acres of land. None of them are resident.

There is a sufficient supply of labour, and there are believed to be enough cottages, but many are in poor condition. They mostly belong to small proprietors. They are chiefly built of pebbles, got from the beach, and thatched. Some of them have very good gardens. There are no allotments.

There is a parochial school, under a mistress. It used to be taught by a master, but about two years ago it was put under a mistress. The vicar, in a letter, reports that "the employment of very young "boys in the place of men, principally as horse-boys, "is having a most damaging effect upon the parish

"schools," and states "that the average age in the "first-class in the national schools" (in his inspection district) "has fallen 11 months in the last 10 years, "mainly owing to the demand of boy-labour."

The bulk of the land in these four parishes is a rich hazel loam; it is not very wet land, but two-thirds of it has been very much benefited by draining. The best land is worth 2*l.* an acre; and there would hardly be any let under 30*s.* It is too strong for barley; but it will grow wheat, oats, and peas. Its root crops are good. On an average of seven years it will produce eight sacks of wheat to the acre, and about 16 sacks of oats.

The ploughs are generally drawn by two horses abreast, without a driver, except for a winter fallow, when a third horse is put on, and a driver required, Nine-tenths of the corn is thrashed by steam; but not more than one-third is sown by the drill. It suits all sorts of weather best to sow broadcast; the men understand the mode better; and if the ground is clean, it is thought to result in quite as good a crop as would be procured by the drill.

The standing rate of weekly wages at present for an ordinary labourer is 13*s.*; carters get 15*s.* or 14*s.* and their house rent-free; shepherds 15*s.* and cottage. The farmers in this district only fatten sheep, and do not breed largely. The proportion of sheep kept would be about one to an acre.

A man is paid 5*l.* 10*s.* (without beer) or 5*l.* (with beer) for his harvest month; but many men do their harvest work by the piece, and in this way would probably earn 6*l.* or more. The assistance of the wife would probably add 2*l.* to this amount.

The custom of gleaning in these parishes is only to allow the family of the labourers employed on the farm to go over the land first; afterwards, anyone is allowed to pick up what is left. A family will often glean upwards of a sack.

A good deal of the harvest work is done by foreigners. They come for 10 days or a fortnight, do the reaping, but rarely stay to carry. They do not displace any of the home labour, but only supplement its deficiency.

The earliest work to which boys are put is to scare birds and tend sheep. They are sometimes taken as early as seven; but for ordinary farm work they are of little use before 10. But parents with large families are anxious to get their children employed at the earliest moment.

Young girls under 18 are hardly ever seen at work on the land; and there is a difficulty of getting even married women to undertake field labour. Their chief employment is to clean the land, weed corn, and help in haymaking. The farmers do not consider women's labour absolutely indispensable, indeed they believe they could get on without it; but it is very useful. A woman's day is from eight to five, with an hour allowed for dinner; and the wage is 10*d.*; 1*s.* in haymaking.

A boy of 10 would earn from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* a week.

The custom has almost entirely expired of boys and young men living in the farmhouse.

The meeting is unanimous in desiring that every labouring man should be able to read and write intelligently.

The meeting feel very distinctly the difficulties that surrouud any system of compulsory education, as applied to the case of agricultural labour. They would prefer seeing an attempt made to produce better results than exist at present, by the use of some motive of encouragement.

They do not believe that there is any necessity for legislation to abridge or limit the hours of labour, which in this district are not excessive or exhausting. They feel that any restriction laid upon the age at which children should be allowed to go to work, would have to face and deal with the difficulty of the hardship that would thereby in many cases be inflicted upon large families.

Recognizing these various difficulties, and unable to see their way clearly through them, but by no means desiring to express themselves as though they were content or satisfied with things as they are, the meeting are not prepared to make any recommendations upon the question submitted to them, and only hope that, if dealt with legislatively it will be dealt with in a wise and practical spirit.

Signed on behalf of the meeting.

THOMAS S. L. Vogan, Chairman.

Nov. 19, 1867.

No. 69. *Thursday, November* 21, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Walberton, for

Walberton	Pop., 588	Acr., 1,722	R.V., 3,350*l.*
Madehurst	Pop., 208	Acr., 912	R.V., 1,190*l.*
Birsted	Pop., 110	Acr., 1,086	R.V., 1,080*l.*
Eastergate	Pop., 162	Acr., 1,908	R.V., 1,920*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Walberton—
- Rev. T. S. L. Vogan, vicar.
- Mr. J. D. Hide, churchwarden, and occupier of 500 acres in Walberton, Yapton, Middleton, and Felpham.
- Mr. Wm. Barton, guardian and occupier of 230 acres in Yapton and Walberton.
- Mr. Henry Farnden, baker, and occupier of 4 acres.
- Mr. Mark Luxford, parochial schoolmaster.

From Madehurst—
- Rev. C. R. Scholfield, vicar.

From Binsted—
- Rev. H. C. Bones, rector.

From Eastergate—
- Mr. Thomas White, overseer, and occupier of 250 acres.

The chair was taken by Rev. T. S. L. Vogan.

In Walberton there are two principal, and five or six small proprietors. The principal proprietors are resident.

There is about a sufficient supply of labour in the parish for the cultivation of the land. A good many of the men are employed by a bricklayer and stonemason; others work in the woods. In consequence of the opportunity of this employment, there are men who will not work on the land unless they can earn 2*s.* 6*d.* or 3*s.* a day. The supply of cottages is deficient. Mr. Barton requires three cottages on his farm and hasn't one. There are about 100 cottages in the parish. It is considered that 4½ men, and three cottages is the proper proportion to 100 acres. The cottages at present are not in good condition. About 55 belong to one of the landowners, and he is now engaged in putting them into an improved state. There is a great deficiency of bedroom accommodation, several having only a single chamber. The rent ranges from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. The landowner's cottages above referred to are let on a monthly tenure, at 6*s.* 8*d.* a month. There are no allotments, but most have gardens varying in size from 10 to 15 rods.

The parish school is endowed with 12*l.* a year. The school pence amount to from 8*l.* to 10*l.* The extra expenditure, which has amounted to from 40*l.* to 50*l.* a year, is provided by one of the landowners (Mr. Prime). There are at present 59 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 45.

There is also a mixed infants' and girls' school, supported entirely by a benevolent lady, non-resident, but connected with the parish, with 68 names on the register, and an average attendance of 50.

There is also a private adventure dame's school attended by 32 children, paying 3*d.* a week, which the vicar considers to be a very useful school.

All these schools are attended by children from neighbouring parishes; but the vicar believes that at least 100 Walberton children are under education.

There is no night school. The vicar's health is unequal to undertake it; and the schoolmaster is at

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present inexperienced, and shrinks from the responsibility.

In Madehurst, the land (with the exception of 23 acres of glebe), all belongs to one proprietor (J. C. Fletcher, Esq.), who is resident. There is a considerable quantity of woodland and down in the parish. These woods employ a good deal of labour, and the labour supply of the parish is short. Labourers are imported from Slindon and Walberton. There are only three farms in the parish. There are 27 cottages reported to be in good condition generally, and improvement is going on. Only a few have three bedrooms. They are let at 1*s.* a week, with a good garden. The water supply is almost entirely from the rain fall, which is caught in ponds and tanks. This water is found to be perfectly wholesome. The vicar never uses anything else himself, though he has a well. The wells are obliged to be sunk very deep, perhaps 100 yards, and it takes two minutes to draw a bucket of water.

There is a parochial school, entirely supported and managed by the squire. It is taught by a master and sewing mistress, and has about 45 children on the register; regularity of attendance is strictly enforced. The vicar considers it the best rural school that he has ever had anything to do with.

One of the squire's daughters has had a night school at the hall for four or five winters, which has been attended by eight or ten scholars, who are employed by day upon the land. It has been very useful.

It is found that the larger proportion of the children, when their education is finished, do not remain in the parish or work upon the land. They either are taken into service at the hall, or migrate elsewhere. Boys ordinarily stay at this school till 12, and girls till 14. This is the rule of the school, and though there is no particular mode of enforcing it, it is generally complied with. The present standing rate of weekly wage in Madehurst is 12*s.*, and with the exception of a rather lower rent and a better garden, the parents enjoy no advantages beyond those in other parishes. Yet they make no difficulty about keeping their children at school.

There are five or six landowners at Binsted, of whom none are resident.

There is a deficiency of labour, which is imported from the adjoining parishes. There are two farms and 18 cottages, which is an inadequate supply. The cottages, generally, are in fair condition; rent 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a week; very good gardens. A good water supply from wells, the water being about 25 feet below the surface. Bedroom accommodation is deficient, and in three cottages there is considerable overcrowding. In one case, a grandfather and grandmother, a father and mother, and three young children sleep in one room. These three cottages belong to one considerable landowner.

There is no day school, Binsted being within half a mile of Walberton, and the children attending there.

There is no night school; the rector believes that most of the young men can read and write.

In Eastergate there are two large and one or two small landowners. There is a sufficient supply of labour, and enough cottages. Many of the cottages are newly built, and others have been put into a thorough state of repair. It is believed that most have three bedrooms. Generally, they have good gardens, perhaps 20 rods in size. The rent is 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a week. The cottages chiefly belong to the landowners, who are non-resident. About 400 acres belong to the dean and chapter of Chichester.

There is a school which has been temporarily suspended for the last three months, in consequence of the illness and subsequent death of the master. Some difficulty is experienced in raising the requisite amount of funds.

There has occasionally been a night school, but it is not maintained this winter.

The quality of the land in this district varies much. It lets at rents varying from 10*s.* to 40*s.* and even 60*s.* per acre. Wages, at present, are about 13*s.* a week; carters and shepherds receiving 1*s.* to 2*s.* a week more. It is found a difficult thing to get carters, the young lads not taking to the stables. Indeed, "it is hard to replace any good labourer, if "you lose one."

Young girls are not at all employed in these parishes on the land, and, except in haymaking and harvest, married women can hardly be procured. There is a difficulty to get women to come out from home to do a day's work at charing or washing, even at 1*s.* a day wages, with victuals. Boys are rarely employed before 10, though occasionally a younger boy is put to scare birds or tend sheep.

The half-day system is considered inapplicable to the agricultural operations of this district. The alternate day system requires a relay of boys, and as there is no redundancy of boy labour this also would be impracticable. When boys commence regular work (which they rarely do before 10), they are generally kept on throughout the year, and there would be a difficulty in securing any sufficient amount of slack time during which they could be sent to school. Under these circumstances the meeting think that the best way to improve the education of children in an agricultural district would be to prohibit their going to labour under a certain age, say 10 years; to make provisions for securing their regular attendance under that age; but when that age is reached, to shackle them with no further restrictions in respect of attendance at school. To fix a higher age than 10 would not only inconvenience the farmer, but would often inflict hardship on large families.

The condition of female labour in this district is not such as, in the opinion of this meeting, to require legislative interference.

The fact was mentioned with regret that early and imprudent marriages are very prevalent in this district, and that many of the women who marry are quite incompetent to discharge their duty as wives and mothers, and instead of adding to his comfort, bring poverty and wretchedness into their husband's home.

The meeting regret the facilities that are placed in the way of obtaining a license to sell beer. They would wish either that the licensing power should be placed in the hands of the magistrates, or that the petition for the licence should be signed by a higher class of ratepayers.

Signed on behalf of the meeting,
THOMAS S. L. VOGAN, Chairman.

Nov. 21, 1867.

No. 70. *Friday, November* 22.

Collective Meeting at Singleton, for

Singleton	Pop., 556	Acr., 5,010	R.V., 3,640*l.*
Graffham	Pop., 416	Acr., 1,650	R.V., 1,060*l.*
East Dean	Pop., 343	Acr., 4,647	R.V., 1,470*l.*
Upwaltham	Pop., 71	Acr., 1,245	R.V., 510*l.*
Binderton	Pop., 90	Acr., 1,790	R.V., 980*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Singleton—
- Rev. F. A. Bowles, rector.
- Mr. Ephraim Adams, churchwarden and relieving officer.
- Mr. John Dearling, occupier of 300 acres and churchwarden.
- Mr. Charles Farley, overseer and churn-maker.
- Mr. James Challen, guardian and occupier of 160 acres.
- Mr. John Ewens, occupier of 1,200 acres (including down.)
- Mr. George Scammell, publican.
- Mr. Edwin Curtis, grocer and draper.
- Mr. N. B. Turner, medical officer.
- Mr. Henry Hipkins, occupier of 500 acres.
- Mr. Geo. Busby, national schoolmaster.

From Graffham—
Rev. R. W. Randall, rector.
From East Dean—
Rev. H. Cogan, vicar.
Mr. Charles Stride, churchwarden and occupier of 2,000 acres in East Dean and Upwaltham of which latter parish he is guardian.
Mr. Thomas Fogden, waywarden, and occupier of 800 acres (including down).
From Up Waltham—
Mr. Stride is an occupier here.
From Binderton—
Mr. Walter Woods, guardian and occupier of 600 acres.
Mr. S. C. Heming, steward to Hon. Mrs. Vernon Harcourt.

The Chair was taken by the Rev. F. A. Bowles.

The three chief landowners in Singleton are the Duke of Richmond, Lord Leconfield, and the Hon. Mrs. Vernon Harcourt. None of them is resident in the parish.

For the ordinary cultivation of the land there is a sufficient supply of labour; but in turnip-hoeing, hay-making and harvest, there is a deficiency which is supplied by men from the hop districts. In the winter many of the men find employment in the woods.

The cottages are generally in fair condition, but are much crowded in Goodwood race week, when their lower apartments (in the case of 16 cottages) are turned into boxes for race-horses. All the recently erected cottages have three bed-rooms, and others have had their sleeping accommodation much improved. Some of the cottages belong to small proprietors, but the majority belong to the landowners and are let at low rents, 1*s.* and 1*s.* 2*d.* a week, with about 20 rods of garden-ground. Where the garden is small, an allotment is attached to the cottage which is included in the rent.

There is a school in two departments for boys and girls, under a master and a mistress, the whole expense of which (over and above the school fees) is borne by Lord Leconfield. A very large proportion of the population are under instruction; there are 50 names on the boys' school register and 70 girls and infants in the other department; and this out of a population of less than 600. Not a single child comes from other parishes.

There has generally been a night school, but last winter it was scantily attended and has not been attempted this winter.

In East Dean all the land except the glebe belongs to the Duke of Richmond, who resides in the adjoining parish of Boxgrove. About three-fourths of the area is down, coppice, and timber land.

There is a sufficient supply of resident labour throughout the year, and there are enough cottages. The cottages generally are in very good condition and there is not much to complain of in the way of overcrowding. There are about 70 cottages, of which 55 belong to the Duke of Richmond, one to the vicar, nine to another proprietor, and four to another. The general rent is 3*l.* a year, the rent being taken monthly. Each farm has four or five cottages attached to it at the disposal of the tenant, which are let at 1*s.* a week. All the cottages have good gardens.

There is a mixed school not in connexion with Government, under a mistress, kept in a building belonging to the Duke of Richmond, supported by voluntary subscriptions amounting to about 30*l.*, with 50 names on the register, and an average attendance of 45.

The governess conducts a private night school, attended by eight or 10 scholars, varying in age from 8 to 13. She has no difficulty in managing it.

Upwaltham is three miles from East Dean, and is a distinct parish, though at present both are served by the same incumbent. The land belongs in about equal proportions to Lord Leconfield and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

There is rather a scarcity of labour in the summer time. Of the 1,245 acres in the parish not more than 500 are cultivated land.

The cottages (14 or 15 in number) are in good repair, several with three bedrooms, let at about 3*l.* a year, with good gardens.

The whole parish, with the exception of 50 acres, is in one occupation. The five cottages belonging to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners are attached to the farm. Lord Leconfield's are kept in the proprietor's hands.

There is a small school attended by from 15 to 20 children, kept in a room adjoining a cottage by an elderly woman, who is competent to teach reading, writing, and plain needlework. She receives 17*l.* a year (the produce of voluntary subscriptions) in addition to the school pence which come to about 1*s.* 3*d.* a week.

There is no night school.

All the land in Binderton belongs to Hon. Mrs. Harcourt, who has a mansion in the adjoining parish of West Dean.

About 800 acres is the extent under cultivation.

In the busy times of the year, out-parishioners are employed; but at other seasons there is a sufficiency of resident labour.

There are about a dozen cottages all belonging to Mrs. Harcourt, let with the farms. Most of them have three bedrooms, and the rent is generally 1*s.* a week. They have all gardens.

There is no school at Binderton, the children attend the school at West Dean, which is about two miles distant, along a good road.

There is no night school either, but there is one at West Dean, though it is not believed that any scholars attend from Binderton.

In Graffham the principal landowner is the Bishop of Oxford, who is also the chief owner of cottage property. There are five farmers in the parish, and not more than 800 acres of cultivated land. There is an excess of labour for the actual wants of the parish, and some of the people are badly off in the winter. Before the change in the Poor Law, the poor rate in Graffham has been known to be 22*s.* in the pound, and the population was then in excess of what it is now. Of late years the rate has averaged 3*s.* 6*d.* in the 1*l.* Many of the people work out of the parish, chiefly in the Duke of Richmond's woods.

The condition of the cottages is not good. Many of them are out of repair and some are sadly overcrowded. Those belonging to the Bishop of Oxford are in the best condition, and six that he has recently erected are excellent. He has lately bought several cottages, which are at present in bad condition, but which it is believed he intends to improve.

There is an excellent school which the rector is "thankful to say," is not in connexion with Government; held in an admirable building erected by the rector, mixed, under a master and mistress, with about 70 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 50.

There is also a separate infant school attended by about 30 children.

The schools are perfectly free, and the total annual cost, the schools being maintained on a scale of great liberality, is fully 130*l.* a year. The Bishop of Oxford subscribes 30*l.* a year, and the rest of the cost is defrayed by the rector.

This school serves also for the parish of Woollavington, which contains 150 people.

The rector finds he cannot keep children to as high an age as he used to do. He can rarely keep a labourer's son beyond 11, and not many to as high an age as that.

There is a night school, fairly flourishing, managed by some ladies resident in the parish, and attended by about 15 scholars.

Except in Graffham, where the soil is very variable, the whole of these parishes is on the chalk. The land is hilly and requires a good deal of horse-power, but it works kindly, and except when old ground is broken up, it is easily ploughed by two horses abreast. The

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rent varies from 10*s.* to 30*s.* per acre for cultivated land; the greater part of the down would not fetch 2*s.* 6*d.*, there being hundreds of acres which are scarcely of value as a sheep walk.

The annual cost of labour is about 30*s.* or rather over per acre of cultivated land. Turnip-hoeing, in this strong soil, is rather a costly process. There is no steam-plough at work in any of these parishes, but most of the thrashing is done by steam or horse-power. Three cottages, four men and a couple of boys would be an average supply for 100 acres.

The women have mostly got above going to work on the land, though they help in hay-making, and work with their husbands in harvest. Mr. Stride and Mr. Hipkins don't employ women at all on the ordinary work of the farm, and the amount of work done by women in the district is very insignificant; much less than it used be.

Young girls are not at all employed in field work.

The standing weekly wage at present is 13*s.* At Graftham, which is in rather a different district, on the northern side of the downs, wages are 1*s.* or 2*s.* a week lower.

Including harvest and piece-work an able-bodied man's total annual earnings this year will amount to something above 40*l.*

Wheat is cut by the acre at from 10*s.* to 15*s.* It is carted by the day at double wages.

When grass is mown by the scythe it is paid at from 3*s.* to 5*s.* an acre; and a man is supposed to cut about $1\frac{1}{4}$ or $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres a day. But mowing machines have been largely introduced into the district of late years.

Boys are generally taken to work on the land at about 10. Boy-labour is considered to be dear labour to the farmer till the boy gets to be 13 or 14 years of age; but it would not do to keep him at school to that age, or he would never make a handy labourer, nor could the parents afford to maintain him unemployed so long.

The circumstances of this district with regard to the employment of women and girls are not such as in the opinion of the meeting require any legislative interference.

The youngest boys who are employed in this district are those who accompany their fathers during the winter months into the coppices, and those who are employed at a saw mill at Singleton. Such boys are sometimes taken from school at as early an age as 7 or 8.

It is considered that any legislative restriction on the age at which boys should be allowed to work on the land will affect the pecuniary interests of the parent more seriously than those of the farmer. The farmer would not be hurt if the law were to prohibit the employment of children under 10; but any such absolute prohibition might inflict hardship upon large families.

If any legislation takes place on the subject the meeting would prefer to see an age fixed, below which children should be prohibited from work, and then leave their labour free, trusting to such influences as the night school to carry the work of education on, to any attempt, which they think would fail, to combine school attendance with employment when the boy is once gone to work. The meeting was unanimous in their opposition to any system of compulsion in the matter; and in this district the school attendance in proportion to the population is such as to indicate that where favourable influences exist, compulsion is unnecessary.

Upon the question of an educational rate, the majority of the meeting were unfavourable to that mode of supporting schools; but five gentlemen present would have no objection to a rate, locally levied, on the understanding that both the rate was administered and the school inspected under the directions of the county magistracy, and was altogether released from Government interference and control.

Signed on behalf of the meeting,
Nov. 22, 1867. J. N. Bowles, Chairman.

No. 71. *Saturday, November* 23, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Sidlesham, for

Sidlesham	Pop., 960	Acr., 4,109	R.V., 6,990*l.*
Selsey	Pop., 900	Acr., 4,314	R.V., 4,410*l.*
Earnley	Pop., 116	Acr., 1,182	R.V., 1,860*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Sidlesham—
- Rev. W. Bruton, vicar.
- Mr. Thomas Hobgen, guardian, churchwarden, and occupier of 800 acres.
- Mr. Joseph Boorn, churchwarden and occupier of 300 acres.
- Mr. W. E. Arnell, occupier of 50 acres.
- Mr. Frederick Shrubb, occupier of 80 acres.
- Mr. Thomas Hunt, occupier of 130 acres in Sidlesham and North Mundham.
- Mr. William Fogden, waywarden and occupier of 150 acres.

From Selsey—
- Rev. H. Foster, rector.
- Mr. Hugh Penfold, churchwarden and occupier of 500 acres in Selsey and Sidlesham.
- Mr. Lambert Stubington, churchwarden and joint occupier of 400 acres.
- Mr. William C. Woodman, guardian, overseer, owner and occupier of 400 acres.
- Mr. R. Chase, overseer, owner and occupier of 80 acres.
- Mr. Hugh Penfold, junior.

From Earnley—
- Mr. Henry Duke, guardian, churchwarden, owner and occupier of 1,000 acres in Earnley, Sidlesham, and East Witting.
- Mr. Robert Wakeford, overseer, owner and occupier of 250 acres.
- Mr. William Dawtrey, relieving officer.

The chair was taken by Mr. Henry Duke.

The land in Sidlesham belongs to several owners, of whom the dean and chapter of Chichester, Joseph Godman, Esq., Hon. Mr. Fitzpatrick, Thomas Oliver, Esq. are the principal. None of these owners is resident. There is a fairly adequate supply of labour for the ordinary cultivation of the land, but in the months of July and August an extra supply is required and imported. No able-bodied man is out of work in the winter.

Three of the farms are of 500 acres and upwards, and there are five or six between 200 and 500. There are about 15 occupations below 200 acres.

It is considered that about $3\frac{1}{2}$ men and three cottages is the proper proportion to 100 acres of land. Not more than half the cottages are the property of the landowners, and consequently there is sometimes a difficulty found by an agricultural labourer in getting a home.

The condition of the cottages, though not worse in the opinion of the relieving officer than in many other villages, is reported to need improvement both as to their state of repair and as to the extent of their sleeping accommodation. Improvement, however, is going on, and several new ones have been recently erected. The worst cottages are those not connected with the farms. The rent ranges from 2*l.* 12*s.* to 5*l.*; they are let by the week, the month, and the year. The labourers appear to prefer a yearly tenure, the farmers a monthly.

The cottages have gardens varying in size from 10 rods to 30, but there are no allotments. It is considered that 30 rods of planting ground is quite as much as a labouring man can cultivate properly or profitably.

There is no public school in the parish, but about 50 of the elder children attend a school called the "Manhood" school (from the name of the hundred), which supplies, or is supposed to supply, the educational wants of Birdham, Earnley, East Wittering, and Sidlesham; Sidlesham children would have to travel from one to three miles to get to it.

There are three private adventure schools, attended by about 70 children in the aggregate; one of them is kept by a pensioner, formerly schoolmaster of his regiment, but who is not a pattern of sobriety. The payment in these schools is 2*d.*, 3*d.*, and 4*d.* a week. The same man keeps a night school, attended by about 10 scholars. A statement was made by Mr. Arnell that between 1818 and 1836 there were three private schools in the parish, with 25, 40, and 30 scholars respectively, and he considers that the parish has retrograded in respect of the means of education.

In Selsey the principal landowner is the Hon. Mrs. Vernon Harcourt, who owns about 1,000 acres, but has no residence in the parish. There are about 150 acres of reclaimed land belonging to the Crown. There are 15 or 20 small proprietors.

There is plenty of labour, except perhaps in harvest time. For the last 15 years no able-bodied man has been out of employ.

There is a considerable number of fishermen in the parish, and there are four coast-guard stations, with from 80 to 100 residents.

Mrs. Harcourt is building cottages of an excellent description, and is always willing to listen to suggestions of improvement, but she has inherited a property inadequately provided with cottages, and there is one farm of 600 acres which at present only has two cottages belonging to it. The cottages generally are in good repair; indeed, the condition of the cottages in Selsey is believed to be superior to those in most parishes. The rent is about the same as at Sidlesham.

There is a national school, receiving Government aid, under a certificated mistress, with 72 names on the register, and an average attendance of 52. The total annual cost is about 63*l.*, of which about 20*l.* comes from voluntary subscriptions. The children pay 2*d.* a week, and their pence amount to about 20*l.* a year.

There are four private adventure schools, attended by about 65 children; one of them is taught by a clergyman's daughter, and is of a superior class; another is taught by an intelligent man, who is a cripple, who teaches about 20 boys, and charges 6*d.* a week. The other two are ordinary dames' schools, in both of which the children are taught fairly well to read; so that there are about 140 children under education in the parish.

The night school is kept by a tradesman, who is a large manufacturer of mousetraps, and who frequently employs about 20 boys from 10 to 11 years of age. For the benefit of these boys he has opened a night school for the last three winters, taught by his foreman and such occasional help as he can procure, which is open to such other boys as choose to attend.

The two principal landowners in Earnley are the Earl of Winterton and Mr. Fitzpatrick, neither of whom is resident.

There is not a sufficient supply of resident labour. There are about 20 cottages, all of which, except four old cottages, are in a fair state of repair. They have a sufficient supply of garden ground, and the rent ranges from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. Many of the cottagers who work on the farms pay no rent for their cottages. It is not thought that 10*l.* a year is paid as cottage rent in the parish. There is no school in Earnley; the children attend the Manhood school, and many have to travel from one to two miles. There is no night school.

The district is flat, and the land is a rich loam resting on a subsoil of brick earth, though there are varieties in that part of the district which abuts upon the sea. Perhaps 1,000 acres are reclaimed land, which is laid down in pasture. The cultivation of the rest of the district is almost entirely arable. The best farms let at about 30*s.* an acre; 500 acres would be considered a large occupation. The land is decidedly well cultivated, and is free from weeds. The annual cost of labour on arable land that is well cultivated is reckoned at from 40*s.* to 45*s.* per acre. There is much less female labour than there used to be; the women are not disposed to work on the land, except in haymaking and harvest. The farmers, for ordinary work, would nearly as soon be without them as with them. A woman's daily pay would be 9*d.*, 1*s.* in haymaking.

Young girls are not at all employed on the land; they mostly go to service, the proximity of Brighton constituting a great attraction.

Boys are not required before the age of 10. There is very little bird-scaring done or needed; there is only one rookery in the neighbourhood. As boys are chiefly employed about horses, it is not considered safe to employ boys younger than 10. A boy of 10 would earn 6*d.* a day, which would be his wage up to 12 or 13, when he would expect to be raised to 8*d.*

The standing weekly wage of an able-bodied man at present is 13*s.*, but with harvest and piecework his earnings throughout the year would average 16*s.* a week. Besides harvest and haymaking, turnips are hoed, dung is carted, hay and straw are trussed, and draining is done by the piece. Piece-work is considered much more economical to the farmer than labour paid by the day, and consequently all the work that can be done by the piece is put out in that way.

The employment of female labour is so rare and exceptional in this district that the meeting do not consider that any legislative restriction is required to regulate it.

The meeting would be glad to see a restriction laid upon the employment of boys under the age of 10, if such restriction could be accompanied with such exemptions as would mitigate the hardship that might otherwise be inflicted upon large families. A boy under 10 is of no use to the farmer, and if employed, it is generally at the solicitation of the parents. After the age of 10, however, it would be a serious interference with the cultivation of the land if the farmer were required to spare the boy either for half the day or on alternate days, or for any other period of time, for the purpose of attending school.

Here and there would be found a family (though not very frequently) where starvation would be the consequence of an absolute prohibition of boy-labour under the age of 10.

The meeting would desire to call the attention of the Legislature to the extent to which the sale of beer is carried on in unlicensed houses. Far more mischief is believed to be produced by this practice than by the licensed houses. The meeting would wish to see greater facilities placed in the way of every labouring man for brewing his own beer.

The meeting would also welcome any effective system that could be devised to prevent the evil of overcrowding in cottages. They think that every cottage occupied by a mixed family ought to have three sleeping-rooms. In Selsey, the worst cases of overcrowding and defective sanitary arrangements are to be found in the buildings belonging to the Admiralty, and occupied by the coast-guard.

Signed by the chairman in behalf of the meeting.
Nov. 23, 1867. HENRY DUKE.

No. 72. *Monday, November* 25, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Birdham, for

Birdham	Pop., 436	Acr., 1,948	R.V., 3,260*l.*
East Wittering	Pop., 223	Acr., 1,505	R.V., 2,090*l.*
West Wittering	Pop., 616	Acr., 3,615	R.V., 3,850*l.*
West Itchenor	Pop., 167	Acr., 782	R.V., 870*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Birdham—
- Rev. J. W. Miller, rector.
- Mr. Matthew Cobby, churchwarden, and occupier of 150 acres.
- Mr. Charles Farne, churchwarden, guardian, occupier of 120 acres, and manager of 140 acres.
- Mr. William Farne, overseer and miller.
- Mr. James Vine, owner and occupier of 80 acres.
- Mr. Thomas Peachey, overseer, guardian, and occupier of 300 acres.

Sussex.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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Mr. Edward Kerwood, occupier of 120 acres.
Mr. William Lawrence, schoolmaster.

From East Wittering—
Rev. John Rusbridger, churchwarden, owner, and occupier of 250 acres.
Rev. J. Cooke, rector.

From West Wittering—
Rev. W. D. Underwood, vicar.
Mr. James Gorham, churchwarden, owner and occupier of 400 acres.
Mr. Thomas Harris, guardian, owner and occupier of 300 acres.

From West Itchenor—
Rev. A. Fuller, rector.
Mr. John Halsted, churchwarden and guardian, and occupier of 400 acres.

The chair was taken by Rev. J. W. Miller, rector of Birdham.

The land in Birdham (about 1,800 acres cultivated) belongs to several owners. The largest is the Duke of Richmond, who owns about 200 acres. Most of the owners are non-resident. The size of the farms varies from 20 acres to 300. There is about a sufficient supply of resident labourers. People are rarely out of employ, even in the winter, though they used to be. The change is attributable partly to a diminution in the population and partly to improved methods of cultivation requiring more labour.

The cottages are sufficient in number, and there is no great amount of dilapidation; but very few have three bedrooms. They are constructed chiefly of brick and stone, or boulders from the shore, and tiled or thatched. Most have good gardens of from 12 to 20 rods. There are no allotments. The rent ranges from 2*l.* 10*s.* to (in a few cases) 5*l.* The majority of the cottages belong to the landowners, and are let with the farms. There has not been much recent cottage building in Birdham.

The school in Birdham (called the Manhood school, from the name of the hundred) was built in 1817 by subscription, at a cost of 350*l.*, and was intended for the six parishes of East and West Wittering, West Itchenor, Earnley, Sidlesham, and Birdham. West Wittering and West Itchenor have now schools of their own, but the Manhood school still supplies the wants of the rest of the district. There are at present on its register from—

—	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
Birdham - -	26	20	46
Sidlesham - -	24	25	49
Earnley - -	5	6	11
East Wittering -	10	6	16
West Wittering -	7	1	8
	72	58	130

and the ordinary attendance is between 80 and 90.

The school is under an untrained master, who has been in charge 31 years, assisted by a sewing mistress, and is maintained by voluntary subscriptions, which amount to about 40*l.*; the children's pence are about 16*l.* There is no other source of income. The school is considered adequate to the wants of the parish. There is a private adventure dame's school, attended by a few young children.

There is no night school. The schoolmaster has made several attempts, but they did not succeed, owing to the apathy of the people.

The Duke of Richmond is the largest owner of land (about 230 acres) in East Wittering. There are a great many small proprietors. There is a sufficiency of labour, except perhaps in harvest time. The cottages generally are reported to be in good condition, but some are decidedly deficient in sleeping accommodation. All are believed to have gardens. The rent much the same as at Birdham, 4*l.* 10*s.* being the maximum; they chiefly belong to the landowners, and there have been no recent improvements in their condition.

The Manhood school serves the purposes of East Wittering. There are two private dames' schools, attended by about 30 children, who pay 3*d.* a week. There is no night school.

The land in West Wittering belongs to several landowners (none owning more than 300 acres), most of whom are resident. The Great Tithes (said to be worth 800*l.* a year) and a farm of about 250 acres form part of the endowment of the Blue Coat school (Oliver Whitby's charity) in Chichester. The trustees built the school in West Wittering, keep it in repair, and subscribe 20*l.* a year to its maintenance.

The supply of labour is hardly equal at times to the wants of the farmers, but there is no great deficiency. There is, however, a short supply of cottages, in consequence of the number occupied by the coast-guard, of whom there are 26 resident families. The Admiralty only provide houses for 18 of these families. The consequence is that the rent in East Wittering ranges high, from 2*l.* 12*s.* to 6*l.* 10*s.*, the latter being an amount beyond the means of the agricultural labourer. Most of the cottages have two bedrooms, but several have only one, and very few have three.

There is a school, built about 14 years ago by the Whitby trustees, not receiving Government aid, under a trained mistress, with 55 or 60 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance between 40 and 50. There is a considerable fluctuation in the numbers, in consequence of changes in the coast-guard. The total cost of the school is about 45*l.* a year, the mistress's salary being 40*l.*

There are two private schools, in which about 20 children are taught. One of these claims to be a somewhat superior school.

The vicar conducted a night school for three or four winters, but has given it up, as most of his scholars went to sea or removed, and no recruits have appeared to take their place. He could get no assistance in conducting it.

There are three landowners in West Itchenor, none of whom is resident. The land is let in three principal farms. There is hardly enough resident labour for cultivating the land, as many of the people follow the sea. What more is required is imported from West Wittering and Birdham, but the men have no excessive distance to come to their work.

There are upwards of 30 cottages, mostly clustered into a street. Many of them are wooden structures, put up for a temporary purpose while some shipbuilding was going on. They have since been converted into cottages, but are not properly habitable by a family; many of them have only one bedroom, and families are huddled together in a way which makes decency impossible. The cottages that go with the farms are very decent, and mostly have three bedrooms.

The condition of the timber cottages has been reported upon by the sanitary inspector, but no improvement has taken place in their condition.

Rent ranges from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 6*l.* 10*s.* The higher rented cottages are not occupied by agricultural labourers.

There is a school, built on the glebe, and belonging to the rector. It has been maintained about 18 years. The teacher is an elderly woman, who receives the school pence, all materials being supplied by the rector. The school fee is 3*d.* for one child, 1½*d.* for a second, and 1*d.* for any other per week. There are about 35 children in attendance, most of whom are infants.

A man conducts a private school in the parish, which is attended by from a dozen to 20 older children, not all belonging to West Itchenor parish. The children pay 6*d.* a week. There is no night school.

London clay forms the bed of this district, the cultivated soil being a loam of good quality. The rent

ranges from 30*s.* to 40*s.* an acre. The standing weekly wage at present is 13*s.* The men who look after horses and sheep get 15*s.*

Female labour is not much employed. The women generally are not disposed to work on the land, except in harvest or an occasional job of piece-work. There is very little grass land that is mown, most of the pasture being marsh. When a woman does work, she gets 8*d.*, 10*d.*, or 1*s.* a day. Young girls are scarcely, if ever, employed in field-work in these parishes; they generally get out to service.

The meeting were unanimously of opinion that the half-time system (whether half-day or alternate whole day) is entirely inapplicable to agricultural employments. Boys are rarely taken to work in this district under 9 or 10. In large families the earnings of the children are so important to the parents that they are often removed from school to work when the parents would have wished their education to be continued for a longer period.

The meeting, therefore, are of opinion that if any legislation takes place on the subject, and children are prohibited from going to work on the land under a certain age, that age should not exceed 10. Five gentlemen would prefer 9, and that any such prohibition should be accompanied by a dispensing power which should prevent its operating as a hardship in the case of large families.

It is the unanimous wish of the meeting that every labouring man should at least be able to read and write.

The limited extent to which female labour is employed in this district is not such as, in the opinion of the meeting, to call for any legislative interference.

Nov. 25, 1867. J. W. MILLER, Chairman.

No. 73. *Tuesday, November* 26, 1867.

Collective Meeting at North Mundham, for

North Mundham	Pop., 426	Acr., 1,882	R.V., 3,620*l.*
Donnington	Pop., 183	Acr., 1,029	R.V., 1,890*l.*
New Fishbourn	Pop., 341	Acr., 610	R.V., 2,080*l.*
Pagham	Pop., 988	Acr., 4,376	R.V., 7,230*l.*
Hunston	Pop., 176	Acr., 1,003	R.V., 1,640*l.*
Appledram	Pop., 129	Acr., 1,197	R.V., 1,600*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From North Mundham—
- Rev. C. D. Holland, vicar.
- Mr. Sidney Smith, schoolmaster.
- Mr. George Donner, waywarden and occupier of 270 acres.
- Mr. F. Heath, relieving officer.
- Mr. Charles Chitty, guardian, churchwarden, and occupier of 300 acres.
- Mr. W. Hollingdale, landowner and occupier of 150 acres.

From New Fishbourn—
- No representative.

From Donnington—
- No representative.

From Pagham—
- Rev. R. Barker, vicar.
- John Bayton, Esq., magistrate, landowner, and occupier of 370 acres.
- Mr. Henry Upton, guardian, churchwarden, and occupier of 1,000 acres.
- Mr. Edwin Herington, guardian and occupier of 300 acres.
- Mr. Robert Penny, schoolmaster.

From Hunston—
- Mr. Alfred Cosens, churchwarden and occupier of 400 acres.

From Appledram—
- Rev. R. A. L. Nunns, incumbent.
- Mr. E. Fogden, guardian, churchwarden, and occupier of 200 acres.

The chair was taken by John Bayton, Esq.

In North Mundham the land belongs to six or seven proprietors of whom four own upwards of 200 acres. Only one of the chief landowners is resident.

There is barely sufficient labour available for the cultivation of the land. The parish being only two miles from Chichester, several of the men work there.

The cottages in number are about adequate to the population. They are in tolerable repair, and nearly all of them have two bed-chambers; a few have three. The vicar is not aware of any cases of overcrowding. They all have gardens; but there are no allotments. The gardens range in size from 15 to 40 rods. The rent of most cottages is 2*s.* a week; but a considerable number are let at 1*s.* 6*d.* The majority of them belong to small proprietors. They are mostly clustered into hamlets, of which there are five in the parish. They are not generally let with the farms, but are held direct on weekly tenure from the owners.

There is a parochial school, under the management of the vicar, not in receipt of Government aid, taught by an untrained master, who has been in charge of it for 14 years, assisted by a sewing mistress. It serves for the two parishes of North Mundham and Hunston, which, though separately maintaining their poor, are ecclesiastically united. There are 94 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of from 60 to 70. The attendance yesterday was 68. The school takes in a few children from an outlying hamlet of Pagham. The annual cost of maintaining the school is about 55*l.* The school fee is 1*d.* a week; and the amount derived from this source last year was 14*l.* The difference is made up by voluntary subscriptions; and no difficulty is experienced in maintaining the school, which the vicar considers quite adequate to the wants of the parish.

There is no night school. It was attempted for one winter, but did not succeed. The failure is attributed to the young men fancying that they already possessed sufficient education; most of them could read and write.

The land in Pagham belongs to several owners, of whom the largest are non-resident. The farms vary in size from 100 to 1,000 acres; 400 acres is considered, on the average, a large farm.

There used to be a sprinkling of fishermen in the parish, but they have disappeared, and all the people at present are employed on the land. The supply of labour is barely sufficient; such a thing as a good labourer out of work, except for his own fault, is never seen.

Some of the cottages are very old, and not in the best state of repair. There are about 130 in the parish. Not many have three bed-rooms, but most have two. When they are attached to the farms they are generally let at 1*s.* a week; otherwise the rent ranges from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* Some are even let as high as 2*s.* 6*d.*; but these are rarely occupied by agricultural labourers.

There is a National school, nominally managed by a committee, but really under the direction of the vicar. Not in connexion with Government; taught by a trained master, assisted by his wife and son. There are 94 names on the register, and an average daily attendance of 68. The teachers' stipends amount to 60*l.*, and the extra expenditure would be 10*l.* or 15*l.* The school pence (the fee varying from 1*d.* to 4*d.* a week, according to the means of the parents and the number of children out of a single family,) have averaged 30*l.* a year. The voluntary subscriptions range from 30*l.* to 40*l.*, and are raised without difficulty.

The school building is central; but the area of the parish is large, parts of it being distant at least three miles from the school. The quality of the instruction is quite sufficient for the needs of the parish.

There are two private dames' schools attended by about 30 children, which supply the place of an infant school and are considered to be useful.

There is a night school conducted by the master,

Sussex.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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attended by about 10 lads who are very regular in attendance and take interest in their work.

In Appledram there are four landowners, none of whom is resident. There are three resident occupiers. There is generally a sufficient supply of labour, some of it coming from Chichester and New Fishbourn. The population at present is only 100, but out of the 24 houses (including farms) four are now vacant. These vacant cottages are in a dilapidated condition and require repair, which is likely to be done, to make them habitable. The cottages generally are fair, though two or three are very small. The incumbent does not remember any case of overcrowding. Most of the cottages are in the hands of the farmers and are let at 1*s.* a week. There are no allotments, but all the cottages (except three) have a garden, generally a good one.

There is only a Sunday school at Appledram, held in the clerk's house. The children attend, the younger ones at Donnington distant three-quarters of a mile, the older at Chichester which is from one to two miles off.

There was no gentleman present resident in Donnington, but the following information was gathered from Mr. Fogden and the relieving officer.

Nearly all the land belongs to Charles Crosbie, Esq., who is non-resident, but takes a great interest in the condition of the parish. He is a large restorer of cottages and he built the school-house.

The relieving officer does not believe there is a bad cottage in the parish. Those belonging to Mr. Crosbie are let at 1*s.* a week. A few others also in very good condition are let at 2*s.*

There is a fairly sufficient supply of labour.

The school is supported by voluntary subscriptions; is kept in a good room, taught by a mistress, not assisted by Government, managed by the curate, and attended by about 40 children. There is not believed to be a night school.

There was no one present to represent New Fishbourn, which is a parish of small area adjoining Chichester. The principal landowner is Francis Smith, Esq., of Salt Hill. He maintains a school, which though situated in Bosham parish is close to New Fishbourn and is intended for the accommodation of its children.

The relieving officer considers the cottages on the whole to be very good, many of them have three bedrooms. The rent varies from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* and 2*s.* 6*d.* a week; but a large proportion of the population are not of the agricultural labourer class.

The soil in these parishes is mostly a rich loam, resting on the London clay; some of it rests on gravel, some on sand, and some on chalk. It is good, rich land, growing good grain and root crops, and letting at from 30*s.* to 40*s.* per statute acre. A crop of wheat would average eight sacks to the acre.

The standing weekly wage at present is 13*s.*, carters receiving 13*s.* and house rent free; shepherds 14*s.* with a house, besides their perquisites at lambing. It is estimated that an efficient labourer of 30 years of age earns at least 40*l.* in the course of the year. The practice of the district is to pay day labourers their wages all the same whether the weather is wet or dry; but of course piece-work is affected by weather.

There is always employment for married women on the land who care to work; since wages have risen they are found less disposed than they used to be to work in the fields. Except in haymaking and harvest it would not interfere very seriously with the cultivation of the land if none were employed.

Young girls are hardly ever employed in the fields; and the employment of them is considered highly undesirable, and is much discouraged by the board of guardians. Only the most thriftless mothers would allow their girls to work in the fields.

Boys are rarely taken to work regularly on a farm before 9 or 10. At 10 the farmers are glad to get them, as there is a scarcity of boy-labour in consequence of the number who go to sea. They are occasionally taken to scare birds or tend sheep at as early an age as eight. A rook-scaring boy would earn 4*d.* a day; a carter's boy (each carter who has the care of four horses requiring the help of such a boy), earns 6*d.*, 8*d.*, and 10*d.* a day, according to age and strength. The summer ploughing is done with two horses; the autumn ploughing by three (two abreast and a leader) and then a boy is required to drive them; and if there are two or three pair-horse ploughs at work in a field a boy is required between them.

Boys, in this district, being exclusively employed about animals which require daily attention, and there being no redundancy of boy labour, any attempt to apply the half-time system of the Factory Acts to the regulation of such employment with a view to the better education of such children, must either be impracticable, or could only be enforced to the utter derangement of agricultural operations.

Again, the teams are at work throughout the year, so that there is no slack time of which advantage could be taken for the purpose of enabling the boys employed about them to attend school.

It is the opinion of the meeting also, that in this district owing to the scattered character of the population, the night school can never be made an efficient instrument of carrying on or completing an interrupted education.

At the same time the meeting unanimously and strongly desire that every labouring man in the kingdom should be able to read and write. To secure these results, they are prepared to recommend that security should be taken, by legislation, that all children in an agricultural district should attend school for at least five years up to the age of 10; that the main stress of the teaching should be thrown on the reading and writing, more especially on the reading; but that if any prohibition is placed upon their employment, that prohibition should not extend beyond the age of 10. A prohibition beyond that age would interfere seriously with the cultivation of the land, and also inflict hardship upon large families.

There is not believed to be any tendency or desire to impose an exhaustive day's work on children or females, and the circumstances under which women are employed in the district are not such as to render any legislative interference with that employment necessary or desirable.

Signed on behalf of the meeting,
Nov. 26, 1867. J. Bayton, Chairman.

No. 74. *Thursday, November* 28, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Boxgrove, for

Boxgrove	Pop., 666	Acr., 3,676	R.V., 4,800*l.*
Eartham	Pop., 121	Acr., 1,504	R.V., 1,060*l.*
East Lavant	Pop., 421	Acr., 2,884	R.V., 2,950*l.*
Mid Lavant	Pop., 257	Acr., 1,350	R.V., 1,420*l.*
WestHampnett	Pop., 522	Acr., 1,890	R.V., 2,770*l.*
West Stoke	Pop., 94	Acr., 880	R.V., 830*l.*
Slindon	Pop., 543	Acr., 2,504	R.V., 2,206*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Boxgrove—
- Rev. W. Burnett, vicar.
- Mr. G. T. Bayley, occupier of 1,000 acres.
- Mr. W. J. G. Souter, guardian and occupier of 370 acres.
- Mr. Alexander Fogden, churchwarden and occupier of 200 acres.
- Mr. James Boys, guardian and overseer of East Dean, and occupier of 1,000 acres in Boxgrove, East Dean, and Eartham.
- Mr. George Knight, overseer and butcher.
- Mr. Henry Raine, certificated schoolmaster.
- Mr. Henry F. Freeland, guardian and occupier of 300 acres.
- Mr. Thomas Humphreys, relieving officer.
- Mr. John Earwicker, bricklayer.

From East Lavant—
- Rev. Henry Legge, rector.

From Mid Lavant—
No representative.
From West Hampnett—
Mr. T. S. Cogan, guardian, churchwarden, and occupier of 200 acres.
From West Stoke—
No representative.
From Slindon—
Rev. W. C. Izard, rector.
From Eartham—
No representative.

The chair was taken by the Rev. W. Burnett, vicar of Boxgrove.

Four-fifths of the land in Boxgrove belongs to the Duke of Richmond, whose residence is in the parish. Except at harvest there is a sufficient supply of labour for the cultivation of the land, but no redundancy.

There are about 100 cottages, the greater part of which belong to the Duke of Richmond. His Grace is improving his cottage property, and those cottages which are not in a satisfactory condition are constantly being replaced by improved ones. Ever since the Duke has succeeded to the property he has paid attention to the state of his cottages. At this moment he is engaged in the erection of five double cottages, within a radius of a mile. The rent of most is 1*s.* a week, with 20 or 30 rods of garden ground.

There is in Boxgrove a boys' and girls' school in separate departments. The girls' school is under a certificated mistress, and receives government aid; the boys' school is also under a certificated teacher, but is not under inspection. There is an endowment of 16*l.* 12*s.* for the girls' school, and 20*l.* for the boys'. In the girls' school there are 110 names of girls and infants on the register, with an ordinary attendance of 96. In the boys' school there are 43 boys under instruction, and 36 in average attendance. The school fee is 1*d.* per week. The schools are supported by voluntary subscriptions, the Duke of Richmond being a liberal contributor. There are perhaps a dozen children who come from outlying parishes, but it will be noticed that the proportion of children at school to the population is very high. There has been a night school for 10 or 12 winters; it is conducted by the schoolmaster, and is attended this winter by 25 scholars, who are anxious to learn and regular in attendance. They are all above 14 years of age. Four or five, when they first came, could only read imperfectly; one, a man of 30, could not read at all. With the exception of two or three they are all of the agricultural labouring class, and are considered to be about average specimens of the intelligence of that class in the village. About four or five could write a decent letter, fairly expressed as regards composition. About half could work a sum in the first four rules of arithmetic.

Almost all the land in both the Lavants belongs to the Duke of Richmond. There is for ordinary farm work a sufficiency of labour. In Mid Lavant there are a good many copyhold cottages, in moderate condition, and some of the Duke's cottages are condemned, and are to be replaced. The object at which the Duke is aiming is to have no cottages on his estate with less than three bedrooms. The rent is about the same as at Boxgrove, but the copyhold cottages are let on higher terms.

The Duke's new cottages are built of brick and flint, with tiled roofs; the three chambers are up stairs, with a fireplace sometimes in every room, and always in two out of the three; on the ground floor are two rooms and a pantry. The cottages are generally supplied with water from a well, and each has its own outhouse, privy, &c. Mr. Earwicker, who is employed to build some of these cottages, estimates the cost of a double cottage of this character at 300*l.* The outside walls are 14 inches, and the partition wall is nine inches. Bricks sell at about 32*s.* per 1,000; flints cost only the picking and the cartage. There is not, however, much saving in the use of flints, as they require more mortar and take more time to lay; the cartage too comes to a considerable sum.

There is a joint school for the two Lavants, one of which (East Lavant) is almost cut in two by the other, though they are different incumbencies. It is a mixed school, under an experienced mistress, thoroughly competent for her work. There are 90 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 75. The school fees are at the rate of 1*d.* per week per child. The voluntary subscriptions amount to from 30*l.* to 35*l.* a year, the rector of East Lavant giving up the schoolroom and house for the mistress (valued at 14*l.* a year) rent free.

There is a night school conducted by the mistress on her own account, which she manages very successfully. It is attended by 22 lads, ranging in age from 11 to 20. The mistress finds no difficulty in keeping them in order. Some years ago the night school was under a master, and it did not succeed nearly so well; indeed, one winter it had to be broken up.

The Duke of Richmond is almost the entire owner of the land in the parish of West Hampnett. There is usually sufficient labour, with a slight tendency to occasional scantiness. The cottages are generally good, though about half-a-dozen, belonging to small proprietors, are small, badly drained, and have no outlet behind, and these are the highest rented. The Duke of Richmond's cottages are let in some cases with the farms; but his Grace's more recent practice is to retain the management of his cottages in his own hands.

There is a mixed school, under an untrained mistress, not in receipt of Government aid, attended by about 40 children. The population of the parish in 1861 (and it is not believed to have increased) was 326; there were then 176 inmates of the union-house which is in the parish. The school is managed by the vicar, and is supported by voluntary contributions, the Duke of Richmond being the chief subscriber.

There has usually been a night school in West Hampnett, conducted by the vicar and two or three volunteers, but, for some reason or other it has not been opened this winter.

West Stoke is a small parish, unrepresented at the meeting, with a population of less than 100, the land principally belonging to the Duke of Richmond. There are not above 15 cottages in the parish. There is a schoolhouse and a day school, attended by a small number of children, and taught by a mistress.

Slindon is a parish of 2,500 acres, five-sixths of which belong to Col. Leslie, a Roman Catholic, who has a residence here. There is enough labour, but a deficient supply of cottages. The present condition of the cottages is very bad, but it may partly be accounted for by the fact that there has been litigation in Chancery about the title to the principal estate. Many of the cottages are very deficient in accommodation, some of them having only two rooms. The water supply throughout the parish is a matter of difficulty, in consequence of the depth at which the springs lie. The wells are from 150 to 200 feet deep, and at the rectory well, the machinery of which is rather antiquated, it takes seven minutes to draw a bucket of water.

There are scarcely any cottages let at a lower rent than 2*s.* a week. The garden plots in many cases are small and insufficient. There are about three acres of allotment ground, which the people prize and cultivate successfully. They are let in parcels of about 16 rods apiece, at 4*d.* a rod.

There is a mixed parochial school, held in a small converted building on the glebe. It is taught by an untrained master, assisted by a sewing mistress. There are about eighty names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 62. About a dozen children come from adjoining parishes.

The principal landowner, being a Roman Catholic, does not subscribe to this school, but supports a small Roman Catholic dame's school, attended by eight or nine children. Consequently there is a difficulty in raising the necessary income for the school, which costs about

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56*l.* a year. There is no endowment; the school fees amount to about 12*l.*; the rector raises about 14*l.* from subscriptions in and out of the parish, and himself makes up deficiencies. There has been a night school for the three last winters, attended in 1865 by 25; in 1866 by 23; and this winter by 19 as yet. It is taught by the schoolmaster, the rector attending and teaching as often as he can. It is thought to be working successfully.

Of the 19 scholars about one half can read fairly well, the rest scarcely at all. About half would write a fairly legible hand, but could not do much in the way of composition. About half again can work sums in the four compound rules of arithmetic.

The land in these parishes is of a medium quality, much of it an earthy gravel; when it approaches the downs a chalk subsoil emerges. The down land would not be worth more than from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.* 6*d.* per acre; the arable land below the down would be worth on the average 30*s.* The yield of wheat, according to the quality of the soil, is from four to nine sacks per acre. Roots are largely cultivated, a full fourth of the arable land being laid down for them. The four-course husbandry is followed: a wheat crop succeeded by roots; that by spring corn, barley or oats; and that by seeds.

It is not heavy tillage land, and summer ploughing is done with two horses. But when deep ploughing is required a third horse is put on, which necessitates the employment of a boy for every couple of ploughs, whose business is to keep the horses up to their work. This sort of ploughing, however, rarely lasts for more than a month in the year, generally beginning the latter half of November after wheat sowing.

Ten or fifteen years ago women and girls were largely employed on the Goodwood Home Farm in all kinds of agricultural work; the effect was very mischievous, physically and morally. The practice has now been discontinued, so far as driving carts and other work of that kind is concerned, with very beneficial results; and the only work which women now undertake is haymaking, helping their husbands in harvest, weeding, and trimming roots. A woman's wage at present is 10*d.* to 1*s.* a day.

Young girls between 12 and 18 are scarcely ever seen on the land. They almost universally go into service.

The Duke of Richmond has half-a-dozen women in constant employ on the farm and in the park, of whom five are widows, who are thus enabled to maintain themselves without help from the parish. They are paid 6*s.* a week, and are not expected to work in the wet. There is a considerable demand for boys in the agriculture of the district; but a boy is not fit to be trusted with sheep, pigs, or horses before he is 10 years old. They might perhaps scare rooks at an earlier age. Their wages begin at 4*d.* a day, and at 11 or 12 they would be worth 6*d.* or 8*d.* It is the unanimous and decided opinion of the meeting that any attempt to apply the half-time system to the education of the agricultural labourer would end in failure. When a boy is once taken on to work his services are required throughout the year. There is, therefore, no slack time to which the principle of the Printworks Act could be adopted.

It is believed, therefore, that the best mode of dealing with this question would be to prohibit the employment of children in agriculture under the age of 10, and to take advantage of as many years as possible before they reach that age for their education.

The meeting was unanimous in their objection to a compulsory system of education, nor do they believe that there is any necessity for it. They think that the mere prohibition from labour, coupled with the growing desire for education, would bring the children regularly to school; at any rate they would wish to wait for the results of the experiment before resorting to compulsion.

The meeting do not consider that any legislative interference with the employment of women in farm labour, as it is practised in this district, is required.

The meeting desire to express their sense of the high value of night schools, without the supplementary aid of which they fear that the educational condition of an agricultural district must always be more or less in arrear.

The religious difficulty does not exist is these parishes. Even in Slindon, where there are about 130 Roman Catholics out of a population of 600, there are a dozen or fifteen children of Roman Catholic parents or one of whose parents is a Roman Catholic, attending the parochial school. They attend church as their own voluntary act, and no objection has been raised to their receiving Biblical instruction, or being taught the Church Catechism.

Signed on behalf of the meeting,

W. Burnett, Chairman.

Nov. 28th 1867.

No. 75. *Friday, November* 29, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Oving, for

Oving	Pop., 949	Acr., 2,946	R.V., 6,930*l.*
Aldingbourne	Pop., 772	Acr., 3,069	R.V., 5,670*l.*
Tangmere	Pop., 201	Acr., 774	R.V., 1,570*l.*
Rumboldswyke.	Pop., 582	Acr., 645	R.V., 2,440*l.*
Merston	Pop., 79	Acr., 710	R V., 1,240*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Oving—
- Rev. A. P. Birrell, vicar.
- Rev. G. H. Woods, vice-chairman of the Board of Guardians, landowner, and occupier of 30 acres.
- Mr. George Drewitt, guardian and occupier of 450 acres.
- Mr. John Manning, overseer and occupier of 250 acres.
- Mr. George Crunden, schoolmaster.
- Mr. Thomas Humphreys, relieving officer.
- Mr. J. B. Benwell, churchwarden and resident gentleman.

From Aldingbourne—
- Rev. G. F. Daniell, vicar.
- Mr. R. Dickins, churchwarden and occupier of 240 acres.

From Tangmere—
- Rev. G. Gaisford, rector.
- Mr. Peter Buchan, assessor and mechanical engineer.

From Rumboldswyke—
- Rev. S. Johnson, vicar.
- Mr. John Kent, chuchwarden and occupier of 450 acres in Rumboldswyke, Felpham and Warblington.

From Merston—
- Rev. R. F. Chambers, rector.
- Mr. Henry Davis, churchwarden and occupier of five acres.
- Mr. Henry Tipper, assessor, waywarden, and occupier of three acres, and carpenter.
- Mr Wm. Dillaway, overseer, and owner of five acres.

The chair was taken by Rev. G. H. Woods.

The land in Oving belongs to several proprietors, of whom the chief are the Duke of Richmond, the Rev. G. H. Woods, Lady de la Zouche, and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

The parish runs close in to the city of Chichester, and part of the population partakes of a suburban character. There is hardly a sufficient supply of agricultural labourers; all through the year, perhaps 30 labourers have to be imported from adjoining parishes.

There is a deficient supply of cottages for the

agricultural labourers. There are about 150 in all, but many of them, particularly in the hamlet called Portfield, which adjoins Chichester, are occupied by mechanics and artizans. In the agricultural part of the parish the cottages belong to the landowners, and are in some cases let with the farms; in Portfield they mostly belong to small proprietors.

The cottages occupied by the agricultural labourers are generally reported to be very good. A good many have been built within the last 10 or 20 years. The rent ranges from 1*s.* 3*d.* to 2*s.* a week, with gardens averaging 15 rods in size, of excellent land. There are no allotments.

There are two schools in the parish, one near the church, in two departments for boys and girls, the private property of the Rev. G. H. Woods, and entirely maintained by him. It is taught by an untrained master and a mistress. There are 45 boys and 50 girls under instruction, with an average attendance of 85. Regularity of attendance is strictly enforced; a child who became irregular would be suspended or dismissed. The school fee is 1*d.* a week, which is refunded at Christmas, with a premium in every case where there has been no gross misconduct. The school is considered to be thoroughly efficient. The schoolmaster has kept a night school for 26 winters, but has discontinued it for the last two, as he thought that he required a little rest. Nor did he consider it so necessary, in consequence of the proficiency which the boys attain in the day school, and the attainment of this proficiency he attributes principally to the regularity of their attendance during the period which they spend at school. The night school, when kept, was gratuitous, and was maintained by Rev. G. H. Woods.

There is a mixed girls' and infants' school in the hamlet of Portfield, under the management of the vicar, in connexion with the National Society, but not receiving aid from Government, taught by an untrained mistress, with 42 children under instruction, and an average attendance of 35. There is a small endowment of 9*l.*; the school pence amount to about 6*l.* at 1*d.* per week, and the voluntary subscriptions are 4*l.* or 5*l.*

The land in Aldingbourne is in many hands, the principal owners being Mr. Hasler, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, Mr. Peckham, Mr. Godman, &c.

There is not enough resident labour in the parish for the cultivation of the land. The cottages, generally, are very indifferent, old, and deficient in accommodation. They principally belong to the landowners. The rents range from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* They have generally good gardens. There is no immediate prospect of improvement of the condition of the old cottages, of which there are perhaps 50; indeed, they are considered to be past improvement. There are no allotments in Aldingbourne, nor are there any required. There is a school in Aldingbourne in union with the National Society, not receiving Government aid, under an untrained master, assisted by his wife for the needlework. There are 65 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 50. The total annual cost is about 40*l.*, with a house for the master, provided by one of the landowners, rent free. The annual subscriptions amount to about 30*l.*, and the school pence to 8*l.* or 9*l.* Considerable difficulty is experienced in keeping the school afloat, in consequence of a want of general interest.

There are one or two small private schools, attended by a few children of a rather superior class. Some outlying children have been in the habit of attending the school at Eastergate. There is also a privilege of admission for six boys to the Oving school, of which only three are at present availing themselves.

There is no night school in Aldingbourne. It is a long scattered parish, and the schoolroom, though close to the church and vicarage, lies at one end. A night school was tried one winter and did not succeed.

Very little interest is felt in the parish by any class in favour of education. The master is considered by the vicar to be fairly competent for his work, and he does his duty conscientiously.

Half the land in Tangmere belongs to the Duke of Richmond, the remainder is divided among several proprietors, a good many of them small. There is a sufficient supply of labour to cultivate the land. The condition of the cottages varies; some are very good, some very bad. They belong to a great variety of proprietors, only three to the Duke of Richmond; in several cases the occupiers are also owners. All the cottages have gardens. The rent ranges from 1*s.* to 3*s.* a week. There were some allotments 15 or 20 years ago, but they have been abandoned as unnecessary.

There is a school-house of modern erection, with a residence for the teacher. The school is under an untrained mistress; it is managed by the rector. There are 27 children on the register, and an average attendance of 22. The school pence amount to 4*l.* The mistress's salary is 19*l.*, with a house. The Duke of Richmond contributes 10*l.* a year, and the balance is made up by the rector. If there were sufficient funds the rector would prefer a trained infant-school mistress.

There is a privilege of free admission for one boy and one girl to the Boxgrove school.

There is no night school. One or two Tangmere boys attend the night school at Boxgrove, which is only a mile distant.

Rumboldswyke is a kind of suburb of Chichester, running into the country. The Duke of Richmond, Mr. Bayton, Mr. Habin, and Mr. Fogden are the principal landowners. There is a superabundance of resident labour, and the parish supplies some of its neighbours. Many of the people belong to the mechanic and artizan class.

Most of the cottages are new, and though badly built, are not deficient in accommodation. There has been a large increase in the last 25 years in the population, which is now believed to amount to upwards of 700.

The cottages chiefly belong to small proprietors; nearly all have good gardens, and they let at rents varying from 2*s.* to 3*s.* a week. Most of the elder children in Rumboldswyke attend the central or other schools in Chichester. The rectory house, which at present consists of a single room, has been converted into a school room for younger children. The school is taught by a mistress, who has had some training, and is an efficient teacher. There are 26 children on the books, and from 15 to 20 in ordinary attendance. The school fee is 3*d.* for one child, 1½*d.* for a second, and 1*d.* per week for the third. The mistress has the school pence and a house rent free (with 7*l.*) All the materials for the school are provided by the rector.

The rector would gladly see a more efficient school in the parish, but has no hope of ever being able to raise the necessary funds.

There is no night school. An offer was made by the curate to open a night school for lads above 15 twice a week. He attended two evenings for the purpose, but no scholars appeared.

Most of the land in Merston belongs to Mr. Godman, who resides in Surrey, but occupies his own land, managing it by a bailiff. There is a sufficient supply of resident labour, except perhaps in harvest time. There are 15 cottages, four of which are new. The cottages are all in good conditton, and nearly all have three bedrooms. About half belong to Mr. Godman. The rent would be about 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, but those belonging to Mr. Godman are occupied rent (not rate) free, on condition of the occupiers doing the work that is required on the farm on Sundays. All the cottages have very good gardens, but there are no allotments.

There is no school in the parish, the population not being sufficient to maintain one; but about 15 children attend school in Chichester, which is three miles distant; four or five attend the Aldwick school, in the parish of Pagham.

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There was a night school last winter for the first time, and the rector intends to open one for this winter next week. It was attend in 1866 on the average by 10 scholars, and was fairly successful. The boys were very anxious to avail themselves of the opportunity. It was taught by members of the rector's family, and was free.

The land throughout these five parishes is of a good quality; the basis of it is London clay, lying in a basin between the chalk of the Isle of Wight and that of the Southdowns. The rent varies from 30*s.* to 40*s.* per acre. Eight sacks of wheat to the acre is reckoned a good yield. The four-course husbandry is followed on the lighter land, but on the heavier descriptions of soil the cultivation is what is called the two-and-four course, by which two-sixths of the land would be laid down in wheat, and the remaining four portions would be pulse, spring corn, roots and seeds. The pulse and seeds would be followed by the wheat-crop of the ensuing year. Under this system each field is supposed to grow a wheat crop twice in six years.

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There is very little employment of women in these parishes on the land, except in haymaking and harvest. The women would often be serviceable, but they cannot be procured. They appear to prefer staying at home and attending to their families, and they are known to say, that field work, when undertaken to the neglect of domestic duties, is more loss than gain. Some of them are found to dislike field work in consequence of the necessity which it entails of keeping an elder child away from school.

It is a rare thing to find a young unmarried girl at work on the land.

Boys are employed for short periods in spring and autumn, keeping birds from the new sown corn, at as early an age as eight or nine; but for the ordinary uses of the farmer, a boy is of little, if any, value before he has reached the age of 10 or 11. He is of most value at 14 or 15; but of course he must begin before that to bring his hand in. At bird-scaring a boy would earn from 4*d.* to 6*d.* a day; when he can drive a plough he is worth from 6*d.* to 8*d.* A boy of 15, or as soon as he is man enough to hold a plough, expects 1*s.* a day.

It is believed in the opinion of this meeting, that the employment to which females and boys working on the land, are subjected in this district is not such, either in respect of the nature of the work itself or of the number of hours of its continuance, as to render legislative interference either necessary or desirable on physical grounds, although a case may here and there occur in which mischievous results may have followed from premature or excessive employment. Such cases, it is thought, are quite exceptional, the employment being generally healthy, and can best be dealt with, not by legislation, but by the common sense and prudence of the people themselves. It is found that women will not undertake work that is distasteful to them.

To secure an improved education for the children of the agricultural class, the meeting are unanimous in considering that none of the principles of the Factory Acts, as they are applied to manufactures, are applicable to agriculture; and that any attempt to combine attendance at a day school with labour in the fields would be found to be an unsuccessful experiment.

They consider that a more effective plan would be to secure the regular attendance of children in agricultural districts at school up to the age of ten. The two weak points in the present system are felt to be the irregularity of the children's attendance, and the early age at which they are removed from school. The meeting believes that if a child is kept regularly at school till 10, he would have a better chance of education than by being allowed to go to work at 8, and required to attend school at intermittent periods up to the age of 13.

The meeting are unanimously of opinion that the principle upon which Government aid is at present administered, which refuses to recognize or reward work done in schools not under a certificated teacher, has a very unfavourable effect on the development of education in a rural district, and especially in small and poor parishes. They court the inspection of their schools by a competent officer, and only ask to be aided in proportion to the result produced. There are many untrained and uncertificated teachers in this district who are doing excellent work in their schools, whom the managers would be most reluctant to exchange for another, simply because he happened to possess a certificate, which after all may be no guarantee of his efficiency as a teacher.

Signed on behalf of the Meeting,
GEO. H. WOODS.

Nov. 29, 1867.

COUNTY OF GLOUCESTER: UNION OF CIRENCESTER.

No. 76. *Tuesday, December* 3, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Elkstone, for

Elkstone	Pop., 320	Acr., 2,058	R.V., 2,127*l.*
Brimpsfield	Pop., 392	Acr., 2,485	R.V., 2,736*l.*
Colesbourne	Pop., 261	Acr., 2,232	R.V., 1,761*l.*
Syde	Pop., 55	Acr., 610	R.V., 644*l.*
Winstone	Pop., 230	Acr., 1,428	R.V., 1,638*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Elkstone—
- Rev. Edward Ness, rector.
- Mr. John P. Pope, occupier of 843 acres in Elkstone and Colesbourne.
- Mr. John Cripps, churchwarden, overseer, and occupier of 230 acres.
- Mr. Henry Wheeler, guardian, churchwarden, and occupier of 207 acres.
- Mr. Wm. Attwater, manager for Mrs. Read, of a farm of 1,025 acres.
- Mr. Anthony Sadler, owner and occupier of 800 acres in Elkstone and Cowley.

From Brimpsfield—
- Rev. W. Moore, rector and rural dean.
- Mr. R. W. Winning, churchwarden, guardian, and occupier of 220 acres.
- Mr. James Beman, occupier of 205 acres.
- Mr. John Long, waywarden and occupier of 500 acres.

From Colesbourne—
- Rev. F. W. Hohler, rector.
- Rev. Thos. Atkinson, curate.
- Mr. W. Cooke, guardian and occupier of 415 acres.
- Mr. John Cooke, occupier of 450 acres.
- Mr. Albert Edmonds, bailiff of J. H. Elwes, Esq. and manager of 1,200 acres.

From Syde—
- Rev. T. Wolstencroft, rector.
- Mr. Andrew Calderwood, guardian, churchwarden, overseer, and manager of 610 acres for John Hall, Esq.
- Mr. Clement Broughton, farm pupil.

From Winstone—
- Rev. F. W. Hohler, rector of Colesbourne and Winstone.
- Mr. Andrew Calderwood, manager of the estate of Lord Justice Rolt.

The chair was taken by the Rev. W. Moore, rural dean, rector of Brimpsfield.

In Elkstone, the land belongs to two principal owners, Mr. Wm. Hall and Mr. Thomas Dunn, neither of whom are resident, though Mr. Hall resides in the adjoining parish of Coberley. There is hardly a sufficient supply of labour in the busy time of the summer; but at other seasons there is enough.

About a dozen cottages which were in a very dilapidated condition, belonging to one of the land-

owners, have been pulled down within the last five years, but in the same period of time nearly as many new ones of a good quality have been built. The old cottages are in several cases dilapidated, and are defective in sleeping accommodation. There has been a considerable improvement in the state of the cottages within the last few years. Every cottager has a garden and most of them have a piece of allotment. The gardens are about 16 perches, and the allotments about 40. The rent of the cottages is 1*s.* a week. They are generally attached to the farms, and at the disposal of the tenant, and are held on yearly tenures, with six months' notice.

There is a parochial school, under the rector's management, held in a good room, taught by an untrained middle-aged mistress, with about 40 names on the register, and an average attendance of 30 to 35, depending considerably on the state of the weather and the roads. The population of Elkstone is collected into three groups, and the school is in the central group. No child has to travel much more than a mile. The school is not only free, but the girls are partly clothed. The total annual cost is about 30*l.* which is borne by voluntary subscription. The mistress receives 13 guineas a year, and her house rent free. She is able to teach the children to read, to write, and to cipher.

There is an evening school in the winter months, taught by the schoolmistress and her husband, who is a fair scholar. It is attended by 14 or 16 boys, who pay 1*d.* a week each. The rector considers it to be useful.

The principal landowner in Brimpsfield is John Hall, Esq., who owns two-thirds of the parish, but has no residence there or in the neighbourhood. The rest of the land is in several hands.

The supply of labour is much the same as at Elkstone; rather short in the busy season.

Of the cottages, some are very fair, some indifferent. The three worst were erected by squatters on the waste, and are no better than pigsties. The occupiers pay a quitrent to the lord of the manor; but it is not considered that he has power to pull them down.

There are between 60 and 70 cottages, and very few have three bedrooms, a good many have only one chamber. They all have gardens, and a considerable proportion have allotments. The rent is 1*s.* a week, and a few are let at 3*l.* a year.

There is a National school, built by Government aid, but not receiving any annual grant, under an untrained mistress, who has been in her position upwards of 40 years, and has done very good service in that time. But she is now past her work, and it would be very desirable to pension her. If she were to resign the school, without a pension, her only refuge would be the workhouse. There are 40 names on the register, and an average attendance of 20. The parish lies very wide, and the population is distributed into hamlets and scattered cottages; some children have to come 1½ miles. This affects the attendance, particularly in the winter, the country being bleak and the roads sticky in wet weather and after a frost. The children pay 1*d.* a week, with an extra 2*d.* for those who are taught to write and cipher, and the total yearly cost of the school is about 20*l.* (exclusive of the pence), which is raised by voluntary contributions. The mistress receives 9*l.* 10*s.* a year in addition to the pence, which amount to between 4*l.* and 5*l.* There is no obligation on the children to learn writing and ciphering; and sometimes there are not more than two or three who are doing so.

There is no night school. A teacher cannot be procured.

In Colesbourne, nine-tenths of the land belong to J. H. Elwes, Esq., who is resident. The parish is short of resident labourers, for many years outparishioners have been constantly employed.

Many of the cottages are occupied by small tradesmen, and the servants of the landowner; and there is consequently a short supply for the agricultural labourers who are required. There has, however, been no destruction of cottages; and in fact, eight or nine new cottages have been built by the present proprietor. Every cottage has been personally surveyed by Mr. Elwes, and the condition of those that are, in the opinion of the rector, cannot be better; some, however, have only two bedrooms. All outdoor conveniences are admirable. The water supply comes from excellent springs, and from a brook that runs through the village; rarely from wells. All the cottages have good gardens; and many have allotments besides. The rent is 1*s.* a week; a few are let with the farms, but the greater number are held direct from the landowner.

There is a parochial school, under Government inspection, and receiving annual aid. Taught by an ex-pupil teacher, provisionally certificated; with 40 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 30. The mistress's salary is 20*l.* from the squire, the school pence, and the Government grant; amounting altogether to about 40*l.*, with furnished apartments. The school is considered efficient, and thoroughly adequate to the wants of the parish. The children pay 1*d.* a week, and an extra 1*d.* when they begin to write in copybooks.

There is a night-school, which is taught by the mistress twice a week, the curate making it a point to attend. There are this winter nine boys, between 10 and 15, under instruction.

The whole of the land in Syde, except the glebe, belongs to John Hall, Esq., who is non-resident. The supply of resident labourers is short, and the deficiency has to be imported from Brimpsfield.

There are 10 cottages occupied by agricultural labourers, of which about half are in fair condition. They have good gardens, and are let at 1*s.* a week. Three of the cottages have only one bedroom.

A cottage has been recently set apart by the landowner for a school, which, in spite of the smallness of the population, the rector has resolved to maintain, in consequence of the distance of Syde from any neighbouring school. At present, there is only a dame's school in Syde, attended by nine children, paying 2*d.* a week.

There is no night school at present.

In Winstone, fourth-fifths of the land belongs to Lord Justice Rolt, who does not reside in the parish. There are people unemployed in the winter, but in the harvest season there is a scarcity. There is more than a sufficient supply of cottages; there are six standing vacant now, two of which are being pulled down. As a general rule, the cottages in Winstone, "are a disgrace." There are in the parish 12 or 14 proprietors of cottages and land; and many of the cottages have been run up by squatters on the waste; some of which are in tolerable condition. There has been no improvement in the state of the cottages of late years; but improvement is promised, and is likely to come soon; not before it is required. The land changed hands about five years ago. The cottages are deficient in accommodation as well as out of repair. The rent is about 1*s.* a week. Some of the gardens are very small; but in the centre of the village are two acres of allotment, which are let in parcels of about 20 perches, at 3*d.* a perch.

There is a school in Winstone, united with the National Society, and built with Government help, but not receiving annual aid. It is under an efficient untrained mistress, who has had charge of it for 28 years. She receives the children's pence which amount to between 6*l.* and 7*l.* a year; in addition to which the rector guarantees her 10*l.* a year. There are 25 names on the register and an ordinary attendance. Some of the scholars are farmers' children.

There is no night school in Winstone.

The geological character of the land in these parishes is the oolite brash. It is very fair corn and stock land, but it lies high, at an elevation of 1,100 feet above the sea, is much exposed, and suffers from a prolonged winter. September is the great

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harvest month. Six sacks of wheat would be a good yield per acre, an average crop would be about five.

It is a great sheep district, about two sheep being kept to every three acres. Considerable stocks of cattle are also kept, at the rate of 10 to 100 acres; mostly shorthorns or Herefords, or of mixed breed.

The land has a tendency to get full of couch grass, and requires a great deal of attention to keep it clean. For the proper cultivation of 100 acres, there would be required 2½ men, one boy, and one woman, where the holdings are large. The heavy lands would require rather more; and this calculation supposes arable and pasture land to be mixed and is based upon the labour of the whole year. The smaller holdings would require something more than this proportion. The cost of labour in a Cotswold farm is commonly estimated at 1*l.* per acre per annum. Most of the land, especially since the price of stock has been so high, is cultivated on the five course system: (1) turnips; (2) barley or oats; (3) seeds, mown; (4) seeds, fed; (5) wheat. Some of the land, however, is farmed on the four-course system, which only allows one year for seeds.

The land lets on the average at about 1*l.* per acre.

The standing weekly wage of an ordinary agricultural labourer in these parishes at present is 10*s.* It has been at that sum for the last two years; previously to that it was 9*s.* In some instances, when wheat has been low, there has been a difference of 1*s.* a week between winter and summer wages. Carters and shepherds get from 2*s.* to 3*s.* in excess of these rates. All through the summer months much of the work is done by the piece; mowing, turnip-hoeing, and harvest work. The harvest is paid at per acre, for reaping and tying, the farmer doing the carting. This year the rate of payment was about 10*s.* per acre without beer. It is estimated that the total annual earnings of an efficient labourer in constant employ would be from 30*l.* to 32*l.* As a rule the farmers draw their labourer's fuel, which reduces the price of their coal delivered, to about 15*s.* or 16*s.* a ton. In the summer months, the men have an allowance of two quarts of beer per day, with an extra quantity in harvest time.

There is a large employment of female labour in the district. The young women in many cases seem to prefer field labour to domestic service, though the feeling of the meeting is that such labour should be discouraged rather than encouraged. Girls under 16 are very rarely seen working on the land, except to assist their parents during the harvest, for which purpose they often leave their place, returning to a fresh situation when the harvest is over.

A woman's daily wage is 8*d.* or 9*d.*, and 1*s.* during harvest. They also do a good deal of piece-work; wheat hoeing (but never after the plant has reached four or five inches in height), turnip picking, stone picking, &c.

Boys are occasionally set to scare crows or keep sheep at as early any age as eight or nine; but they are not of much real value till they are 10. When a boy is old and strong enough to drive plough he would earn about 3*s.* a week; a boy of 12 or 14 would earn from 4*s.* to 5*s.*.

It is a very rare thing to find a labourer unemployed in the winter. There is special winter employment for the men in the woods and quarries. If a man chooses to stay at home on account of weather, he is not paid; but if he comes to his work, be the weather what it may, a job would be found for him.

The poor-rate in this union in 1866 was 2*s.* 3*d.* in the 1*l.* (including the county rate).

The meeting were unanimous in considering that the half-time system, under either of the forms under which it is applied by the Factory Acts, is impracticable in agriculture; their choice therefore lay between the principle adopted under the Printworks Act of requiring a certain number of hours' schooling between the age of 8 and 13 as a condition of being employed, and the principle of fixing a higher age than eight below which a boy should be prohibited from labour, on condition of his being then allowed to work without further restriction.

With one dissentient, the meeting were in favour of the latter principle; and would recommend that the age fixed upon should be 10; but they would desire that in case a boy could produce a satisfactory certificate of ability to read with facility at an earlier age, the restriction in that case should be removed. They consider that such relaxation of the rule would operate as a motive to the parents inducing them to send their children regularly to school. They would not wish to see the agricultural child's education stop at the age of 10, but they would trust for its continuance to the voluntary agency of the night school. It was suggested that the application of Miss Burdett Coutts' plan of an itinerating master, who could give his time (say) to three parishes twice a week in each, might help to place night schools on a more solid foundation than they rest upon at present.

This district being a district of small parishes, in which it is difficult to raise an adequate salary for a certificated teacher, the meeting are unanimous in pressing upon the Legislature the importance of paying schools simply for results, without regard to any previous testing of the qualifications of the teacher by an examination.

The meeting do not think it necessary or desirable, having in view the circumstances of this district, to restrain by legislative interference the employment of females on the land; but they do consider it highly desirable, and believe it would be profitable, when a number of them are employed together, that they should be employed under proper supervision.

Signed in behalf of the meeting,
Dec. 3rd 1867. W. Moore, Chairman.

No. 77. *Wednesday, December* 4, 1867.

Collective Meeting at North Cerney, for

North Cerney	- Pop., 692 - Acr., 4,026 - R.V. 4,742*l.*
Rendcomb -	- Pop., 246 - Acr., 2,627 - R.V. 2,916*l.*
Badgington	- Pop., 175 - Acr., 1,104 - R.V. 1,473*l.*
Duntisbourne Rouse.	- Pop., 127 - Acr., 2,211 - R.V. 1,888*l.*
Daglingworth	- Pop., 355 - Acr., 1,843 - R.V. 2,116*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From North Cerney—
- Rev. John R. Gregg, curate.
- W. F. Croome, Esq., magistrate, deputy-lieutenant and landowner.
- Mr. G. N. Hulbert, churchwarden, guardian, and occupier of 650 acres.
- Mr. James Newman, churchwarden and occupier of 600 acres and owner.
- Mr. Robert Large, overseer, miller and occupier of 25 acres.
- Mr. James Northam, certificated schoolmaster.
- Mr. Wm. Bennett, waywarden and occupier of 600 acres.

From Rendcomb—
- Sir Francis Goldsmid, M.P., landowner.
- Rev. Joseph Pitt, rector.
- Mr. W. Godwin Tovey, churchwarden and occupier of 500 acres.

From Badgington—
- Rev. W. Dyke, rector.

From Duntisbourne Rouse—
- No representative.

From Daglingworth—
- No representative, and
- Mr. Thos. Matthews, relieving officer of the district.

The chair was taken by Rev. John R. Gregg, curate of North Cerney.

The principal landowners in North Cerney are Sir F. Goldsmid, Bart., Earl Bathurst, Wm. F. Croome, Esq., Jas. Curtis Somerville, Esq,, and Jas. Bownes,

Esq. There are also several small proprietors. Three of the large owners reside either in the parish or in the neighbourhood.

There is an adequate supply of labour in the parish, but one farm of 600 acres in a distant hamlet (Calmsden) is insufficiently provided with cottages, and the tenant has to draw a portion of his labour supply from sources two miles off. Otherwise there is a sufficient supply of cottages, as regards number, clustered into a village and two hamlets. The farmers consider that if the cottages were more distributed over the area of the parish it would be more convenient. The majority of the cottages belong to the landowners, but a considerable number are the property of small owners. Several are lifeholds, which will ultimately fall into Earl Bathurst; the condition of these, as respects accommodation, is in many cases very bad, in consequence of single cottages under the supposed advantages of the tenure having been converted into two. The majority of the cottages are defective in chamber accommodation and in sanitary arrangements. A great number have only one bedroom; and there is a row of six cottages none of which have any washhouse or back-door. Sir Francis Goldsmid has recently erected five cottages of a model description, three of them with three bedchambers, and there is a prospect of still further improvement in this direction.

The gardens attached to the cottages are in many cases small; but there are about eight acres of field allotment, some of it not very conveniently situated, let in parcels of from 20 to 40 perches, at 3*d.* a perch. The rent of the cottages ranges from 2*l.* 12*s.* to 4*l.* a year; and they are let by the week, quarter, half-year, or year.

There is a National school, receiving annual Government aid, under a certificated master, assisted by his wife and a male pupil teacher, with 90 names on the register and an average attendance last year of 63. The total annual cost is about 120*l.*; of which about 30*l.* is produced by the Government grant, and 27*l.* by children's pence. The rest of the expense is provided by the rector. The children of tradesmen pay 4*d.* a week, decreasing by 1*d.* according to the number of children sent; journeymen and labourers pay 2*d.* a week for the first, and 1*d.* for the rest.

The average age at which children have left this school for the last three years is shown in the following table:—

1867	Boys at	10·3	-	Girls at	11·1
1866 -	„	10·9	-	„	11·5
1865 -	„	11·0		„	11·4

Some important building operations which have been going on for the last three years at Rendcomb House are believed to account for the diminished age in the case of the boys.

The experiment of a night school for boys over 12 was tried for three years, but did not prove successful and has been abandoned. There was an insufficient attendance and a want of interest. The schoolmaster believes that there is a good number of young men in the parish who cannot read or write.

All the land in Rendcomb, except 24 acres of glebe, belongs to Sir F. Goldsmid, who has a residence in the parish. There is not a sufficient supply of resident labourers for the cultivation of the land. Mr. Tovey, on his farm of 500 acres, has not a single Rendcomb person employed, nor a single cottage at his command. He has to import his labour from Chedworth, a distance of two miles.

There are 36 cottages, of which about 30 are available for agricultural labourers. 17 of these are new, and have every accommodation that a cottage can require. The new cottages have admirable gardens, the older ones have gardens varying in size. There were four acres of field allotments, which have been resumed by the rector in consequence of their imperfect cultivation, the cottagers being unable to dress them properly with manure. The rent of the new cottages is 4*l.* a year, of the older ones it ranges from 30*s.* to 3*l.*

There is a parish school, lately placed under Government inspection, under a certificated mistress. There are 25 names on the register, and an average attendance of 20. The total annual cost is 50*l.*, and the voluntary subscriptions proceed from Sir F. Goldsmid and the rector.

There was a night school for two years, but it has been abandoned. A sufficient number of scholars did not offer themselves to induce the mistress to undertake their charge.

There is no large landowner in Badgington, the largest property in one hand is 460 acres. One gentleman owning 160 acres is resident.

There is a sufficient supply of cottages as regards number, but five of them are at present unoccupied. There are 37 cottages in all. Some of the cottages are in very bad repair, and nearly half have only one bed chamber. Cases were mentioned of terrible overcrowding. The worst cottages belong to a non-resident landowner, whose estate is now in possession of mortgagees. There are no prospects whatever of improvement. One of the cottages has been recently abandoned in consequence of the occupier being afraid to keep it any longer. The gardens are small; the rent 1*s.* a week. The rector lets about 3½ acres in allotments.

There is a parochial school, managed and supported by the rector (with one annual subscriber of a guinea), held in a cottage rented for the purpose, under an untrained young mistress, with 18 children on the register and an average attendance of 14. The total annual cost is about 21*l.* in addition to the school pence. The weekly fee is 1*d.*, and 2*d.* if the child writes in a copy book.

There is no night school.

There is a precariousness about the school in this parish, in consequence of the difficulty in obtaining a site for a school-house, and the rector being liable at any time to be turned out of the cottage now used for the purpose, which might be required for the farm.

There were no representatives present from Duntisbourne Rouse or Daglingworth, but the following facts were collected from the relieving officer and other gentlemen.

A large part of the land in Duntisbourne Rouse belongs to Corpus Christi College, Oxford, who have just run out their lease. Earl Bathurst is also a considerable landowner.

Much of the labour employed in the parish is drawn from the neighbouring parishes of Duntisbourne Abbotts, Sapperton, and Daglingworth.

The condition of the cottages generally is bad. Some of them are converted farmhouses. The rent is about 1*s.* a week.

There is no day school, but the village is close to Daglingworth, and the children attend there.

In Daglingworth the chief owners are Earl Bathurst and Mr. Haines. There is a sufficiency of labour, and indeed the parish supplies some of its neighbours.

The cottages are described as, some very good, and some very bad. There is an excellent water supply in the village, conveyed from a spring 2½ miles distant, through iron pipes, with taps at certain intervals.

There is an excellent schoolhouse in course of erection at the expense of the rector. It is estimated to cost 1,000*l.* The school is at present conducted in premises erected about 20 years ago, which are now found to be too small. It is taught by a certificated master, and is largely attended.

The principal farms in these parishes range from 500 to 600 acres. There are also small occupations of from 40 to 100 acres. The average rent would be about 20*s.* an acre. The soil is an oolite stonebrash, kindly sheep and stock land, and growing fair crops of corn. The yield of wheat would be from five to six sacks per acre. The husbandry pursued is a five-course, but where sainfoin is grown, which is largely the case in this district (Mr. Newman growing 100

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acres out of 600, at a time that he has only from 60 to 70 acres under wheat) the course is not completed under six, seven or even eight years.

The proportion of sheep and cattle kept is about the same as was stated yesterday at the meeting at Elkstone.

The cost of labour is estimated at about 20*s.* per acre. The standing weekly wage at present is 10*s.* per week. The ordinary work hours of the day are from 7 to 5, including an hour allowed for dinner. Carters, shepherds, and stockmen get 12*s.* wages a week, a house rent free, with 16 perches of potatoe ground cultivated for them in the turnip field, in addition to their garden ; four bushels of malt, or 2*l.* in lieu of it ; an allowance (in the case of carters) of 1*s.* for every journey when they take out a load of corn, which perhaps amounts to 50*s.* a year ; while the shepherd gets his meals during shearing-time, 1*l.* during the lambing-time in lieu of meals, and 1*s.* per score for all lambs that he succeeds in weaning. Shepherds, carters, and nagmen are hired by the year and have no harvest.

It is also the custom for the farmer to cart coals for his labourers without charge.

It is believed that an efficient labourer who can turn his hand to any kind of farm work earns on the average 15*s.* a week throughout the year.

Women are not employed at present in this district to half the extent that they were 25 years ago. The farmers would gladly employ more than they can get. They are useful for a variety of operations : stone-picking, picking drawing and cleaning turnips for sheep and cattle, weeding corn, hay-making, hoeing root crops, picking raking and burning couch, harvesting, pulling topping and tailing turnips, pulling straw for the thatcher, cutting chaff, untying the sheaves for the thrashing machine, mending corn-sacks, &c. &c.

A woman's day wages are 10*d.*, 9*d.*, and 8*d.* At some of their piece-work, such as turnip-hoeing, they can earn 2*s.* 6*d.* a day.

Young girls in the district mostly go into domestic service, and only in exceptional cases work on the land. But the farmers would be glad to employ them, if they could get them.

A woman's day is from 8 to 5. There was a difference of opinion between the farmers present, as to whether women's labour, as compared with men's, is cheap or dear. Machinery has to some extent displaced women's labour.

The steam-plough is being largely introduced into the district.

Boy labour is in considerable demand. Hardly a fortnight passes without the relieving officer being asked whether there is any lad in the house strong enough to come out.

It is the opinion of the meeting that it is not desirable to employ boys on farms under the age of 10 ; nor are boys in general of much use before that age, though, occasionally, owing either to the pressure of a large family, or the deficiency of older boys, they are taken to work at eight or nine. A boy of 10 would earn from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* a week according to his capability.

It is the unanimous opinion of the meeting that the half-time system of the Factory Acts is inapplicable to agriculture, whether with a view to the regulation of the employment of children, or to their education. There is not a sufficient supply of children to employ them in relays, and the character of agricultural operations is not such as to admit of intermissions.

The application of the principle of the Printworks Act, securing a certain amount of instruction for children during the winter months, would be more practicable, though not unaccompanied with inconvenience ; but in the opinion of those present who are acquainted with the management of schools, the educational results of such a system would be unsatisfactory, as they consider that little, if any, progress would be made, while an element of serious difficulty would have been introduced into the discipline and organization of the school.

The meeting therefore would prefer to see a higher age taken than is taken under the Factory Acts, below which children should be prohibited from working, in the hope that by regular attendance at school up to that age more satisfactory educational results would be produced than by the adoption of either of the previous principles. They would not object to that age being fixed at 10 or 11. But they would wish any such restrictive legislation to be accompanied with certain possibilities of exemption, to prevent its inflicting intolerable hardships upon large families.

Sir Francis Goldsmid, however, who was obliged to leave before the conclusion of the meeting, desired to express his conviction that unless some provision were made for carrying on an education, interrupted at as early an age as 10, in most cases the little learning that had been acquired would be lost again.

The rest of the meeting hoped that better results would be produced by securing regular and constant attendance for five years up to the age of 10 or 11, and are content to trust, for subsequent improvement, to voluntary action upon the part of the parents or the children themselves, and in part to the agency of night schools, though they wish the difficulty of constantly maintaining a night school as a feature in the organization of a rural parish, and its entire unsuitableness to the case of girls, to be fully appreciated.

The influence of the Sunday school also is not to be entirely overlooked.

The meeting do not see anything in the circumstances of this district to make it desirable that there should be any legislative interference with the employment of females on the land.

Signed on behalf of the meeting,

JOHN R. GLEGG, M.A.

Dec. 4, 1867.

No. 78. *Thursday, December* 5, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Sapperton, for

Sapperton	- Pop., 600 - Acr., 3,908 - R.V., 4,923*l.*
Edgworth	- Pop., 139 - Acr., 1,559 - R.V., 1,770*l.*
Duntisbourne Abbotts.	- Pop., 354 - Acr., 2,218 - R.V., 2,195*l.*
Coates -	- Pop., 417 - Acr., 2,424 - R.V., 3,206*l.*
Rodmarton	- Pop., 401 - Acr., 3,825 - R.V., 3,697*l.*

Present at Meeting :

From Sapperton—

Rev. W. Pye, rector.

Mr. Henry Playne, guardian, churchwarden, owner and occupier of 480 acres.

Mr. Wm. Coates, waywarden and occupier of 180 acres.

Mr. John Blowen, schoolmaster and assistant overseer.

Mr. Thomas Ratcliffe, churchwarden and occupier of 1,400 acres in Sapperton, Coates and Rodmarton.

Mr. Thomas Clark, occupier of 500 acres.

From Coates—

Rev. T. C. Gibbs, rector and diocesan inspector of schools.

Mr. Chas. Cleverley, resident gentleman.

Mr. Henry Howell, churchwarden, overseer, and occupier of 600 acres.

From Rodmarton—

Rev. H. C. Powles, curate in sole charge, and diocesan inspector of schools.

W. Kilmister, Esq., owner and occupier of 500 acres.

Mr. T. Buckland, churchwarden, overseer, and occupier of 470 acres.

From Duntisbourne Abbotts—

Mr. John Hathaway, guardian and occupier of 800 acres.

From Edgeworth—
No representative.

The chair was taken by the Rev. W. Pye, rector of Sapperton.

In Sapperton about half the land belongs to Earl Bathurst, who resides at Cirencester. There are upwards of 500 acres of glebe. Miss Gordon, of Kemble, owns about 700 acres; Mr. Playne owns all he occupies, and there are two or three small proprietors.

There is a sufficient but not a redundant supply of resident labourers.

There is a sufficient supply of cottages, and they are mostly in good condition. There has been a considerable improvement in the cottages in the last 20 years. There are about 100 cottages, of which not more than 10 have three bedrooms. There are about six that have only one bedroom. All have gardens; the greater part good gardens; and there are 27 acres of field allotments, let in quarter and, in a few cases, half-acre parcels, at 3*d.* a perch. The cottages are clustered into two main groups; but there are about 20 sprinkled over the general area of the parish. Nearly 20 are life-hold, on three lives, and give their occupiers (if not underlet) a vote for the county. Where rent is paid it ranges from 3*l.* to 5*l.* Rents in Sapperton are rather above the average in consequence of the number of men, earning higher wages, employed either on Earl Bathurst's estate or on the railway, of which there are four miles running through the parish. It is considered to be a parish more than usually well to do.

There are two schools; one in the village of Sapperton, the other in the hamlet of Frampton, where there is a population of 250, a mile and a half away. The school in Sapperton is held in an excellent building, erected in 1849 by Earl Bathurst. It is in two departments, and taught by a master and mistress. It is not in connexion with Government. There are 64 names on the register, nearly equally divided between girls and boys; and the ordinary attendance is 56.

There is an endowment of 16*l.* a year. The school pence amount to about 10*l.* Earl Bathurst, who is the sole subscriber, gives 12*l.* a year. The master and mistress have a house and garden rent free.

There is no night school this winter. Last winter the master conducted one, which began with 24 scholars, but dropped down before the end of the season to five. The ages ranged from 15 to 24. There was not one of them who could not read and write a little.

At this moment there are only three boys and 11 girls in the school above the age of 10. The schoolmaster, who has been in charge of the school for 14 years, does not think that there is any decrease in the school age. He finds that the average age of those who have left school to go to work has been in excess of 10 years. From what he sees of them in the Sunday school and other ways, he believes that they retain a considerable portion of what they carried away with them when they left school. He does not think that there are many young men in Sapperton who cannot read more or less.

In Frampton there is a school kept in a cottage belonging to the rector, taught by a respectable middle-aged woman, whose husband is a railway-policeman, attended by from 15 to 20 children. There is an endowment of 5*l.* a year; the house is rent free (which may be considered equal to another 5*l.*); and the mistress takes the pence, which are at the rate of 1*d.* a week.

There was a night school for two winters in Frampton, held on Mr. Playne's premises; but it has been discontinued on account of illness in Mr. Playne's family, and not from any lack of interest on the part of the scholars.

There is an estate which now produces 80*l.* a year, which constitutes an important charity in this parish. It endows the schools, and the balance of about 50*l.* is expended in the winter in the weekly distribution of bread, at the rate of a 4 lb. loaf to each married man and his wife, and to each child under 12. The distribution begins the 1st week in January, and lasts for from eight to 10 weeks, according to the price of the loaf. There is a difference of opinion as to whether it acts beneficially upon the population or not. The original income of the estate has been more than quadrupled by the increase in the value of land.

The land in Coates belongs to four chief proprietors (Earl Bathurst, Miss Gordon, Mr. Dewé, and the rector), of whom the two latter reside in the parish, and the others in the neighbourhood.

There is a sufficient supply of labour.

The cottages, on the whole, are a very fair specimen of what should be found in a country village. There are between 60 and 70, the greater part of which have three bedrooms. There has been a great deal done to improve the cottages in the last twenty-five years. They almost entirely belong to the landowners. The general rent is about 3*l.* All have gardens, some a quarter of an acre in size; and there are 12 acres of allotment. The cottages are clustered chiefly into a village and a detached hamlet. They are generally built in pairs.

There is a good parochial school, under the management of the rector and churchwardens, built with Government aid and under Government inspection. The master is preparing to pass his examination for a certificate. There are 75 names on the register, and an average attendance of 60. The total annual cost is about 45*l.*, of which the master's salary is 40*l.* with a house rent free. The school pence produce 12*l.*, the voluntary subscriptions 20*l.*; the deficiency is made up by the rector.

In the hamlet of Tarleton, which contains about 172 people, partly in the parish of Coates and partly in Rodmarton, there is a dame's school, attended by about 15 children, who remain there till they are old enough to travel to the schools in Coates and Rodmarton. Miss Gordon contributes 5*l.* a year to this school, and the dame takes the pence. As preparatory to the other schools, it is considered as a useful institution.

There is no weekly night school at Coates this year in consequence of the schoolmaster's preparing himself for examination, and not being able to spare the time. But the rector has a class of young men at his own house on Sunday evenings. The night school in Coates has had a somewhat fitful existence; the schoolmaster, after his work in the day, is not very much disposed to give up his evenings to its superintendence.

Of the 3,825 acres in Rodmarton, 2,550 belong to Miss Gordon. There are 550 acres of glebe. About 400 acres belong to the Rev. W. George, who is not resident; and there are two smaller estates belonging to the two Messrs. Kilmister.

The supply of labour is very short; the population has decreased since 1861 from 401 to 358. Many of the people have gone off into other occupations. The parish consists of three hamlets, Rodmarton, Culkerton and part of Tarleton. In Rodmarton there is a deficient supply of cottages. Almost all the cottages belong to Miss Gordon; and though the condition of many of them is still below what it ought to be, in respect of accommodation, considerable improvement has taken place and is still going on under the present management of the estate, particularly in the hamlet of Culkerton. There are 70 cottages in the parish of which only one has three bedrooms. The majority of the cottages were originally built with only one large bedroom, which has since in almost all cases been divided into two by a partition. This arrangement, however, does not secure a separate entrance to each chamber. The rent of these cottages is low, many are let at 30*s.* a year, several at 40*s.*, and not more than two are believed to exceed 4*l.* a year. The gardens are generally very fair, and there are 35 acres of field allotments, which, however, have mostly passed

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out of the hands of the agricultural labourers (who are glad to give them up), and are now held in small occupations of from three to four acres by other parties; a blacksmith, a carpenter, a carrier, and so forth.

There is a National school in Rodmarton, kept in a house built for the purpose by the rector (with assistance from Dr. Warneford's charity) on the glebe, and at present under his sole control. It is, however, on the point of being conveyed to the parish. The school is taught by a trained, but not certificated mistress, fairly competent for her work. There are 25 names on the register, and an average attendance of 20. The total annual cost is about 35*l.*, the mistress's salary being 30*l.* with a house rent free. The children's pence (at 2*d.* a week) amount to about 8*l.*; a charitable endowment of 4*l.* is applied to the support of the school; 2*l.* 10*s.* arises from Betton's charity, and the balance is made up by the rector. The school as at present conducted, is considered to be rather below than above the requirements of the people; but there is every hope that, when handed over to the parish, it will be considerably improved.

In Culkerton hamlet there is a dame's school supported by voluntary contributions to the extent of 5*l.* The dame takes the children's pence charging 2*d.* a week. She has about 12 scholars, mostly infants.

There is a night school in Rodmarton taught by the curate, one of the churchwardens, and an intelligent labourer. There are 16 scholars with an average attendance of 13. It is decidedly successful.

The curate, who can speak to the point advisedly, believes that there are very few men in Rodmarton, even among the elder ones who cannot read; the greater part can read well. There is a great demand for lending-library books among people of all ages. It appears that 30 years ago there was an excellent school of the old style, which did not attempt much beyond reading, but taught that thoroughly well.

In Duntisbourne Abbotts the land belongs to six or seven proprietors, of whom one (Mr. Baillie) owns nearly half the parish. There is enough labour, and a sufficiency of cottages. Three or four cottages are vacant now. The condition of the cottages generally is pretty good. The rent ranges from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. They mostly belong to the landowners.

The school is under a certificated schoolmistress, and is in receipt of annual Government aid. It is attended by about 30 to 40 children. Mr. Hathaway believes it to be supported chiefly by the rector and Mr. Baillie.

There was a night school for a few winters, but the scholars fell off, and this winter it has not been attempted. It was conducted by the schoolmistress assisted by the parish clerk.

The land in Edgworth belongs to Sir William Russell, and Edmund Hopkinson, Esq., the latter of whom is resident. The supply of labour is believed to be sufficient; the condition of the cottages not very good; they are old and small. There is no school in Edgworth; the children attend the schools in the adjacent parishes.

The population in these parishes is on the decrease, with the exception of Coates, where there have been three gentlemen's residences built, leading to an increase in the number of the inhabitants.

It is the opinion of the meeting that the average weekly wage of an ordinary efficient farm labourer at present prices is slightly in excess of 12*s.* including work by piece, harvest, and the usual allowances for beer.

There is a considerable employment of female labour in these parishes, and there would be more if it could be procured. The women are generally married; in fact, there are very few unmarried women residing in the district, they are mostly in service.

There is a marked improvement in the morality of this district within the last 30 years, as far as illegitimate births are concerned; and the people are reported to be generally honest. Cases of petty pilfering, once very frequent, seldom, if ever, occur. In Rodmarton there is further stated to be a perceptible diminution in drunkenness (which otherwise is the worst failing in the agricultural labourer of this district) and this is attributed to the influence of a Friendly Society, not connected with a public house.

Boys are rarely employed now under the age of 10, and they are of very little use to the farmer before that age. One of the most experienced farmers in the district (Mr. Kearsey) stated to Mr. Powles yesterday that he would not employ a boy under 10, if he knew it.

A boy of 11 would earn 2*s.* 6*d.* a week and a boy of 14 is worth 4*s.* to 5*s.*

The meeting were unanimous and decided in thinking that the half-time system, under either of its forms, is quite impracticable in the agriculture of this district, where boys are employed not in gangs, but separately, chiefly about horses and cattle; and, therefore, all the day through. Nor, speaking generally, are there any slack months in any season of the year when the labour of boys can be dispensed with, so that advantage could be taken of that time for attendance at school.

The plan, therefore, that approved itself to the judgment of the meeting, as the only one likely to work without difficulty, would be to fix an age below which children should be prohibited from labour, and to take security that during the prohibited period they should attend school.

The age at which the prohibition from labour should cease, it was suggested should be 10.

The meeting were strongly of opinion, that the conditions under which assistance is now given out of the Parliamentary grant to schools, are such as to place many deserving schools, especially in rural districts, out of the reach of such assistance; and they do not believe that the interests of education generally, would suffer, while the efficiency of a large number of schools would be increased, if the requirement of a certificate in the teacher, as a condition of the school's receiving aid, were removed. It is felt that the condition of many rural schools require improvement, and it is thought that this would be the most efficacious mode of improving them.

The circumstances of this district, where not more than one woman is employed to 100 acres, are not such as to require any legislative interference with female labour on the land. A woman's day is from 8 a.m. to 4·30 or 5 p.m., with an hour for dinner, and they are entirely left to please themselves whether they come to work or not.

Signed in behalf of the Meeting.

WILLIAM PYE, Chairman.

Dec. 5, 1867.

No. 79. *Friday, December* 6, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Fairford, for

Fairford	Pop., 1,654	Acr., 3,681	R.V. 7,090*l.*
Kempsford	Pop., 1,007	Acr., 4,794	R.V. 6,882*l.*
Hatherop	Pop., 328	Acr., 2,059	R.V. 2,595*l.*
Quenington.	Pop., 426	Acr., 1,921	R.V. 2,630*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Fairford—

J. Raymond Barker, Esq., lord of the manor, magistrate and landowner.

Rev. Thomas Morton, assistant curate.

Mr. Wm. Wakefield, churchwarden and bank manager.

Mr. Banks, certificated schoolmaster.

From Kempsford—

Sir Gilbert Augustus Gilbert-East, Bart., lord of the manor.

Mr. Richard A. Iles, vice-chairman of Board of Guardians, and occupier of 420 acres.

Rev. Arthur Evans, assistant curate.

Mr. Thomas Arkell, occupier of 700 acres and owner of 250.

The chair was taken by J. R. Raymond Barker, Esq.

The principal landowner in Fairford is John Raymond Barker, Esq., who is resident. There are six other proprietors owning less than 50 acres apiece.

There is more than enough labour for the ordinary operations of the farm, and even in harvest there is no deficiency.

There is a sufficient supply of cottages; 18 are vacant now. The population has not increased since 1861.

The condition of the cottages is reported to be somewhat above the average; but some 30, belonging to small and poor proprietors, and occupied by a needy class of tenants, are very much out of repair. It is not believed that one in twenty of the cottages occupied by agricultural labourers has three bedrooms.

As a rule, gardens are not attached to the cottages, or at best only a very small garden; but, there are about 35 acres of field allotments, let out in parcels varying from 10 to 80 rods in size, at rents varying from 2½*d.* to 1*s.* per rod. The rents of the cottages range from 2*l.* to 5*l.* a year. It does not always follow that the higher rent implies a better cottage. Some of those let at 1*s.* 8*d.* and 1*s.* 10*d.* a week are in a very rickety condition.

The water supply is very unequally distributed, owing to the natural character of the springs; but the river Colne runs through the parish, and partly supplies the deficiency of the springs, and some of the farmers, in very dry seasons, cart water for their labourers.

There is an endowed school, under trustees, in two departments, for boys and girls, under a certificated master and mistress, admitting Government inspection, but not receiving annual aid. The amount of the endowment is about 120*l.* a year net, arising from land.

In the boys' school there are 110 names on the register, and the average attendance of the last quarter was 84. The numbers in the girls' school are about the same. Sixty boys and 60 girls are admitted free upon the nomination of the trustees. The other scholars pay 1*d.* a week, till such time as there is a vacancy on the foundation. They are admitted at the age of five, and are allowed to stay, on the foundation, till 12.

These two schools are in thorough order and efficiency, and have been well reported of by Her Majesty's inspector for many years, but a want is felt of an infant school, though there is no prospect of its being supplied.

There are two small private adventure dame's schools, one of them little better than a nursery, attended by about a couple of dozen children, paying 3*d.* a week.

There is a night school entirely conducted by the curate, with 24 scholars, and an average attendance of 16, ranging in age from 11 to 18 or 20. They pay 1*d.* a week, which includes use of books, copybooks and pens.

The school has been in existence for eight winters, and has been fairly successful.

Both the curate and the schoolmaster consider that the educational condition of the labouring classes in Fairford is decidedly above the average of an agricultural district; the proportion of those who can read and write is large, and the proportion of those who spend their evenings in the public house is small.

In Kempsford the principal landowner and lord of the manor is Sir Gilbert East, who is resident. There are about half a dozen other proprietors, the largest of whom owns about 300 acres.

There is enough labour, but no surplus. There are about 170 cottages. Some are in good order, but the majority, though not below the condition of cottages in other villages in the neighbourhood, are bad. Sir Gilbert East says they are far inferior to the condition of the cottages on his estate in Berkshire. A great number have only one bedroom. Quite half belong to proprietors who hold no other kind of property in the parish. The rent varies from 2*l.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* From 25 to 30 are lifehold, and these generally are the cottages that are in the worst state of repair.

Sir Gilbert East owns about 60 cottages, the conditions of which he is hoping to improve by building two new cottages each year.

The estimated cost of a good double cottage, with three bedrooms to each tenement, and adequate outdoor accommodation, is 250*l.*

Sir Gilbert East has 130 allotments of 15 rods apiece, let at 2*d.* a rod.

The vicar has 35 acres let out in the same way, in parcels varying in size from a quarter of an acre to an acre. The larger sized allotments are held mostly by tradesmen, let at from 2*l.* to 50*s.* an acre, rate-free.

The population of Kempsford is distributed into one village and three hamlets (Whelford, Horcott, and Dunfield, with a population of 200, 100, and 100 respectively), and there are about 10 cottages belonging to a detached farm. These ten cottages are more than two miles distant from any school.

The principal school is in the village of Kempsford. It is not in connexion with Government. It has an endowment of 10*l.* a year, and is a mixed school, taught by an uncertificated master, assisted by his wife. There are 130 names on the register, with an ordinary attendance of 90. It is maintained by voluntary subscriptions and school pence. The fee is 2*d.* a week for one child, 1*d.* for a second; any others of the same family come free.

The curate considers this school to be thoroughly efficient.

There is a second school in the hamlet of Whelford, kept in a cottage, under a middle-aged untrained mistress, attended by about 25 children, who are taught here till they are old enough to take the journey to the principal school. The mistress's salary is 4*s.* a week (which is provided out of the voluntary subscriptions), with a house rent free, and the children's pence.

The hamlet of Horcott adjoins the town of Fairford, and several of the children attend school there. There is also in this hamlet a school connected with the Roman Catholic chapel, attended by from 15 to 20 children. This school is supported by the children's pence and voluntary contributions.

There has been no night school in Kempsford village for the last three years. It was maintained for several years, but seemed to have worn itself out. Its revival was attempted this year, but unsuccessfully. It was taught by the schoolmaster and the clergy.

There is a small night school with about half a dozen scholars in Whelford, and another small one in Horcott, superintended by the Roman Catholic schoolmaster.

[There was no representative of Quennington or Hatherop, but the following information respecting them was gathered from Mr. Raymond Barker, who has property (a paper mill) in Quennington.]

The chief landowner in Quennington is Sir M. H. Beach, M.P. There is also a considerable estate, both in Quennington and Hatherop, recently belonging to the Maharajah Dhuleep Singh, which has just passed into the hands of Mr. Bazley.

It is believed that there is ordinarily a sufficient supply of labour. Some of the cottages are very bad indeed. A few new cottages have been built, but they are rather above the means of the agricultural labourer.

There is a mixed school under a mistress, supported by voluntary contributions, kept in a good room erected about seven years ago. Some of the bigger boys in Quennington come to Fairford school,—there are at present seven; a few of them only for the winter, going to work in the summer.

With regard to these children, who attend during

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the winter months, working in the summer, and who may therefore be considered as illustrating the working of the principle of the Printworks' Act, Mr. Banks finds that when they return to school at the end of the summer season, though they retain their power of reading, they have fallen back in their writing and ciphering nearly to the point at which they stood at the commencement of the previous winter.

In Hatherop all the land, except the glebe, belongs to one owner, Mr. Bazley. The supply of labour is believed to be adequate. The condition of the cottages is capital, almost all being of recent erection. There is also an excellent school-house, built by Hon. Ashley Ponsonby at the time that he owned the estate. It is a mixed school under a mistress, not in connexion with Government. Two Hatherop boys attend Fairford school.

There is reported to be a night school at Hatherop, conducted by the clergyman.

There is a considerable difference in the quality and character in the land in these parishes. It is, however, mostly light land. In Kempsford there is not a stone to be found ; but some of the land is very bad. In Fairford, Quennington, and Hatherop it is chiefly an oolite brash, with an occasional intermixture of heavy clay. There is some black land upon a white gravel in Kempsford and Fairford, which is of a very poor quality, and refuses to produce crops with any virtue in them.

The ploughing is done sometimes with two horses abreast, but more frequently with three in line. When oxen are employed, as they are on the heavier land in consequence of their steadier draught, they are generally used in teams of four, either in line or abreast. When three horses or four oxen are employed, of course a boy is required to drive them. Sir Gilbert East mentioned an instance which had come under his own observation of a girl of about 12 years of age being employed for this purpose.

The rent of the land would range from 20*s.* to 30*s.* an acre ; some may even exceed this higher figure.

About two and a half to three cottages per 100 acres would be an adequate supply ; and to be properly cultivated, the same quantity of land would require three men, one or two boys, and one or two women ; though this proportion would be somewhat affected by the size of the farm, and still more by the quality of the land, the heavier land requiring more labour.

The standing weekly wage has been 11*s.* till within the last fortnight. It is now 10*s.* Including his piece-work and harvest, it is estimated that an able-bodied labourer, at present rates, earns on the average 13*s.* a week throughout the year.

Women are largely employed on the land at all seasons of the year, except perhaps in the dead of winter. It is not thought that the land could be properly cultivated without them, unless a machine can be discovered for singling turnips, and some other operations of that kind, which are now performed by women.

A woman's daily wage is 9*d.* and 10*d.*

Young unmarried girls are occasionally employed in field-work, but the number is small and is much reduced in comparison with the number so employed 10 years ago. At present, they generally go to domestic service. The employment of unmarried girls in the fields (except in the haymaking season) would not be encouraged by the farmers.

Speaking generally, the labour of a boy is not considered by the gentlemen present to be of much real value to the farmer under the age of 11 or 12, though they are not unfrequently employed at an earlier age.

Some of the gentlemen present considered that, with a view to education, the best results would be produced, were the system practicable, by the application of the half-day system to boys up to the age of 13. Other gentlemen considered that better educational results would arise from continuous education for five years up to the age of 10 or 11, regarding the half-day system as impracticable. In forming the latter opinion it was considered that the education should be continuous, to be secured, if need be, by compulsion, and that its results should be tested by examination. They would wish every child before he leaves school and is allowed to go to work, to be able to pass an examination in the fourth standard, and they would prefer that the restriction upon labour should be limited by the condition of attaining this standard of proficiency, rather than by an absolute standard of age.

Signed in behalf of the Meeting,
J. R. Raymond-Barker, Chairman.

Dec. 6, 1867.

No. 80. *Saturday, December* 7, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Somerford Keynes, for

Somerford Keynes	- Pop.,	386 - Acr.,	1,488 - R.V.,	2,053*l.*
Poole Keynes	- Pop.,	180 - Acr.,	1,136 - R.V.,	1,792*l.*
Kemble -	Pop.,	406 - Acr.,	3,034 - R.V.,	4,249*l.*
South Cerney	- Pop.,	1,006 - Acr.,	2,931 - R.V.,	5,898*l.*
Sharncote	- Pop.,	19 - Acr.,	473 - R.V.,	676*l.*

Present at Meeting :

From Somerford Keynes—
- Rev. C. Fawcett, vicar and landowner.
- Mr. Thomas Westmacott, guardian and occupier of 100 acres.
- Mr. Wm. Clarke, waywarden and occupier of 170 acres.
- Mr. Wm. Walker, overseer and occupier of 220 acres.
- Mr. Edward Pickett, overseer and occupier of 140 acres.
- Mr. John Taylor, churchwarden and occupier of 700 acres.

From Poole Keynes—
- Rev. Benjamin Mallan, rector and diocesan inspector of schools.
- Mr. Jonathan Lewis, churchwarden and occupier of 46 acres.
- Mr. Wm. Whitfield, guardian and occupier of 230 acres.
- Mr. Wm. Hiscock, occupier of 200 acres.
- Mr. John Jennings, bailiff of the glebe farm of 200 acres.

From Kemble—
- Rev. R. H. Taylor, vicar.
- Mr. David Hiscock, occupier of 130 acres.
- Mr. Wm. Price Jones, representative of his mother, who owns an estate in the parish.
- Mr. George White, churchwarden and occupier of 1,200 acres.
- Mr. John Barton, guardian and occupier of 600 acres.

From South Cerney—
- Rev. W. W. Liddell, vicar.
- Mr. Joseph Howell, churchwarden and occupier of 180 acres.
- Mr. Wm. Large, guardian and occupier of 150 acres.
- Mr. Wm. Knight, guardian and occupier of 65 acres.

From Sharncote—
- No representative.

The chair was taken by Rev. C. Fawcett, rector of Somerford Keynes.

The chief landowners in Somerford Keynes are Rev. C. Fawcett and Sir Herbert Croft, Bart., the former of whom is resident, the latter not. There are three or four small proprietors.

There is plenty of labour ; but it is a rare thing to find a man out of work. There is a sufficient number of cottages, the majority of which are in a tolerable state of repair. But they are deficient in bedroom accommodation. Not one in the parish has three

bedrooms; and a few have only one. They all have gardens; and there are about 16 acres of allotments, which are let in parcels varying from 20 to 80 rods in size, at 3*d.* a rod. The general rent ranges from 35*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* The majority of the cottages belong to the landowners; there are about 70 in all, and some 20 of them are let with the farms. They are mostly clustered into a village, and near the church and school.

There is an excellent schoolroom, erected a few years ago by the rector. The school is under a certificated mistress, and is in receipt of annual Government aid. There are 85 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 60. The total annual cost is 55*l.*, of which 23*l.* comes from Government grant, 13*l.* from school pence, and 19*l.* from voluntary subscriptions. It is considered a thoroughly efficient school, and Her Majesty's Inspector reports favourably of its condition.

There is no night school. One was attempted by the schoolmistress, but it broke down the second winter, in consequence partly of the thinness of the attendance and partly of the difficulty of management.

The principal landowner in Poole Keynes, owning four-fifths of the parish, is Miss Gordon, who resides in the adjoining parish of Kemble. There are 200 acres of glebe; and there are three other small owners.

The supply of labour is hardly adequate. There are 27 cottages, the condition of which is being gradually improved by Miss Gordon, to whom they all belong. There is not, however, one with three bedrooms, and most have only one. They are built of the stone of the country, and are thatched. Proper offices have lately been added to most of them. The water supply is deficient from natural causes. There is also an artificial cause believed to be at work in the presence of a large steam pumping engine, which throws the water from the sources of the Thames into the Thames and Severn Canal. The rent varies from 30*s.* to 2*l.* 12*s.* The gardens are generally good; and there are 4½ acres of allotment on the glebe, which are let at 6*s.* per 20 rods, rate free.

There is a good schoolroom, built by subscription 20 years ago, in which is held a mixed National school, managed by the rector, taught by a provisionally certificated mistress. There are at present 33 names on the register (which is rather above the average) and an ordinary attendance of 25. The total annual cost is 45*l.* The mistress receives 30*l.* with a house. The Government grant is 12*l.*; the school pence 8*l.*; Miss. Gordon subscribes 5*l.*; 5*l.* is received from Betton's charity; and the rector makes up the deficiency.

There is a night school, conducted by the rector and the schoolmistress, also receiving Government aid. There are 14 scholars this winter, who pay 1*s.* 6*d.* for 16 weeks' instruction at three nights per week. It has been maintained for a good many winters, and the rector considers it to be quite successful. The age of the scholars ranges from 11 to 22. All but one could read and write fairly, when they began this season. They are anxious to improve themselves, and there is no difficulty in maintaining order. The rector makes a point of attending himself.

Miss Gordon is owner of upwards of 2,000 acres in Kemble, about 400 acres belong to Mrs. Jones, and 260 acres are glebe. These three owners are resident in the parish. There are three or four smaller landowners.

There are a good many tradesmen in Kemble, and several of the people work on the Great Western Railway.

The supply of agricultural labour, both of men and boys, is rather short.

There are between 80 and 90 houses, of which 65 are cottages. They are generally in good repair, and have been much improved in the last two or three years. There is, however, still room for improvement, which is going on. Not more than two of the cottages have three bedrooms. A case was mentioned of one cottage occupied by a family of eight persons with only one bedroom. The rent is very low, in many cases not above 9*d.* a week. There are good gardens, and about 12 acres of allotment, let in lots of 20, 30, and 40 rods at 3*d.* or 4*d.* a rod. The people are generally anxious to have these allotments, though occasionally when a man has had no family he has thrown his piece up.

There is a charity of 30*l.* a year, partly arising from land, which is distributed at Christmas at the discretion of the minister, churchwardens, and leading parishioners. It is a charity of ancient date, and the vicar has never seen the trust deed, nor even knows where it is. The land has been in the occupation of the same family since 1720. The charity is not considered to have had a beneficial effect upon the people, and has lessened their self-respect and sense of independence. There is a difficulty also in defining who are its proper recipients.

The school is nearly entirely supported by Miss Gordon. It is held in a good room, converted to the purpose, with a stone floor, well ventilated. It is not in receipt of Government aid, but is under diocesan inspection. There are between 60 and 70 names on the register, and an average attendance of about 50. It is taught by a mistress, who receives 30*l.* a year (including the school pence), and a furnished house rent free. The vicar considers the mistress to be a superior person, and the school to be thorougly adequate to the wants of the place.

There is a night school in Kemble taught by a master specially paid for the purpose by Miss Gordon, and superintended by the vicar. It is held in a room adjoining the vicarage, and is attended by 15 scholars. In previous winters there have been as many as 20. It is free. The age of the scholars varies from 10 to 20. All but one (who is a stranger, a shepherd's boy,—a class in consequence of their migratory employment who always labour under disadvantage), could read and write fairly when they came to the school this winter. Most of them can work sums in the four rules of arithmetic.

In South Cerney there are upwards of 30 landowners. The largest estate is about 300 acres, and the proprietor (Miss Sutton) is resident. A few of the estates are occupied by their owners. The occupations are generally small; the largest farm is 320 acres, the smaller occupations range from 30 to 50 acres. The land is about equally divided between arable and pasture. A considerable quantity of sheep and cattle are kept.

The supply of labour is considerably beyond the wants of the parish, and South Cerney sends labourers into 10 adjoining parishes: Sharncote, Somerford Keynes, Siddington, Preston, Harnhill, Driffield, Latton, Down Amney, Kemble, and Ashton Keynes. Some of these labourers have to travel from three to four miles to their work.

South Cerney is an open parish, and its population has been in a great measure driven into it from the surrounding close parishes, and many of those that have come are not families of the highest stamp.

The cottages, generally, are very bad. They are in the hands of a great number of small proprietors who cannot afford to spend money upon them. They are out of repair, as well as deficient in adequate accommodation for the families. The rent ranges from 2*l.* 12*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* Many of them have fair gardens, but there is a deficiency in this respect also. There are from 20 to 25 acres of allotment. The vicar considers that the condition of the cottages has an unfavourable effect upon the character and habits of the people.

There is school, mixed in the morning, and separated into two departments in the afternoon. It is held in a sufficiently good room, which is to be improved next year. It is in receipt of Government aid, and is taught by a certificated master and a trained mistress. There are 100 names on the register, and an average

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attendance of 90. The population are chiefly clustered into a village which is close to the school. The total annual cost of maintaining the school is about 115*l.* The master and mistress receive 90*l.*, with a house. There is an endowment of 35*l.*, and the voluntary subscriptions are 25*l.* The school pence are 20*l.*, and Government grant has varied from 16*l.* to 30*l.* The vicar makes up deficiencies. There has been a heavy expense in the last five years on repairs, which is likely to be renewed next year for the contemplated improvements.

There is an infant school in a hamlet two miles distant from the main village, attended by 25 children. The mistress receives the school pence, and the vicar makes up her salary to 8*s.* a week.

There is a private adventure school in the parish, attended by 8 or 10 children, above the labouring class, who pay 6*d.* a week.

There is a night school in the village, taught by the schoolmaster and his wife and the vicar. It is attended by 42 scholars; the average of some past winters has been about 40. It is decidedly flourishing. The scholars, who range in age from 10 to 30, pay 2*d.* a week. All could read and write, more or less, when they came. They are divided into three classes, and those who have attended for two or three previous winters can read and write very fairly.

Sharncote is a small parish with a population under 30, lying between Somerford Keynes and South Cerney. There are two principal landowners, one of whom is resident. There are six cottages and two farms. There is a short supply of labour, and most of what is wanted is procured from South Cerney. There is no school in Sharncote, and the children attend school at Somerford Keynes, which is not more than a mile distant. There is no resident clergyman.

The custom of hiring labourers by the year to live in the farm-house, once prevalent in this district, has nearly expired. Carters, shepherds, and cattlemen, however, as well as the boys who attend upon them, are still hired by the year, though paid by the week. The men are found a cottage, and if there is room in the house, they are sometimes paid extra by the farmer to take a boy as a lodger. Boys from 15 to 20 years of age are hired by the year, and in most cases leave their own home and parish, and come to reside in the parish where they are hired. They are found to prefer this arrangement, as they thus become their own masters, and also generally get higher wages.

There is a statute fair at Cirencester, which is very largely attended by farm servants. The best farm servants of both sexes are rarely hired at the statute, but they all insist upon attending it, in order to have a day's pleasure. It is thought that all hired farm servants must be hired by the year, or there would be a risk of the farmer being left without any one to do his work at the busiest time. He now keeps servants whom he does not want through the winter in order to be sure of their services in the summer. These yearly hirings are generally secured by a written agreement.

The land in these parishes is very various in quality. It lets at rents varying from 1*l.* to 2*l.* an acre. The occupations generally are of a medium size. A few farms would run as high as 1,000 acres, but the average would be from 200 to 300. The cost of labour per annum would be about 20*s.* an acre.

There is considerable employment for women for about six months in the year, if they choose to undertake it, but they are not found to be so anxious for farm work as they used to be. In South Cerney a few unmarried girls work on the land, but in the other parishes represented in this meeting, hardly a case could be remembered.

With regard to the morality of the district, a remarkable contrast was mentioned. In three adjoining parishes, in which Miss Gordon is the chief landowner, Rodmarton, Kemble, and Poole Keynes, there is neither publichouse nor beerhouse, and a case of drunkenness is of unfrequent occurrence; in South Cerney there are 10 houses licensed to sell beer, and the condition of the parish in respect of sobriety, is in proportion to that fact.

A marked improvement in the habits and character of the people (compared with what they were 10 years ago) is traced, in Kemble, to the improvements which have been recently made in the people's homes.

It is the unanimous and decided opinion of the meeting that no half-time system could be applied to agricultural employment in any district in which there was not a sufficiency of boy labour to work the boys in relays. This is not the case in this district.

Nor can the meeting see how, even if there were a relay, it could be worked on the half-day system, though it might be worked, not without some trouble and inconvenience, on the method of alternate whole days.

Of all the principles embodied in the legislation of the Factory Acts, the only one at all applicable to the agriculture of this district, and which would cause least embarrassment to the farmer, is that which would require a certain amount of attendance during the winter months (when some of the younger boys might be spared), at school, as a condition of their going to work the following spring, but the school managers present do not believe that any satisfactory educational results would be produced under this system, the long interval spent at work being likely to neutralize all the benefits of the short interval spent at school.

The meeting, therefore, consider that better results would be produced by fixing an age below which children should be prohibited from field labour, at the same time securing that during the prohibited period they should attend school.

The age which the meeting would desire to see fixed upon for this purpose is 10, as it was considered that a higher age, however desirable in the interests of education, would inflict severe hardship in the case of large families.

Some of the gentlemen present would desire to see the requirement of age accompanied with a requirement of a moderate standard of attainment, as a condition precedent to employment.

Signed on behalf of the Meeting.
C. Fawcett, Chairman.

7th Dec. 1867.

No. 81. *Tuesday, December* 10, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Amney Crucis, for

Amney Crucis	Pop., 648	Acr., 3,015	R.V., 4,140*l.*
Amney St. Peter's	Pop., 188	Acr., 541	R.V., 1,058*l.*
Amney St. Mary's	Pop., 125	Acr., 1,236	R.V., 1,705*l.*
Barnsley	Pop., 327	Acr., 1,992	R.V., 2,156*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Amney Crucis—
- Rev. E. J. Brewster, vicar.
- Mr. John Theyer, guardian and occupier of 750 acres.
- Mr. John Radway, assessor of taxes, and occupier of 220 acres, and landowner.
- Mr. Edward Ackerman, churchwarden and occupier of 250 acres.
- Mr. William Radway, occupier of 300 acres.
- Mr. James Snowsell, overseer, and occupier of 375 acres.
- Mr. Walter Wakely, certificated schoolmaster.

From Amney St. Peters—
- Mr. Charles Stevens, owner and occupier of 260 acres.
- Mr. Thomas Bedford, guardian and occupier of 300 acres.
- Mr. Thomas Ricketts, churchwarden.

From Amney St. Mary's—
Mr. Henry Cole, guardian, churchwarden, overseer, and occupier of 1,130 acres.
From Barnsley—
Rev. G. E. Howman, rector.
Mr. Charles Turk, guardian, churchwarden, and occupier of 1,300 acres.
Mr. George Radway, churchwarden, overseer, and occupier of 300 acres.

The chair was taken by Rev. E. J. Brewster, vicar of Amney Crucis.

About four-fifths of the land in Amney Crucis belong to the representative of the late J. E. Blackwell, Esq., who is lord of the manor. There is a mansion belonging to the estate, now occupied by Lord Gifford. Earl St. Germains has a farm of 250 acres; and there are 200 acres of glebe. The Dean and Chapter of Gloucester also own about 150 acres of land. There are a few more small proprietors.

The population is very inconveniently distributed in relation to the farms. There are 67 cottages belonging to the Blackwell estate; but there are three farms on the same estate to which only four cottages are attached. Mr. Theyer occupies a farm of 750 acres, with three of these cottages, each containing only two small rooms, which he is obliged to "crowd "like a barrack; you can't walk between the beds. "The best of the three was put up for 40*l.*; and that "is a palace compared with the other two." He is obliged to get his supply of labour from where he can; and some of his men come a distance of four miles.

The state of the cottages generally in Amney Crucis is "very middling;" they are old, and very little has been done to put them in proper repair. The want of a resident landlord is felt. The only buildings on the glebe are a cart-house and a mill. Three cottages, the rent of which goes to the repair of the church, are represented as being in a very bad condition, and there are no funds available for their improvement. The rent of the cottages on the Blackwell estate, with about a chain of garden ground, is 1*s.* a week. There are four acres of field allotment. There are about 90 cottages altogether in Amney Crucis; but not more than half are occupied by agricultural labourers. More cottages are wanted in connexion with the farms. It is estimated that a pair of cottages, each with three bedrooms, the materials all being obtainable on the estate, could be erected for 180*l.*

There is an endowed school, with a residence for the teachers, in two departments, for boys and girls; each department at present under a certificated teacher, holding a certificate of the first class. There are 45 boys' and 50 girls' names on the register, and an average attendance of 40 and 45 respectively. The school is under Government inspection; but in consequence of the amount of the endowment the annual sum received in aid is insignificant. The endowment is 80*l.*, arising from land. All labourers' children are admitted free. Tradesmen's children pay 2*d.* for the first child, and 1*d.* for the rest. By the endowment six boys and six girls are clothed as well as taught; and by a voluntary subscription in aid of the endowment, amounting to from 30*l.* to 40*l.* a year, 12 more boys and 12 more girls are wholly or partially clothed, as well as other expenses of the school are defrayed.

The best behaved and most regularly attending children are those who are now recommended for the clothing benefaction. The principle formerly acted upon was to select the children of the poorest parents; but it was found to work with considerable embarrassment, and has been abandoned.

The vicar considers that the school is efficient and adequate to the wants of the parish; but the people are not found to avail themselves of the advantages of it. At the present moment there is only one labourer's son (who is a cripple) in the school above 10 years of age. There are two or three tradesmen's sons who are about 12.

There was a night school last winter conducted by the schoolmaster; but no great zeal was exhibited in the matter by the scholars, and the experiment has not been renewed.

There is a private school in the parish, kept by Mr. Sutton, attended by farmers' and tradesmen's sons.

In Amney St. Peter's, the land chiefly belongs to Mr. Stevens and Mr. Jones, of whom the former is resident. A considerable proportion of the population are tradesmen or independent people, and there is barely a sufficient supply of labour for the cultivation of the land.

The cottages are generally in good order. Several of them belong to the clergyman (Mr. Daubeney), who pays attention to their condition. The rent is about 1*s.* a week.

There is only a Sunday school in Amney St. Peter; the children attend school at Amney Crucis, and are admitted there on equal terms. The endowment of the school (which dates from 1722) arises from land situated in Amney St. Peter.

The principal landowners in Amney St. Mary's (or Ashbrook, as it is otherwise called) are the Dean and Chapter of Gloucester, who have about 1,000 acres, and John Jones, Esq., who resides about 7 miles off.

There is a sufficient supply of labourers and of cottages. The cottages are well placed in relation to the farms. On the property of the Dean and Chapter, which is all held in one occupation, there are 18 cottages. Some of these require repair, and some are defective in amount of accommodation. The rent varies from 2*l.* to 3*l.* a year.

There is not even a Sunday school in Amney St. Mary. The day scholars attend at Amney Crucis; the Sunday scholars at Amney St. Peter's. The distances do not exceed a mile. In respect of the property which they hold in these parishes, the Dean and Chapter subscribe 10*l.* a year to the Amney school.

There is no night school.

In Barnsley, all the land, except 16 acres of glebe, belongs to Sir W. A. Musgrave, Bart., who has a mansion there, occasionally occupied by some members of his family as a shooting-box, but who is not himself resident.

There is a sufficiency of labour, and of cottages. The cottages are generally in a good state of repair, but are in some cases deficient in accommodation. They all belong to Sir Wm. Musgrave. The rent ranges from 1*l.* 10*s.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* They have good gardens, and there are 12 acres of allotment, let at 3*d.* a perch.

There is a mixed parochial school, held in a good building erected for the purpose about 25 years ago by the late Sir James Musgrave, under an untrained young mistress, with 30 names on the register and an ordinary attendance of 25. The school is conveniently situated, and the parents take a fair amount of interest in their children's education. The rector considers the instruction offered in this school adequate to the requirements of the parish. The total annual cost of the school is somewhat under 40*l.*, towards which 6*l.* are subscribed, about 5*l.* arises from children's pence, and the rector bears the burden of the deficiency.

There is a night school, conducted by the curate, the schoolmistress, and two or three volunteers. It is attended by about 20 scholars, who are found to be regular, orderly, and anxious to learn. They pay 1*d.* a week for three nights' instruction. It is held in the schoolroom.

There is a small dame's school, attended by about 15 or 18 children, mostly under six years of age, who pay 3*d.* a week (2*d.* of which is contributed by the rector, who regards this school as an infant school to feed his own).

The rector feels that the interests of education very greatly suffer in this parish from the early age at which the children go out to work. They frequently leave as soon as seven or eight; and when

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they come back at 15 or 16 to be prepared for confirmation they are found hardly to know their letters.

The meeting are unanimous in desiring that every labourer should be able to read, write, and cipher.

They believe that this amount of education makes a more intelligent, useful, and valuable labourer.

They fear that this result will never be satisfactorily or generally attained without a system of compulsory education.

But if compulsory measures are adopted to enforce the attendance of children at school up to a certain age, they consider that certain exemptions from, or relaxations of, the law should prevent such enforcement from operating with undue hardship upon large families. A man's worst time is when he has a large young family, and he is the only bread-winner.

The meeting consider that none of the modes of enforcing attendance applied under the Factory Acts are applicable to agriculture; and they think that the best educational results would be secured by requiring continuous attendance at school up to a certain age, and then leaving the child's labour free.

The age which they would desire to see fixed upon for this purpose is 10.

The meeting do not desire to see the employment of young girls on the land encouraged. They think it would be even desirable to prohibit such employment in the case of girls under 14 (some gentlemen would prefer to say under 16), except in the seasons of haymaking or harvest, or in company, or under the supervision, of their parents.

The meeting are decided in considering that the cottages of the agricultural labourers need improvement, and that this improvement really should be the first step in any attempts that are made to elevate the condition of this class of our population. With good cottages, conveniently placed in relation to the farms, there would be no scarcity of good labourers. The condition of the cottages is observed to suffer from the non-residence of the landowner.

Signed in behalf of the before-mentioned Meeting.
EDW. J. BREWSTER,
Dec. 10, 1867. Vicar of Amney Crucis.

No. 82. *Wednesday, December* 11, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Siddington, for

Siddington	Pop., 474	Acr., 2,125	R. V., 3,553*l.*
Stratton	Pop., 596	Acr., 1,303	R. V., 2,961*l.*
Baunton	Pop., 122	Acr., 1,338	R. V., 1,494*l.*
Preston	Pop., 217	Acr., 1,955	R. V., 3,122*l.*
Driffield	Pop., 132	Acr., 1,225	R. V., 1,472*l.*
Harnhill	Pop., 88	Acr., 689	R. V., 1,130*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Siddington—
- Hon and Rev. J. Gifford, rector.
- Mr. David Bowley, landowner and occupier of 100 acres.
- Mr. Samuel Sargent, occupier of 480 acres.
- Mr. Charles Wood, churchwarden, and occupier of 500 acres.
- Mr. George Hine, overseer, and occupier of 120 acres.

From Stratton—
- Rev. G. F. Master, rector.
- Mr. Edward Trinder, agent for Col. Master.
- Mr. William Slatter, churchwarden, guardian, and occupier of 700 acres.
- Mr. Thos. Vaisey, jun., occupier of 360 acres.

From Baunton—
- Mr. Thomas Porter, churchwarden, and occupier of 600 acres.
- Mr. James Butt, guardian and occupier of 360 acres.

From Preston—
- Rev. A. C. Master, vicar.
- D. Mildred, Esq., landowner, guardian and occupier of 250 acres.
- Mr. Thomas Lewis, occupier of 370 acres.
- Mr. James Boston, churchwarden and occupier of 300 acres.
- Mr. George Broad, occupier of 300 acres.

From Driffield and Harnhill—
- Rev. Thomas Maurice, rector, magistrate, chairman of Board of Guardians, and occupier of 200 acres.
- Mr. Henry Howell, guardian, churchwarden, overseer, and occupier of 1,000 acres.

The chair was taken by Hon. and Rev. J. GIFFORD.

Four-fifths of the land in Siddington belong to Earl Bathurst; 300 acres are glebe, and there are two estates about 100 acres each. Lord Bathurst resides in the immediate neighbourhood. The supply of labour is fairly adequate to the demand, but some of the outlying farms draw their supply from South Cerney.

There are about 90 cottages in the parish, of which 30 are held on a life-hold tenure, which gives a vote for the county. This tenure was created after a hotly contested election, which took place just after the Reform Bill of 1832. It has worked very unfavourably on the condition of the cottages so held. They are held at a quit rent of about 1*s.* 6*d.* a year, under Earl Bathurst, but the lives that are now in the lease will not be renewed.

The cottages in Siddington, not held on this tenure, are in a fairly satisfactory condition, but there are very few that have three bedrooms. Lord Bathurst lets his cottages at 1*s.* a week, the rest fetch 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* They have good gardens, and there are eight acres of field allotment of excellent land, let at the same rent which the farmer pays, about 50*s.* an acre.

There is a National school held in an excellent room, erected in 1847, receiving annual aid from Government. It is taught by a trained master, who is now sitting for his certificate, assisted by a sewing mistress. It is a mixed school, with 60 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 45. The total annual cost is about 80*l.*, of which 60*l.* goes in salary to the master, who has to provide the sewing-mistress. The income arises—11*l.* from school pence, 12*l.* or 15*l.* from Government grant, and the remainder from voluntary subscriptions. No difficulty is experienced in maintaining the school, which the rector considers adequate to the wants of the parish.

There is a private adventure dame's school, kept by a very respectable elderly woman, which is attended by from 20 to 25 children (infants), till they are of age to come to the National school. It is a school which does good service.

There is a night school, taught by the rector and the schoolmaster, attended this winter by 22 scholars, who are regular in attendance and anxious to learn. It is held for three nights in the week, and the fee charged is 2*d.* The scholars vary in age, from 10 to 21. The rector thinks that of the 22 lads, 16 when they came could read well enough to amuse and improve themselves, and about half-a-dozen could write a letter.

Of the land in Stratton, half belongs to Colonel Master, and one-third to Earl Bathurst and others; There are about 360 acres of glebe. The town pricipal landowners have residences in the neighbourhood. There is an ample supply of labour. The condition of the cottages in point of repair is fairly good, but in many of them there is not sufficient accommodation for the families. Colonel Master lets his cottages, with a quarter of an acre of garden ground, at 1*s.* a week. Others, belonging to small owners, are let at from 4*l.* to 6*l.* a year, but these are near the town of Cirencester, and are chiefly occupied by mechanics or artizans.

There is a National mixed school, under a certificated master, whose wife teaches sewing, receiving annual aid. There are about 80 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of between 50 and 60. The total annual cost is about 85*l.* The school pence amount to 8*l.* or 9*l.* (at 1*d.* per child per week); the

Government grant about 25*l.*; the voluntary contributions are 50*l.* There is no difficulty in raising this amount, and the school is well reported by Her Majesty's inspector, and is considered by the rector to be quite efficient.

There is a night school, taught by the schoolmaster and two or three volunteers. There are from 18 to 20 scholars, who attend with fair regularity. The majority of them cannot read or write with facility, but the rector believes that they are the least intelligent young men of their class in the parish. The school is held three times a week, and the fee is 3*d.* The age of the scholars ranges from 12 to 20.

The whole of the land in Baunton is the property of Colonel Master. There is about the supply of labour that is required.

The cottages (22 in number) are in fair condition. There is not believed to be any case of overcrowding. They are all the property of Colonel Master, and lodgers are not allowed to be taken without his consent. The rent is the same as at Stratton.

There is a dame's school, under the direction of the rector, maintained by the school pence and voluntary subscriptions (amounting to about 12*l.*), attended by 26 children. Elder children are frequently passed on to Stratton school, which is only a mile distant. The mistress is a middle-aged woman, fairly competent. She also keeps a night school, which is attended by 10 or 10 scholars, whom she is said to manage very well.

In Preston, of 1,955 acres, 1,400 belong to Colonel Master, 230 acres are glebe, 230 acres form part of the endowment of the Blue and Yellow school in Cirencester, and there is an estate of 120 acres belonging to D. Mildred, Esq., who is resident.

There is a deficient supply of labour, and a good deal is imported from Cirencester, which is 1½ miles distant. There is an insufficient supply of cottages. They are 30 in number, of which only five have three bedrooms. The gardens are very small, but there are eight acres of field allotment, let in quarter-acre lots at 48*s.* per acre. The cottage rents are 1*s.* a week.

There is a parochial school, held in a good room erected for the purpose, not in connexion with Government. It is taught by a young untrained, but very competent, mistress, who receives a salary of 26*l.* a year, with a house rent free. There are 32 names on the register and an average attendance of 22. The school costs about 30*l.* a year; the landowner subscribes 10*l.*, the school pence amount to 5*l.*, and the vicar makes up the deficiency.

There is a night school held in the same room, and taught by the vicar, his wife, and the schoolmistress. There are 12 scholars, who are very anxious to learn, and fairly regular; they seldom miss, except for a reason. They can most of them write fairly, and their arithmetic is remarkably good, sufficient for any purpose of ordinary accounts, but their reading is "mild." The age of the scholars ranges from 7 to 19; the majority are between 7 and 12. Children are taken from the day school to work at a very early age in Preston. The vicar attributes this, in part, to the insufficiency of labour. One family was mentioned with six children under 10, in which two boys, aged severally seven and nine, bring in 2*s.* a week apiece.

The two principal landowners in Driffield are Colonel Vansittart and George Vansittart, Esq. There are 180 acres of glebe. The supply of labour is hardly adequate, a few men have to be imported from South Cerney, which is something over two miles distant.

The cottages are in fair condition, but some of them are not well-constructed, and pinched for room. Others are farmhouses that have been converted. There are about 30 cottages, which, with two exceptions, belong to the landowners. The ordinary rent is 1*s.* a week. The gardens attached to the cottages are not very large, but there are six acres of allotment, so that each cottager with his garden cultivates about a quarter of an acre of ground. The allotments are let at 3*d.* per rod.

There is an endowed parochial school, under trustees. The endowment arises from 300*l.* in the funds, which produces 8*l.* 10*s.* a year. The school is held in a cottage which is part of the endowment, which has been converted and improved. A mistress has been just appointed at a salary of 20*l.* a year, in addition to half the school pence, three tons of coal, and a house rent free.

The school has been ordinarily attended by about 20 children.

There was once a night school, which was discontinued, partly in consequence of the infirmity of the teacher, and at present it has not been renewed.

There is a short supply of boys in Driffield, and in consequence they go out to work at a very early age.

Harnhill is a small parish of less than 700 acres, which belong chiefly to John Bengough Esq., who resides 20 miles off. A good deal of the labour is supplied by South Cerney which is between two or three miles off. The condition of the cottages is bad. There are only 13 cottages, most of which are old. There has been no new cottage erected for this 40 years. It is a close parish, and the practice hitherto has been to get rid of the labourers.

There are only two families with children (three in each) in the parish; and the school in Driffield, which is midway between the two parishes, answers the purposes of both. The villages of the two parishes are seven furlongs apart; and the livings, though not ecclesiastically united, have been held together in one incumbency for 200 years.

The rent of the land in these parishes is about 30*s.* an acre tithe-free. The soil is a good deal mixed; some of it is a stiff clay requiring to be ploughed with three or four horses; but the bulk is a stonebrash of a good workable quality.

The yield of wheat ranges from three to four quarters per acre. The ordinary cost of labour would range from 20*s.* to 30*s.* an acre in the year, varying according to the quality of the land, and the proportion of the farm under the plough or in pasture.

Boy-labour is much in demand in the district and is scarce. Mr. Bowley wants a boy now and can't get him "for love or money." Mr. Maurice has not a single boy on his farm under 16, and does not require them, as he does his ploughing with two horses. He considers two horses abreast quite as effective as three horses in line. He is, however, sometimes obliged to employ a woman to drive at harvest and at dung-carting. 100 acres of land would employ constantly three men and one boy, and two women partially. Boys begin to earn 4*d.* a day, and at 10 years old they are worth 3*s.* a week. A woman earns 8*d.* or 10*d.* a day, and 1*s.* in harvest.

An efficient farm labourer in constant employ, including his harvest and piece work, would earn on the average 13*s.* a week throughout the year. Some gentlemen present put the sum at 1*s.* higher, others were inclined to put it at a little less. Something would depend upon the proximity of the farm to the town of Cirencester.

The custom of hiring boys away from home by the year, who live either in the farmhouse or premises, or who are lodged about the village, does not exist in these parishes, at least not till the boys are old enough to shift for themselves.

The labour of women is largely employed on the land; but they are chiefly married women or widows, and young girls under 16 are rarely seen at work in the fields. The employment of women affects the attendance at school injuriously in this respect, that a girl is kept away to mind the younger children, while the mother goes out to work.

It is the unanimous and strong opinion of the meeting that the half-time system, whether it takes the shape of half day or alternate whole day schooling, the supply of boys being as it is, is inapplicable and impracticable in agriculture.

Further, boys are wanted as much on the farm in winter as in summer; nor is it thought that if school attendance were required for the winter months,

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as a condition of being employed in the summer, that any satisfactory progress would be made.

The only feasible plan, therefore, that approved itself to the judgment of the meeting, was o prohibit the employment of children on the land to the age of 10, and to take advantage of the previous five years for their education by providing for their regular attendance at school. The only difficulty that seems to stand in the way of adopting this plan is the necessity that in the case of some large families might be felt by the parents for their children's earnings, and this difficulty will have to be seriously considered in any legislation which may take place on the subject.

This hardship might perhaps in part be relieved by allowing an exemption in the case of children who reach a given standard of proficiency at an earlier age than 10; and such exemption would also act beneficially in another direction, by operating as a motive upon the parents to send their children regularly to school. The meeting would regret to see the introduction of a direct system of compulsion, till all other influences have been proved to fail.

Signed on behalf of the meeting.

JOHN GIFFORD, Chairman.

Dec. 11, 1867.

No. 83. *Thursday, December* 12, 1867.

Collective Meeting at Down Amney, for

Down Amney	Pop., 429 - Acr., 2,452 - R.V., 3,316*l.*
Meysey Hampton	Pop., 352 - Acr., 1,963 - R.V., 2,711*l.*
Marston Meysey.	Pop., 215 - Acr., 1,275 R.V., 2,036*l.*
Poulton	Pop., 454 - Acr., 1,532 - R.V., 2,374*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Down Amney—
Rev. G. Phillimore, vicar.
Mr. Robert Habgood, occupier of 400 acres.
Mr. James Sparks, schoolmaster.
From Meysey Hampton—
Rev. John Wilson, rector.
Mr. Henry Howse, churchwarden and owner of 80 acres.
Mr. Edmund Stephens, occupier of 660 acres.
From Marston Meysey—
Rev. M. Holme, incumbent.
From Poulton—
No representative.

The chair was taken by the Rev. JOHN WILSON, Rector of Meysey Hampton.

All the land in Down Amney, except 17 acres of glebe, belongs to the Earl of St. Germains, who is non-resident, but takes a lively interest in the condition of the parish. There is a mansion on the property, which is let.

A good deal of the land which was formerly pasture has of late years been put under the plough. On one farm of 1,000 acres, not wholly in this parish, steam cultivation is largely employed. A large proportion of the labour employed on this farm is drawn from other parishes. Mr. Phillimore is of opinion that the proper cultivation of the land in Down Amney demands more labour than the parish can supply. A considerable number of the cottages are occupied by persons not employed in agricultural pursuits. The population is not increasing.

The condition of the cottages generally is excellent. They all belong to Lord St. Germains. Within the last few years 20 new cottages have been erected of an unusually good quality, and the tenants are so sorted in them as to give to every mixed family three bed chambers. The rent of the best cottages, including a quarter of an acre of land, is from 3*l.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* There are no allotments, as the gardens are of sufficient size for all the wants of the people.

There is an excellent natural supply of water, procured from wells.

There is a parochial school, held in an excellent room, not in connexion with Government, under an untrained master and his wife, who assists in teaching throughout the day. It is a mixed school, with 71 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 50. There is only one boy on the register over 10 years of age.

The teachers' salary is 45*l.*, and the total annual cost is 58*l.* or 60*l.* The income arises from school pence (about 15*l.*) and voluntary subscriptions (of which 25*l.* comes from Earl St. Germains). There is no difficulty in maintaining the school, and the vicar considers it to be adequate to the wants of the place.

There is a night school conducted by the schoolmaster. There are 11 scholars, who are very attentive and regular. Their ages vary between 8 and 15. It is held three nights a week, and the fee is a halfpenny a night. There is however a difficulty about this school, partly arising from the late hours at which the boys sometimes return from their work, and partly from several of the cottages lying on the outskirts of the parish.

The vicar and the schoolmaster both consider that the Sunday school is a valuable supplementary instrument of education.

In Meysey Hampton the lord of the manor is John Mott, Esq., who owns between 700 and 800 acres, and resides in Staffordshire. There are 350 acres of glebe; Sir M. H. Beach, M.P., owns about 340 acres, and there are a few small proprietors.

There is hardly a sufficient supply of labour. The cultivation generally is high. Mr. Stephens lays down nearly half his occupation in sainfoin, to save labour. He found that he could not get people enough to cultivate his whole farm as he thought it ought to be cultivated. His farm is three miles from the village, and the men are found indisposed to travel that distance to their work. One man, who has worked 40 years on the farm, has travelled six miles every day to and from his work; his journeys amount to some 75,000 miles. There are about 50 cottages. They are not considered generally to be in a good condition. They chiefly belong to the lord of the manor. A few new ones have been erected; small, cheap houses, with defective chamber accommodation; but otherwise there has been but little improvement, and there is no likelihood of any. The rent ranges from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. Some of the cottages have no garden, but there are about 12 acres of field-allotments.

There is a church school, kept in a cottage given for the purpose by the lord of the manor, under an untrained master assisted by a mistress. There are 47 names on the register, and an average attendance of 37. Only two boys and three girls are over 10 years of age. The average age at leaving school has been, in the case of boys, 9½ years; in the case of girls, 8½. The girls are withdrawn at this early age to nurse the younger children of the family while the mother goes out to work. They generally afterwards go out to service when they are 11 or 12 years old. The rector only knows of one unmarried girl who goes out to work in the fields.

The total annual cost of this school is about 68*l.*, of which 58*l.* is paid for teachers' stipends. The children's pence amount to about 6*l.*, the rector receives 9*l.* in subscriptions, and himself finds the money to cover the deficiency.

The diocesan inspector reports favourably of the instruction; but a better building is to be desired. The rector means to build a new school house when he can see his way to it.

There is also a day school in connexion with the Baptist chapel on the British system, attended, it is believed, by not more than 20 children, three-fourths of whom come from neighbouring parishes. It is taught by a master; and the children of the parish who attend it are unbaptized children, who on that ground are not admitted to the rector's school.

There is also a private school, attended by half a

dozen children of a somewhat superior class, who pay 3*d.* a week.

There is a night school in connexion with the rector's day school, and taught by the same master. It is open for the five winter months for four evenings in the week of 1½ hours each. It is attended by 21 scholars this winter. They are admitted as soon as they leave the day school. Two are only 8 years of age; two are 9, the rest are between 10 and 18. All but two are at farm work. They are fairly regular, and anxious to learn.

There are about 12 women, all married, regularly employed in farm work, about one-half of whom are without young or any families. There is only one girl under 18 so employed, and she is the daughter of one of the above women.

In Marston Meysey the largest proprietor is Mr. John Archer, who owns about 400 acres, and is non-resident. It was originally a leasehold and copyhold estate held under the Bishop of Salisbury, which has been enfranchised by Mr. Archer. There are nine or ten smaller landowners.

The supply of labour is more than sufficient, and the same may be said of the cottages. The result is an influx of families of an unsatisfactory type, who shift whenever they can see a chance of bettering themselves.

The cottages are old and indifferent. No repairs have been attempted, and none are in prospect. The rent varies from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* The gardens are mostly small, but there are six acres of allotment.

Till within the last 11 years there was no resident clergyman, and the princial landowner (the Bishop of Salisbury) up to about the same date, of course, was not resident. Mr. Archer resides at a distance of about four miles.

There is a small dame's school, taught by the clerk's wife, and kept in her cottage. There are about 14 children in ordinary attendance, and about 30 in the Sunday school. The room is small, but no other place is available. The total annual cost of the school is about 12*l.*, towards which 4*l.* are subscribed. There is a small endowment of 3*l.* 12*s.* The children's pence come to about 1*s.* 6*d.* a week.

There is no night school. It was attempted, but the room was not found sufficiently commodious. The only hope of securing a proper school building is, if the Ecclesiastical Commissioners will convert to that purpose a cottage and some land which they have not allowed to be enfranchised, but upon which at present there still remain three lives.

There was no representative of Poulton present at the meeting, but it was described generally as a populous agricultural parish, with the land much subdivided into small estates; cottages in many cases occupied by their owners; for many years without the advantage of a resident clergyman (the income being only 40*l.* without a house), and with no school beyond a dame's school. The people have been, in consequence, thrown upon their own resources, and are described as a self-reliant, hard-working race, but at the same time lawless, and the morality of the parish is of a low type, drunkenness being very prevalent.

The right of presentation to the living has been recently transferred to the bishop who has found a clergyman willing to undertake the post; and the income either has been or is on the point of being somewhat increased from private and public sources. The prospects of the parish are brightening on all sides.

It is the opinion of all the gentlemen present at this meeting that there has been in the last 15 years a marked general improvement in the tone, character, manner, and intelligence of the agricultural population in the three parishes represented.

It is felt, however, that the great difficulty in raising up a generally educated rural population lies in the two facts (1) of the irregular attendance of the children, and (2) in the early age at which they are removed from school.

In Down Amney there is a sufficient supply of the means of education, and it is believed that all those who have availed themselves of those means are educated adequately to their station in life; but there is always a certain number of children whom the system does not reach, or who slip through it, and whom nothing but some form of compulsion will bring regularly to school.

Mr. Stephens has had a conversation in reference to the questions which he supposed would be brought forward at this meeting with several of his labourers, whom he represents to be intelligent and steady men, and their sentiment was that it would be a capital thing to keep children for a longer period and more regularly at school; but that they would like to have the ordering of the times at which they were to attend school, because occasions frequently arise when they would be glad of their help to add a little to the family's income.

The meeting admit that in the interests of education, the half-day system, if it were practicable, would produce the most beneficial results. Mr. Phillimore even thought that in many instances it might be practicable, though of course it would cause a certain amount of additional trouble and inconvenience to the farmer. The rest of the meeting, however, did not concur in this view, and considered that, in the existing scarcity of boy labour, any form of half-time work and school must be impracticable.

No one had any confidence in mere attendance at school for a certain number of hours in the winter months, under which system they believed no progress would be made.

And therefore, if restrictions with a view to the improvement of education are to be placed on the employment of children in the fields, the meeting were unanimous in considering that the most generally practicable and the most beneficial plan would be to prohibit such employment under the age of 10, or till the child could produce a satisfactory certificate of attainment, and to make provision under that age for the children's regular attendance at school.

The practice of employing young girls in agricultural labour is not common in this district; the meeting are unanimous in disapproving of it, and wish to see it discouraged in every possible way, though the circumstances of this neighbourhood are not such as to demand any legislative restrictions upon the subject.

Signed on behalf of the meeting,
J. Wilson, Chairman.

December 12, 1867.

County of Gloucester: Union of Thornbury.

No. 84. *Monday January* 6, 1868.

Collective Meeting at Olveston, for

Olveston	Pop., 1,699	Acr., 4,787	R.V., 10,588*l.*
Elberton	Pop., 180	Acr., 1,499	R.V., 2,561*l.*
Aust	Pop., 180	Acr., 933	R.V., 2,029*l.*
Northwick & Redwick	Pop., 480	Acr., 1,157	R.V., 2,954*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Olveston—
- Rev. Robert Hiles, curate.
- Mr. Danvers Ward, landowner.
- Mr. Edward Meredith, churchwarden, guardian, and occupier of 390 acres.
- Mr. Benjamin Pool, waywarden and occupier of 300 acres.
- Mr. Henry Williams, guardian and occupier of 180 acres.
- Mr. Joseph Gifford, waywarden and occupier of 120 acres.
- Mr. James King, occupier of 300 acres.
- Mr. John Churchill, landowner and occupier of 5 acres.

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Rev. J. Fraser.

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Mr. Wm. Olive, carpenter.
Mr. Wm. Wilkes, certificated schoolmaster.

From Elberton—
Rev. J. K. Charleton, vicar and landowner in Olverston.
Mr. John Alpass, churchwarden, guardian, and occupier of 300 acres.
Mr. George Wintle, churchwarden and occupier of 190 acres.

From Aust, Northwick, and Redwick—
Rev. R. W. Vigors, curate and lecturer.
Mr. W. Bennett, guardian, landowner, and occupier of 240 acres.
Mr. W. Parrott, churchwarden and occupier of 15 acres (resident gentleman).

The chair was taken by Rev. J. K. Charleton, Vicar of Elberton.

In Olveston the land is in many hands, the chief proprietors being A. G. Fullerton, Esq., R. C. Lippincott, Esq., H. T. Salmon, Esq., Rev. C. Cleaver Peach, and T. J. Ward, Esq., of whom only Mr. Ward is resident.

There is a sufficient supply of labour for the cultivation of the land, and generally there is sufficient work for all the able-bodied labourers in the parish. Labour has to be imported in the summer for haymaking. From the Wiltshire corn districts, when their own clover and rye-grass crops have been got in, men come here for a second turn of haymaking, going back for their own corn harvest. Some labourers also come from the districts of Iron Acton and Frampton Cotterell who are ordinarily employed in the quarries. Many Olveston men cross the Severn to take harvest work in Monmouthshire, which is about a fortnight earlier than the harvest here.

There are from 200 to 250 cottages in the parish, of which the majority were lifeholds, which have been falling into the hands of the lord of the manor; but it is estimated that there are still about 50 cottagers held by this tenure.

They are reported generally to be in fair condition. A considerable number, perhaps 30, have been erected within the last 10 years, most of which have been built upon speculation with borrowed money. Three or four of the principal landowners have also erected some substantial cottages.

The majority of the cottages, but not all, have gardens ranging in size from 10 to 40 perches; 15 to 20 perches would be the ordinary size. There is a considerable number of allotments in the parish, varying very much in size. About 20 acres are let in parcels of 40 perches each, at about 3*d.* a perch. There are also from 40 to 50 allotments of from two to four acres a-piece, held by those rather above the class of labourers, who mostly keep a horse and cart and grow wheat, potatoes, and vegetables. The land is generally let at a considerably higher rate than the adjoining farms,—at from 3*l.* to 4*l.* an acre, and even more,—and is said to have deteriorated under this mode of cultivation. But the plan, though not improving the condition of the land, is thought to improve the condition of the people who occupy it.

Cottage rents are high in Olveston; they are seldom under 5*l.*, and frequently rise as high as 6*l.* or 7*l.*

There is a mixed National school, in an excellent room, in connexion with Government, under a certificated master and mistress, with 140 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 85 to 90. Its total annual cost is about 170*l.*, inclusive of the Government grant, which last year amounted to 42*l.* The voluntary subscriptions amount to 70*l.*; the school pence to 40*l.*; when there is a deficiency it is made up by a collection in church. The school is thoroughly efficient.

There is also an infant school, attended by 115 or 120 children, which has been just placed in connexion with Government, and is taught by a certificated mistress. The annual cost of this school is about 80*l.*

Both these schools serve for the combined parishes of Olveston and Elberton, the latter parish being about a mile distant.

There are also two private adventure dame's schools, attended by upwards of 30 children, mostly of younger age.

There is a night school taught by the curate and a volunteer friend, and regularly attended by 18 scholars, varying in age from 15 to 25. Last winter the school was conducted by the certificated master assisted by two or three volunteers. It was opened for six months, and about 40 scholars entered their names. But the attendance was very irregular, especially after Christmas, and dwindled at last to eight or nine. The schoolmaster does not consider it to have been successful, owing to the want of interest evinced by the pupils. All of the scholars could read and write; and about one-third of them could read and write well.

[This parish enjoys unusual educational advantages in having for its vicar the Rev. H. Moseley, Canon of Bristol, and late one of Her Majesty's inspectors of schools, who was prevented by illness from being present at the meeting.]

In Elberton the chief proprietor is R. C. Lippincott, Esq.; another landowner has about 230 acres, and there are two or three other smaller proprietors. None of the landowners are resident in the parish.

There is a deficiency of resident labourers, in consequence partly of the inadequate supply of cottages, and partly of the large allotment system described in Olveston, which also prevails in Elberton, and which furnishes the people with another way of gaining their livelihood.

There are only 22 cottages in the parish, and of these only 13 are occupied by labourers working for wages on the land. Representations have been made to the landowners that the labour supply is deficient but no steps have yet been taken to build, nor any promise made of building, additional cottages.

The cottages all belong to one landowner, who keeps them entirely in his own hand. Not a single cottage is attached to the farms, and on one estate of 230 acres there is not a single cottage. The farmers consequently cannot command a house for their carters or stockmen, and feel the disadvantage of the arrangement. Mr. Wintle's carter lives 2½ miles from his stable. The cottages are generally in very good condition, and a fair proportion of them have three chambers. Elberton suffers now from having been treated as a close parish under the old system. Ten additional cottages would be no redundant supply. The average rent of cottages in Elberton is 5*l.* The allotments are half an acre, one acre, and two acres in size. Four fields of 30 acres are let in parcels of three, four, and five acres each. This parcel of ground is sublet.

The Elberton children attend Olveston school; about 20 children so attend. There are only 31 labourers' children, of all ages under 11, in the parish.

Aust, Northwick, and Redwick are three tithings of the large parish of Henbury (which itself is in the Clifton union). About half the land in Aust belongs to Mr. Lippincott, the rest in the three tithings is divided among several proprietors.

There is a redundancy of labour, the land being chiefly in grass. There are no unemployed men, however, those who don't get work in their own parish finding employment in the neighbourhood.

In Northwick there are only five cottages to about 500 acres of land; in Aust there is a sufficient supply, but there is a deficiency of accommodation; in Redwick there is a redundancy. About 20 new cottages, of a very superior class to the old ones (which are miserable), have been recently erected or are in course of erection. The railway, which runs through the parish and has a station in it, called "The New Passage," is believed to have led to the erection of these new cottages. A row of nine has been built by the company for the use of their own servants. Rents are high, ranging from 4*l.* to 5*l.* Most have a fair supply of garden ground.

There is one school for the three tithings, and two infant schools. The central school is an endowed free

school, with 70 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 60. The endowment is 72*l.* a year, arising from land. It is under a very competent trained master, assisted by his sister to teach sewing. There are 40 children free. The vacancies are filled up by examination (in reading only) of the junior children. As soon as they are admitted on the foundation the attendance of the children is observed to become more irregular. Children can rarely be retained beyond the age of 10. Children not on the foundation pay 1*d.* to 3*d.* a week, according to the means of their parents. The school is held in a good buildng, to which a teacher's residence is attached.

The infant schools are kept by two dames in their cottages. They are attended by about 40 children. More would come if there were room for them. The dames take the school pence, at the rate of 1*d.* a week, and out of the endowment the trustees pay to the mistress at Aust 15*l.* a year, and to the Redwick dame 5*l.* The endowment of all three schools comes from land at Henbury, and is administered by three trustees, who transfer the management of the school to the curate.

There was a night school in 1864 and 1865, but it did not answer, in consequence of want of interest, irregular attendance, and the distance the scholars had to travel. It was given up in 1866, and has not been resumed since.

The district composing these parishes is mainly one of dairy farms. The low lands adjacent to the Severn are almost entirely in grass. The occupations vary very much in size; the farms range from 30 to 400 acres, but the ordinary size of most farms would be from 80 to 100 acres.

The land is very variable also; the low lands are alluvial and of a good quality, letting at about 45*s.* an acre, and producing from 25 to 30 cwt. of hay per acre. The stock kept is about a cow to every three acres. On the slopes and hills a larger proportion of the land is under tillage, and if well farmed will produce seven, eight, and nine sacks of wheat to the acre. The better land is farmed principally on a three-course system, wheat, followed by potatoes, swedes, or mangolds, and that succeeded by beans or peas; on the lighter lands a four-course system is pursued; on the large allotments two courses only, wheat and potatoes, are the usual cultivation.

The extent to which women are employed in this district on the farms is very inconsiderable. They are not found to be inclined to go, and it is not the custom of the country to employ them, but of course the dairy employs women in farmhouses. The milking is done by men, women, and boys, mixed. In haymaking, when the grass is let to mow and make, a woman will assist her husband, but in the corn harvest all they do is at glean. Young girls are scarcely ever seen at work on the land, except it be upon their parents' allotment.

The standing weekly wage of an able-bodied labourer at the present time is 12*s.* a week, in some cases with cider, valued at 1*s.* a week, in addition. A carter's wages are 13*s.* a week and cider, and this may be taken as representing the maximum earnings of an able-bodied farm labourer in constant employ.

The corn harvest is generally taken at per acre to cut, tie, and stick up. The price this year was from 7*s.* to 10*s.* per acre, with cider. The recognized allowance of cider is three gallons per acre.

Boys are not of much value before 10 or 11, and they generally begin their experience in work under the eye of their father or elder brother. A boy would earn 2*s.* a week at first, when employed to scare birds, and 3*s.* as soon as he was old and strong enough to drive plough.

If the legislature were to say that no boy under 12 should work for more than 10 hours a day, with an allowance of 1½ hours for meals, such restriction (except in the seasons of haymaking and harvest) would not produce any inconvenience to the employer, and the opinion of the meeting is that this amount of labour is as much as should be demanded from a boy of that age.

The employment of women in this district is not such as to require, in the opinion of this meeting, any legislative restrictions or interference.

The meeting consider that the half-day system of the Factory Acts would be inapplicable to agriculture, on the ground of the distance at which in many cases the boys' work would lie from the school; and neither this nor the alternate whole-day system could be worked in any district where there was not a sufficient supply of boys to work them in relays.

A considerable number of boys in Olveston school go to work in the summer and return to school for two, three, or four months in the winter, but the schoolmaster's experience is that they make no progress, and that many of them cannot even be kept to the level which they had reached when they left school. The intervening period of work appears to have dulled the sharpness of their intellects, and to indispose them to learn. The bent of their mind is turned in another direction. Mr. Wilkes considers that he could produce by far better educational results by keeping boys regularly at school till 10 or 11, than by letting them go at an earlier age and having them return at intermittent periods. He thinks that a boy kept regularly at school till 11 years of age would be able to pass an examination in the Government fifth standard, and that being able to pass in that standard he would have acquired a power of reading which he would not afterwards readily lose.

Instead, therefore, of adopting any of the principles of the Factory Acts to a condition of things to which in the judgment of this meeting they are inapplicable, the gentlemen present would desire to see an age fixed below which labour should be prohibited, and up to which attendance at school should be required.

As far as the employment of the boys is concerned, and their value to the farmer, there would be no serious embarrassment caused if this age were fixed at 11; but the meeting consider that an absolute restriction to this effect (without any exemption) would in many cases inflict a very serious hardship upon large families.

The meeting desire to press upon the attention of landowners the duty of supplying their estates with an adequate number of cottages for the proper cultivation of the land, and upon the owners of cottage property generally the duty of seeing that the cottages for which they receive rent should be sufficiently provided with chamber accommodation to allow of the families who inhabit them to be brought up in habits of decency, which in the present condition of things is often impossible.

J. K. Charleton, Chairman.

Olveston, Jan. 6th, 1868.

No. 85. *Tuesday, January* 7, 1868.

Collective Meeting at Alveston, for

Alveston	Pop., 841	Acr., 2,518	V.R., 4,425*l.*
Almondsbury	Pop., 1,864	Acr., 6,926	R.V., 12,720*l.*
Tytherington	Pop., 442	Acr., 2,258	R.V., 4,195*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Alveston—
- Rev. John Rawes, perpetual curate.
- W. H. Honnywill, Esq., guardian, landowner, and occupier of 11 acres.
- Major Charlewood, magistrate and landowner.
- Mr. W. H. Brown, solicitor.
- Mr. Wm. Jones, overseer and occupier of 250 acres.
- Mr. Henry Young, churchwarden and occupier of 220 acres.

From Almondsbury—
- Rev. T. Murray Browne, vicar.
- Rev. Frederick Harrison, curate.

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Mr. John Gayner, guardian and occupier of 230 acres.
Mr. Jacob Thomas, occupier of 200 acres.
Mr. James Thomas, waywarden and occupier of 300 acres.
Mr. Wm. Young, occupier of 280 acres.
Mr. Henry Carter, occupier of 350 acres.
Mr. Charles Gunter, occupier of 180 acres.

From Tytherington—
Mr. John Hewett, occupier of 250 acres.
Mr. Thomas Smith, overseer and occupier of 100 acres.
Mr. John Tyler, guardian and occupier of 320 acres.
Mr. Samuel Cox Pullen, churchwarden and occupier of 120 acres.
Mr. James Smith, occupier of 60 acres.

The chair was taken by MAJOR CHARLEWOOD.

In Alveston the principal landowners are A. G. Fullerton, Esq. (about 400 acres); the representatives of Sir John Willoughby; Mr. F. Granger; Mr. Thomas Bush. There are also several smaller proprietors. The landowners generally are non-resident.

The larger farms range in size from 200 to 250 acres; the smaller occupations range from 30 to 100 acres.

With the exception of from 40 to 50 families, composed of shopkeepers, tradesmen, and artisans, the population (which is at a standstill) is exclusively agricultural and employed in the cultivation of the land.

There is no redundant supply of labourers willing to work constantly on the land. Mr. Rawes wants to find a constant labourer at this moment, but cannot do so. He has spoken to two men, who seem to prefer the chance of earning higher wages during the summer to being tied to constant work all the year round.

The cottages are mostly built of stone, with stone floors, and tiled. Many of them belong to the people themselves who occupy them, and are believed to be somewhat deeply mortgaged. The generality of the cottages have two bedrooms. Most have gardens, varying in size from 20 to 80 perches. It is the habit of many of the farmers to let a certain quantity of land, perhaps half an acre or even more, which they plough and manure for their labourers to grow potatoes, usually charging at the rate of 4*l.* to 5*l.* an acre. The men sell the potatoes, and in this way utilize their spare hours in a profitable industry.

The ordinary rent of the cottages is from 4*l.* to 5*l.* They are mostly let on a yearly tenure, and the owners retain the control of them in their own hands. Only a small proportion of them belong to the owners of the land. Some renting farmers, though only holding their land on yearly tenure, without the security of a lease, have bought cottages for the convenience of having a place in which to house their labourers.

There is a mixed school, conveniently situated for the bulk of the population (which is distributed into two or three hamlets), in connexion with Government, under a certificated master assisted by a sewing mistress, with 94 names on the register and an ordinary attendance of 47. The annual cost is about 67*l*; the subscriptions are about 29*l.*; the school fee 13*l.* 10*s.*; the Government grant 19*l.* 12*s.* The school fee is 2*d.* for the first child of a family, and 1*d.* each for the rest.

The are two or three private adventure dames' schools, attended in the aggregate by about 45 children, chiefly those who would find it difficult to travel to the parish school.

The schoolmaster attempted a night school (single handed) this winter. Twelve scholars entered their names. The school was to be opened from 7 to 9, three nights a week, at a charge of 3*d.* The attendance was pretty regular for a fortnight, then dwindled, and the school has been closed. Only one of the 12 could read fairly well.

In Almondsbury there are four large proprietors, Col. Master, R. C. Lippincott, Esq., A. G. Fullerton, Esq., and John Bengough, Esq. There are probably 40 or 50 small owners of properties, varying in size from 100 acres to five. Col. Master is the only resident landowner.

The parish runs into very narrow corners, and the houses in which the labouring population live are not distributed in the way most convenient to the farms; hence in some parts of the parish there is felt to be a deficiency of labour. In the tithing of Gaunt's Earthcott, which contains 700 acres, there is only a population of 41. The population of the parish is believed to be increasing to a slight extent.

About 60 people (10 men, 20 women, and 30 boys) are employed in a large brickyard. These 60 people represent 14 families; there are further two tailors, five butchers, five shoemakers, eight carpenters, four blacksmiths, nine publicans, 10 hauliers; the rest of the people are agricultural labourers. There is a short supply of labourers willing to work constantly on the land; Mr. Thomas has to import labourers from Frampton Cotterell and Winterbourne. This deficiency of labour is chiefly felt in the outlying parts of the parish; in other parts of the parish (Compton and the Marsh district), mainly in grass land, and somewhat thickly populated, there is some surplus of labour. The parish is stated to be nine miles in length and 25 miles in circuit.

The condition of the cottages varies considerably. The generality have only two bedrooms; a very few, if any, have three. There are also very few cases of cottages occupied by a family with only one bedchamber. On the estates of Col. Master and Mr. Lippincott there is an adequate proportion of cottages to the land, but the estates of Mr. Bengough and Mr. Fullerton are insufficiently supplied; on 700 acres belonging to Mr. Bengough there are only residences for eight families. The rent ranges from 3*l.* to 5*l.*, according to size of the cottage and garden.

Where the cottages belong to small proprietors the rent often rises to 5*l.* and 7*l.*

In many parts of the parish there is a bad supply of water, owing to the geological character of the soil. Last summer in many places both the springs and ponds were dry, and people had to fetch their water from a distance of three miles. This state of things prevails more or less in the district generally.

The drainage also, in parts of the parish, is defective.

There are about 40 acres of allotments, let in parcels of a quarter and half an acre. The farmers also allow their labourers potato grounds on the farm. Mr. Carter's plan is to plough and manure the land, while the labourer finds the seed, plants, works, and gets the crop, which is then shared equally between the two.

There are three parochial schools. One in Almondsbury village, receiving annual aid from Government, under a certificated master and mistress, mixed, with 110 names on the register and an ordinary attendance of 90.

There is a second school at Patchway, under a certificated mistress; 60 children on the books and an average attendance of 40.

In the tithing of Over there is a mixed school, under two untrained mistresses, entirely supported by Mr. and Mrs. Lippincott. It has 60 names on the register, with an attendance of 35.

There are also two subsidized dames' schools in outlying hamlets, with about 35 children on the books, and an attendance of 20. The annual cost of the Almondsbury School is about 130*l.*, of that at Patchway about 60*l.* About 35*l.* is annually subscribed towards the support of the schools; the feoffees of some church land contribute 45*l.* out of the funds at their disposal to the same object. The vicar makes up any deficiency.

There is a night school conducted by the schoolmaster, assisted by the curate. It opened this winter with 30 scholars, but the number has been reduced since Christmas to 15. All of them can read and write.

It is kept for five nights in the week, and works successfully.

The land in Tytherington belongs to several owners. The principal are the trustees of the late Thomas Hardwicke, Esq., and Mr. Honnywill. They are not resident in the parish, though Mr. Honnywill resides in the next parish.

There is a sufficient supply of labour and of cottages. The cottages are mostly in good condition, though it is not believed that there is more than one with three bedrooms. Two-thirds of them belong to the Hardwicke estate. They are let with gardens, at rents varying from 2*l.* 12*s.* to 5*l.* 10*s.*, depending on the size of house and garden. In Tytherington there is a good supply of water, and the drainage is good.

There is at present no school in Tytherington, and there never has been anything more than a private adventure dame's school, which was discontinued last March in consequence of the death of the dame. The children that go to school attend either at Thornbury or Cromhall, each of which places is about two miles distant.

There is no night school, and the only educational agencies in the parish are the Sunday schools attached to the church and Baptist chapel respectively.

A carter's wages in this district are 13*s.* a week with a cottage rent-free, and perhaps half an acre of land. He would have a gratuity of 20*s.* at harvest, and this would be equal to the maximum wages of an agricultural labourer earned in the district.

A woman's wages are 10*d.* or 1*s.* a day.

A boy beginning to drive plough is worth 6*d.* a day.

It was the opinion of the majority of the meeting that a boy is not fit to begin to drive plough before he is 10 years of age; one gentleman present thought it not safe to begin before 11.

It is the unanimous opinion of the meeting that any attempt to apply the principles of the Factory Acts to the case of employment of children in agriculture, in the sense of requiring them to attend school in any of the ways specified in those Acts, to as high an age as 13, would inflict serious hardship upon the parents, would embarrass the farmer in the cultivation of the land, and would even be likely to lessen the future efficiency of the child as a labourer.

In the interests of education, therefore, in the widest sense, the meeting would prefer to see an age fixed upon below which it should be unlawful to employ a child on the land, taking security at the same time that the child attended school.

The age at which the restriction upon labour should cease, it was considered, should be 10.

It was the opinion of the employers of labour present that if vexatious restrictions were placed on the employment of boys it would lead to the disuse of such boys in farm labour, and possibly to the substitution of women for them; and it was thought generally that any such substitution would act very unfavourably upon the moral and social condition of the people.

The meeting are fully alive to the importance of providing the labourer with a decent home. They consider that every estate ought to be supplied with an adequate number of cottages to accommodate the labourers employed on that estate; and that every cottage ought to be so far superintended that the number of its inmates should be proportioned to its capacity for accommodating them with decency.

Signed in behalf of the meeting,

J. Charlewood, Chairman.

January 7, 1868.

No. 86. *Friday, January* 10, 1868.

Collective Meeting at Thornbury, for

Thornbury	Pop., 2,544	Acr., 8,300	R.V., 20,500*l.*
Oldbury	Pop., 1,000		
Littleton	Pop., 195	Acr., 911	R.V., 1,633*l.*

Gloucester.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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Present at Meeting:

From Thornbury—

Rev. M. F. Townsend, vicar and magistrate.
Mr. Charles Cullimore, vice-chairman of board of guardians, landowner, and occupier of 300 acres.
Mr. Joseph Young Sturge, churchwarden, and land surveyor.
Mr. William Till, churchwarden, guardian, landowner, and occupier of 300 acres.
Mr. Thomas Till, landowner and occupier of 300 acres.
Mr. Thomas Fill, certificated schoolmaster.
Mr. Thomas Bailey, certificated schoolmaster.
Mr. John Thurston, mayor of Thornbury.
Mr. Joseph Weeks, collector of taxes and occupier of 110 acres.
Mr. Charles Anstey, occupier of 150 acres.
Mr. O. E. Thurston, solicitor.

From Oldbury—

Rev. J. Field, rector.

From Littleton—

No representative.

The chair was taken by Rev. M. F. Townsend.

The chief landowners in Thornbury are Henry Howard, Esq. (about 1,000 acres), who is lord of the manor; Sir George Jenkinson, Bart. (under 400 acres); W. O. Maclaine, Esq. (500 acres); John Hatcher, Esq. (under 300 acres); Earl Ducie (under 200 acres). There may be also 50 owners of estates ranging from 100 acres downwards,

There is a sufficient supply of labour for the cultivation of the land; in fact, Thornbury supplies some of the adjoining parishes (such as Elberton, Hill, and Tortworth) with a portion of their labour. At the present moment there are several men out of work; but they are mostly of the shifty or idle class.

A large number of the cottages occupied by agricultural labourers were built, from 50 to 100 years ago, on strips of waste land, and are the property of their occupiers, in some cases giving them a vote for the county. They are frequently mortgaged, but are not represented as being in a bad state of repair. A very small proportion of the cottages belongs to the large landowners; those that are not owned by the occupiers are the property in most cases of small landlords, many of them tradesmen in the town. The rent is high, ranging from 4*l.* to 5*l.* a year. In the case of the higher rent there is probably a garden of 20 perches. The average size of the gardens would be 15 perches. There are many cottages that have scarcely any garden worth speaking of. A few may have only one bedroom, but the majority have two. Not more than one in 20 are believed to have three bedrooms.

There are in Thornbury three schools of the elementary class:—

(1.) A national school, mixed, under a certificated master, assisted by his wife (who has been trained) and two pupil-teachers. There are 161 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 104. The total annual cost is about 150*l.*, of which 60*l.* arises from Government grant, 30*l.* from school pence, and 60*l.* from annual subscriptions, including 10*l.* collected at church. The chief landowners (with the exception of Mr. Howard) are not considered to support the school with with any great amount of liberality. The school is considered to be by the managers in a very fair state of efficiency.

(2.) A British school, not in connexion with Government, under an untrained master and mistress, held in a good building lately erected. There are about 140 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 100. It is attended by a considerable number of tradesmen's children; it is conveniently placed for the district of the town in which it lies; and of course it has its own attractions for nonconformists.

(3.) A free school endowed with a house and garden and an estate now producing about 40*l.* a year for

Gloucester.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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the free education of 12 girls and 24 boys. It is managed by trustees, who nominate the children to the foundation. The master is also allowed to take children as private scholars. The master is an aged man, and the school at present is not efficient. There are not believed to be more than a dozen scholars, and the school is rarely visited by the trustees.

There are, perhaps, half a dozen or more private adventure dames' schools for children of the labouring class, chiefly attended by infants, many of them merely sent to be kept out of harm's way.

There is a night school, held at the national school, and taught by the schoolmaster without assistance. There are 18 scholars in attendance this winter. When the school was first started five years ago it was attended by 90 boys and girls, but it has been difficult to keep the interest alive. The average attendance this winter has already dwindled to six. The school is held three nights a week, and the fee is 1*d.* a night.

The chief landowners in Oldbury are R. S. Holford, Esq., M.P. (about 500 acres); E. A. Sanders. Esq. (about 600 acres); Henry Howard, Esq. (about 150 acres); Mr. L. Curnock (about 400 acres). There is a considerable number of small proprietors.

There is a sufficient supply of labour for the ordinary cultivation of the land; brickmaking, fishing, and boating furnish employment to a certain number of the people.

The description of the cottages at Thornbury will apply almost verbatim to those at Oldbury, which has been recently separated from Thornbury, and been made an independent ecclesiastical district.

There is a national school, which is reported by Her Majesty's inspector to be one of the best in his district. It is a mixed school under a certificated master, assisted by a sewing mistress and two paid monitors. The total annual cost is about 90*l.*

There is a night school, conducted by the master, with 20 scholars enrolled, and about 10 in average attendance.

There is also a very small dame's school, attended by three or four children.

No representative was present from Littleton; but the results of a meeting held there on the previous day were communicated in a letter from the incumbent to the assistant commissioner.

Two-thirds or more of all the land in these parishes is in pasture, and the bulk of the farms are dairy farms, very few farms exceed 300 acres, and a great number of the occupations are below 100 acres. The rent ranges from 30*s.* to 50*s.* an acre. Much of the land in Thornbury is of a light quality and can be ploughed with two horses abreast, but that in Oldbury and Littleton is stiffer, and requires three horses in line. It is considered that two and a half men and one boy would be about the adequate supply of labour for the cultivation of 100 acres (exclusive of harvest and haymaking). Women are not regularly employed, and there is a difficulty in getting them when they are required. Boys, and occasionally girls, are employed in potato planting and potato and apple picking, but they generally work at these jobs with their parents.

The standing weekly wage of the district at present is 11*s.* a week with two or three quarts of cider a day. Mr. Field recently offered a labouring man 12*s.* a week regularly through the year in all weathers, but without cider, and he refused, saying he could do better.

A crow-keeping boy would begin at 2*s.* a week, with dinner on Sundays; a boy beginning to drive plough earns 6*d.* a day.

A boy (except for an occasional job of bird-scaring or work with his parents) is rarely employed on a farm under 12 years of age; nor do they become of much real value before 14.

It was the unanimous opinion of the meeting that either form of the half-time system, whether that of the half-day or of the alternate day, is quite inapplicable to agriculture. Many of the farmers present said they would rather do without boys altogether than employ them on such terms.

Considering the age at which boys are usually employed in regular work on the farms of this district, the meeting think that there is abundance of time for their obtaining a good elementary education before the age at which their labour is required, if only their parents would avail themselves of the opportunities that are now so generally within their reach, and which in the parishes represented at this meeting are abundantly supplied.

The meeting would rejoice if it were possible, without inflicting hardship upon the parents, to secure the regular attendance of all children at school up to the age of 12; and they feel that the great hindrance to successful education is the irregularity of the children who are supposed to be receiving it.

The school managers and schoolmasters present were unanimously in favour of *continuous* as opposed to *intermittent* instruction, as most likely to produce a satisfactory and permanent result.

Signed in behalf of the meeting,

M. F. J. Townsend, Chairman.

January 10, 1868.

The subjoined letter from the rector of Littleton states the results of a meeting held in that parish.

"Littleton-on-Severn,
January 8, 1868.

"Dear Sir,

"As I am unable to attend the meeting proposed to be held at Thornbury on Friday next, I take this opportunity of sending you a report of the proceedings of our parochial meeting held in accordance with your wish, as expressed in your letter to me, dated January 2nd.

"My parish, which is very small—the population about 200—consists almost exclusively of persons in the farming and labouring classes of life; and nearly all the land in it (as, indeed, is the case in this part of the county) is allotted to pasturage.

"At the meeting yesterday the only question which seemed to be considered of any importance by the employers present was this: Can the services of children under 10 years of age be dispensed with in agricultural districts? I think the feeling was in favour of affirming the possibility of such a step. Many farmers, however, I know in this neighbourhood employ children at a very early age, and would consider themselves much aggrieved and put to inconvenience if deprived of such services. Let us then suppose this point to be settled, and that a restriction shall have been placed by law upon the employment of children under 10 years of age or any other definite period; still I do not see that you will have advanced one step towards the attainment of the object contemplated by this Commission. No doubt in towns and densely populated places the Factory Acts may afford young persons an opportunity of attending schools already established for this purpose, but in widely extended and thinly inhabited agricultural districts the non-employment of children is no security for their better education—quite the contrary. The impossibility of sending young persons of tender age to schools at a distance (as must be the case) is the great difficulty to be grappled with in rural parishes. My opinion is that what is wanted is more aid to strengthen the hands of the clergy, who are struggling to do the work efficiently and conscientiously; and of this one thing I am sure, that any attempt to substitute mere secular instruction for religious education will meet with no favour in this neighbourhood.

"The night-school system, which does not interfere with the day's labour, has been found very successful in my parish.

"I am, dear Sir,
"Your faithful servant,
"Arthur Rainy Ludlow."

[Mr. Ludlow appears to have thought that my wish was to have opinions collected at separate parochial meetings instead of at a collective central

meeting, where I could be present and explain the precise objects of the inquiry.]

No. 87. *Monday, January* 13, 1868.

Collective Meeting at Cromhall, for

Cromhall	Pop., 681	Acr., 2,579	R.V., 4,188*l.*
Tortworth	Pop., 235	Acr., 1,471	R.V., 2,633*l.*
Charfield	Pop., 629	Acr., 1,348	R.V., 4,763*l.*
Rangeworthy	Pop., 250	Acr., 889	R.V., 1,605*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Cromhall—
- Rev. W. J. Copleston, rector.
- Major T. Gaisford, landowner and occupier of 150 acres.
- Mr. John Taylor Lea, guardian and occupier of 160 acres.
- Mr. John Cobban, agent to Earl Ducie.
- Mr. John Smith, occupier of 14 acres.
- Mr. John Phillimore, owner of two acres and a cottage.
- Mr. Benjamin Tanner, parish clerk and assistant overseer.
- Rev. Robert Reveley, curate.
- Mr. John Watts, bailiff to Earl Ducie.
- Mr. John Phillimore, jun., churchwarden and occupier of 40 acres, and owner.

From Tortworth—
- Earl of Ducie, lord lieutenant of the county and landowner.
- Rev. Robert Tilbury, curate.
- Mr. H. G. Clevely, certificated schoolmaster.

From Rangeworthy—
- Rev. E. J. Penny, incumbent.
- Mr. John Smith, churchwarden and occupier of 230 acres.

From Charfield—
- Rev. Arthur Hill, rector.
- Mr. John Manning, churchwarden and occupier of 200 acres.
- Mr. George Limbrick, guardian and occupier of 170 acres.

The chair was taken by the Earl of Ducie.

The principal landowner in Cromhall is the Earl of Ducie, who resides in the adjacent parish of Tortworth. There are about 35 small landowners, none of whose estates exceed 200 acres.

There is a sufficient supply, but no surplus, of resident labour.

There are about 150 cottages, upwards of 30 of which belong to the Earl of Ducie. There are perhaps 20 occupied by their owners, who have a county vote upon this qualification.

They are generally in a pretty fair condition, but not many have three bedrooms. Nearly all those belonging to the Earl of Ducie have that amount of accommodation. The water supply and drainage of the parish are each fairly satisfactory. There is no inspector of nuisances in this division of the union. In too many cases the pigsty is too contiguous to the houses. Most of the cottages have gardens, ranging in size from 20 to 40 perches; and there are 37 acres of field allotments, 17 belonging to Lord Ducie, and 20 to a parish charity, the rent of which is employed in the purchase of fuel to be distributed among the poor.

All Lord Ducie's allotments are a third of an acre, and are let at 3*l.* an acre, inclusive of rates, tithes, and taxes. The parish allotments are let in parcels varying in size from a quarter of an acre to an acre, at 1*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* an acre, the land being of inferior quality. It is considered that the value of an allotment to a labourer (not reckoning the worth of his own labour spent upon it) is at least three times the rent. The rent of cottages in Cromhall varies from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*

There is a national school in Cromhall, under the management of the rector, in connexion with Government, under a certificated mistress, with 63 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 45. The total annual cost is 60*l.*, of which 24*l.* arises from Government grant, about 8*l.* from school pence, and the remainder from voluntary subscriptions. The rector considers it an efficient school, adequate to the wants of the population. Being conducted by a mistress, boys when they reach the age of nine or ten are frequently transferred to Tortworth, for the advantage of being under a master. The school fee is 1*d.* a week for a labourer's child, 2*d.* for an artisan's. The school is centrally situated in relation to the population.

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There is a dame's school (private adventure) in the hamlet of Heath End, which is attended by about half a dozen little girls. The weekly charge is 2*d.* and 3*d.*

There has been a night school for the last five winters, conducted by the rector and his curate. There are 14 on the register this winter, and an average attendance of 11. It is held twice a week, without fee. The rector considers it to have been fairly successful, chiefly as a means of preventing lads who have left the day school from forgetting what they had acquired.

There are in Cromhall four public houses and two houses licensed to sell beer.

In Tortworth the whole of the land, except the glebe (56 acres), belongs to the Earl of Ducie, who is resident.

There is not a sufficient supply of labour, which has to be drawn from neighbouring parishes. There are about 30 cottages, all belonging to Lord Ducie, who is adding to their number at the rate of two or three a year. About half of the cottages are occupied by farm labourers; they are in good condition, and, with the exception of one or two, have three bedrooms. They are let at rents varying from 2*l.* 12*s.* to 4*l.* All have gardens of considerable size; and there are 12 acres of allotments, a quantity which is in excess of present requirements. The water supply, as is generally the case in this district when off the coal beds, is excellent, and the facility with which it is everywhere obtained is probably one of the reasons which have led to the scattered distribution of the population.

There is a mixed school, Church of England in its denomination, but under British inspection, taught by a certificated master, assisted by a sewing mistress and a male pupil teacher. There are 132 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 112. The school receives annual aid amounting to about 45*l.*; the school fees are 32*l.* (at 1*d.*, 2*d.*, and 3*d.* per week, according to the means of the parents), and the balance is made up by Lord Ducie. The total annual cost is about 150*l.* The school draws its supply of scholars from adjoining parishes. Only 35 are Tortworth children, and only 17 reside within a distance of one mile of the school Fully 30 children come from a distance of two miles; 14 of the scholars are children of farmers. The schoolmaster states that these children are less regular in their attendance even than the labourers' children, and in many cases do not reach the same level of attainments.*

There is an evening school, conducted by the schoolmaster. It has been carried on for six or more winters. There are 17 enrolled scholars, and an average attendance of 10. It is held for four nights in the week, at a charge of 2*d.* The scholars this winter are mostly adults and boys very backward; they are boys who never attended school regularly. There were four of the 17 scholars at the commencement of the season who could not read at all; three more who could read only words of one syllable; and only five who could read intelligently and with facility.

There is a savings' bank connected with the day school for the purpose of encouraging the habit of

* The farmers at the Berkeley meeting probably state the cause of this fact, viz., that they are obliged to employ their own children in the scarcity of boy labour.

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thrift in the children. There are 35 depositors, whose deposits vary in amount from 1*s.* to 4*l.* The interest on the deposits is paid by Lord Ducie. The deposits are generally withdrawn when the children make their start in life, and the interest ceases when they leave school. It is thought to have had a very beneficial influence.

There is also a co-operative store in Tortworth, established in March 1867. There are 58 shareholders at 1*l.* a share, some of the shareholders holding several shares. The business done is now at the rate of 30*l.* a week, and is steadily increasing. The shareholders have received five per cent. dividend on their paid up capital and a drawback of 3*s.* in the pound on the amount of their purchases. Non-shareholding purchasers have received back a bonus of half this amount. The people thoroughly appreciate the value of the institution.

In Charfield Lord Ducie is the principal landowner, but there are several yeomen proprietors, occupying in some cases their own land. There are 16 farms in Charfield, some of them very small. The high rateable value of the parish may be accounted for by the fact that the Midland Railway runs for two miles through the parish, and is rated at 1,424*l.*, and there are three clothing mills in the parish, employing upwards of 100 hands.

There is a sufficient supply of labour, except it be in the haymaking season, when ten or a dozen hands are imported from the Cotswolds.

The cottages in Charfield belong to a great number of owners. They are from 60 to 70 in number. A considerable number of them are recently erected and well constructed. A few of them are indifferent, and from 10 to 15 have only very small gardens. There are about 25 acres of field allotments, which are very much valued by the people. They are let in lots of from a quarter to half an acre in size, at 2*l.* 10*s.* or 2*l.* 2*s.* an acre.

The cottage rents are rather high, "almost any "little place will fetch 5*l.*," but a considerable number of them are of a superior class. The opening of the railway and the establishment of the cloth mills have improved the condition as well as increased the number of the population.

There are three different day schools in Charfield :—

(1.) A Church of England school, not in connexion with Government, under an untrained master and mistress. It is in two departments, and has on its register about 40 names, with an ordinary attendance of about 25. The attendance is very irregular. There is an endowment of 60*l.* a year in the 3 per cents., the fruit of a bequest made 13 years ago on the express condition that the children should be instructed according to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, and should attend church on Sunday. The management of the school is in the sole hands of the rector.

(2.) There is also a large mixed school, chiefly attendeded by infants, in connexion with the Independent chapel. It is not under Government inspection. It is taught by a mistress, and is attended by about 40 children. The mistress receives 15*l.* a year in addition to the children's pence, which amount to 8*l.* or 10*l.* She has to find her own residence.

(3.) A private adventure school, kept by a respectable female, and attended by children above the class of farm labourers.

There is no night school at Charfield. The experiment has been tried, and did not succeed.

The rector considers that there is a large number of children, owing to the apathy of the parents, who are not availing themselves of the advantages of education which are within their reach. A certain number of children, however, attend school at Wotton-under-Edge and Tortworth, both of which places are about two miles distant. The motive is believed to be the desire of obtaining a superior education ; they are mostly children of a somewhat better-to-do class.

Of the 890 acres in Rangeworthy, 700 belong to W. J. Phelps, Esq., who resides at Dursley, a distance of 12 miles ; of the remainder, 100 acres belong to two charities (one in Wotton, the other in Rangeworthy), and the rest to half a dozen proprietors.

The population would be more than sufficient for the cultivation of the land if all were employed in that way, but the vicinity of iron and coal mines attracts a dozen or 15 of the men. As it is, it is about adequate.

There are about 40 cottages belonging to various proprietors, at least 20 in number. They are reported to be very far from being in a satisfactory condition, specially as regards bedroom accommodation. There are several cases of overcrowding. The majority have sufficient gardens. There are 200 acres, a common enclosed 40 years ago, which are let in allotments varying in size from one to 10 acres. These are mostly occupied by men keeping a horse and cart, many of them residing in the adjoining parishes of Yate and Iron Acton, who do not work for the farmers. The rent of cottages varies from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 7*l.*, depending on the quantity of land attached to them ; the average rent would be 4*l.*

There is a school, Church of England in its character, and under the management of the clergyman, which may be described as a superior dame's school. There are 35 names on the register, and the ordinary attendance is 25. The school is efficient of its class, but is not as good as the clergyman would desire, or as he considers the population to demand. A difficulty in improving its condition is found to be in the small number of boys at present growing up in the parish. There would be no difficulty in raising the funds for the maintenance of a superior school. The chief landowner has expressed his willingness to provide a *master*, but he considers that a mistress is not competent to superintend the education of agricultural boys. The total annual cost of the school as at present conducted is under 20*l.*

There is a night school, solely conducted by the clergyman ; there are eight scholars who attend regularly ; five of the number can read fairly well, and all are making fair progress.

The standing weekly wage of a farm labourer at the present time in these parishes is 12*s.* a week. About half the men on a farm—those, viz., employed about horses and stock—would be employed wet or dry ; the others would be paid if they choose to brave the weather, which few of them are inclined to do. Where a farm is about equally divided between arable land and pasture three men and a lad would be an adequate supply of labour per 100 acres. 12*s.* a week throughout the year would represent the maximum earnings of an able-bodied labourer, allowing for lost time.

Women do not often work on the land in these parishes, except in haymaking and harvest. A considerable quantity of teazles are grown in the district, in harvesting which women chiefly are employed. The teazle harvest occupies about six weeks concurrently with the corn harvest. The women earn from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 4*d.* a day.

Boys—not girls—are employed on the land, occasionally at as early an age as eight or nine, on intermittent jobs, which have the effect of interrupting the continuity of their school life. But a boy is of no real permanent value till he can drive a horse, that is, till he is 11 or 12 years of age.

Young girls, 14 years of age or so, are sometimes employed in stone picking, but their more usual work on the land is either to plant or pick potatoes, and then generally in company with their parents. The girls of the district mostly go into domestic service.

The allotment system is found to work in two ways ; while very beneficial to the material interests of the parents, it operates detrimentally on the educational interests of the child. In the larger allotments the labour of children is extensively employed, and interferes very seriously with their regular attendance at school.

The early employment of children in this district, and their irregular attendance at school, is more

attributable to the apathy, or cupidity, or thriftlessness, or poverty of the parents than to the requirements of the farmer.

Some of the employers of labour present considered that the employment of boys as bird keepers is unnecessary, and it was the general opinion that farmers could dispense with the labour of boys up to the age of 12 if the parents could afford to maintain them.

The farmers present would rather see the labour of boys prohibited even to as high an age as 12, than have their labour interfered with when the boys had once left school.

Mr. Cleveley would much prefer keeping a boy at school regularly up to the age of 10 or 11 to having him withdrawn at 8 or 9, to return merely for the winter months up to the age of 13; but he would rather have him for the winter months, than (as under the Workshops' Regulation Act) have him for two days in each week at school, and the other days at work. The meeting were further agreed that 10 hours a day is as much labour as ought to be required from a boy under 12 years of age.

The employment of females on the land in this district is not such as, in the opinion of this meeting, to require any legislative restriction or interference.

The meeting wish to express their regret at the excessive number of houses at which beer is sold which exist generally through the country, and the facility with which licences for this purpose are granted by the excise.

DUCIE, Chairman.

Jan. 13, 1868.

No. 88. *Tuesday, January* 14, 1868.

Collective Meeting at Falfield, for

Falfield	Pop., 700	Acr., 2,200	R.V., 2,496*l.*
Hill	Pop., 216	Acr., 1,966	R.V., 3,881*l.*
Rockhampton	Pop., 248	Acr., 1,156	R.V., 2,344*l.*
Stone	Pop., 277	Acr., 1,000	R.V., 1,800*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Falfield—
- Rev. C. Tooth, perpetual curate.
- Mr. Thomas Taylor, occupier of 100 acres.
- Mr. Charles Bennett, guardian and occupier of 260 acres.
- Rev. David Griffiths, Independent minister.
- Mr. Joseph Pitman, churchwarden and occupier of 350 acres.
- Mr. Wm. Hooper Wickes, occupier of 100 acres.

From Hill—
- Herbert Jenner-Fust, Esq., magistrate, landowner, and chairman of the board of guardians.
- Herbert Jenner-Fust, jun., Esq., magistrate.
- Mr. Thomas Hewitt, churchwarden and occupier of 300 acres.
- Mr. Charles Baker, overseer and occupier of 300 acres.
- Rev. Sir E. H. V. Colt, Bart., vicar.

From Rockhampton—
- Rev. W. U. Coates, rector.

From Stone—
- Rev. Charles Cripp, perpetual curate.
- Mr. Robert Cox, overseer, owner, and occupier of 70 acres.
- Mr. Thomas King, occupier of 20 acres.

The chair was taken by HERBERT JENNER-FUST, Esq.

The principal landowners in Falfield are the Earl of Ducie and Sir George Jenkinson, Bart., the latter of whom is resident, and the former resides in the adjoining parish of Tortworth. There are perhaps 20 other landowners.

There is plenty of resident labour, though some Falfield men work out of the parish, while, *per contra*, men from outlying parishes find employment in Falfield.

There is sufficient cottage accommodation; three are vacant now. The condition of the cottages generally is good; but there are cottages which have been erected on the waste, belonging to the families which occupy them, that are very deficient in chamber accommodation. There are some that have only one room for all purposes. The principal landowners have a sufficient number of cottages in proportion to their holdings, but the majority of the cottages belong to small proprietors owning little or no land. The rent of the cottages ranges from 3*l.* to 6*l.*; in the case of the higher rent there is generally a good garden.

There are about 15 acres of field allotments, let in parcels of from a quarter to a third of an acre, at the rate of about 3*l.* an acre. The people are very anxious to obtain these allotments, and there would be a demand for more if there were a supply.

There are two public schools in Falfield:—

(1.) A Church of England school, under Government inspection, taught by a certificated master assisted by a sewing mistress. There are 85 names on the register, and the ordinary attendance is about 57. The total annual cost is about 75*l.*; of which 23*l.* arises from Government grant, 18*l.* from children's pence (at the rate of 1*d.* and 2*d.* per week, according to age), and the balance is made up by voluntary subscriptions. No difficulty has been experienced hitherto in maintaining the school. The schoolroom is large enough to accommodate, on the Government scale, 120 children.

In connexion with this school is a night school, taught by the master with the assistance of the clergyman. There are this winter 33 scholars, ranging in age from 12 to 30, with an average attendance of upwards of 20. With the exception of two, all could read when they first joined, and they can all read now fairly well. About 20 of them, after a fashion, could write a letter; they are not believed to be much above the average standard of intelligence in the parish.

(2.) There is a school in connexion with the Independent chapel, conducted on the British principle, managed by a committee. It is not in connexion with Government, is taught by an untrained mistress, and has about 80 scholars on the register, with an ordinary attendance of 50. The annual cost is from 30*l.* to 35*l.*, of which 7*l.* arises from school pence, at the general rate of 1*d.* a week; the balance is made up, without difficulty, by voluntary subscriptions.

About four-fifths of the land in Hill belongs to Mr. Jenner-Fust, who is resident. The remainder is in the hands of about 10 landowners.

There is, perhaps, hardly a sufficient supply of labour, arising from a correspondingly deficient supply of cottages.

There are 30 cottages, most of them in good condition, letting, with a good garden, at from 3*l.* to 4*l.* a year. They are built either of stone or brick, with tiled roofs. Thirteen cottages in the parish have three bedchambers, and 15 others have two. The other two cottages are inhabited by elderly couples without children. Mr. Jenner-Fust has just erected two brick cottages with stone dressings and window frames, ornamental in character, with two rooms and a pantry on the ground floor and three chambers above, with outhouses and pigsty, and fitted up with grates in the living rooms and two of the bed chambers, oven, boiler, and pump, at a contract price of 250*l.* for the pair.

There are six acres of allotments let in plots of from 30 to 80 perches at 3*d.* a perch.

There is a small school, under a mistress, attended by about 30 children, who pay 1*d.* a week, the rest of the cost being defrayed by Mr. Jenner-Fust. The mistress's salary is 35*l.*

There is no night school; there would be a difficulty in finding a teacher.

The chief landowners in Rockhampton are Sir G. Jenkinson, Bart., Mr. Jenner-Fust, Mr. Pinnell, and Mr. Cox. There are several other small owners.

There is an abundant supply of labour in proportion to the acreage. There are several small farmers, eight or ten in number, occupying from 20 to 30 acres, who cultivate their own land.

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There are only 15 cottages, of which five belong to the families who occupy them. Two of these are in very bad condition; the other cottages in the parish are in a very fair state. There are three cottages which belong to the parish and are let at 1*s.* a week; the general rents would range from 3*l.* to 4*l.* The cottages have mostly fair gardens, and those families that can afford it keep a pig, but there are no field allotments.

There is a parochial Church of England school, not in receipt of annual aid from Government, nor under diocesan inspection. It is taught by an untrained, but competent, mistress. There are about 30 names on the register, and an average attendance of about 20. The attendance of the children is very irregular, in consequence of the frequent demands for their labour on the land. They often go out to keep birds at 8 years old. Mr. Hewitt has a boy working for him now who is 11 years old who has been working for him ever since he was 8. He went to school at Berkeley, and he tells his master that he can read and write.

The total annual cost of the Rockhampton school is about 20*l.*; the mistress's salary is 16*l.* and the school pence, which amount to about 3*l.* The school is maintained at its present level without difficulty, but the manager considers it to be too insignificant in size to induce him to apply for Government aid. A combined school for Hill and Rockhampton has been talked of, but the way does not yet seem clear for realizing the idea.

There is no night school in Rockhampton.

Stone is a chapelry in the large parish of Berkeley. The largest landowners are Lord Fitzhardinge, Sir Edward Colt, Mr. Hopper, and Mr. Wm. Cox. There are ten or a dozen small proprietors.

The supply of labour is ample. There are about 26 cottages, six or eight of which have been built on the waste and are in very bad condition. The other cottages are in moderately good condition, letting at from 2*l.* 12*s.* to 5*l.* 5*s.* The difference in the rent is determined chiefly by the size of the cottage and garden. There are two cottages that let as high as 6*l.* There are no field allotments.

There is no day school in the parish at present, but one is in contemplation, and will be erected this year. At present the children have attended school at Tortworth, Falfield, and Berkeley, some of them having to travel a distance of two miles.

Of the land in these parishes more than three-fourths is in grass. In Hill, of 2,000 acres, there are not above 100 acres under the plough.

The farms are all dairy farms, and their staple produce is cheese; they vary considerably in size, the larger farms being 300 acres, the smallest from 20 to 30; an average farm would be from 100 to 150 acres. Such a farm would employ four men, three women (one of whom would be a dairymaid in the farmhouse), and a boy of from 10 to 12 to drive plough. These would be constant labourers. In the haymaking season four extra hands (men) would be required. If a mowing machine is not used, two more men would be needed. Both haymaking and mowing machines are largely used in the district. Women are not much employed in haymaking.

The quality of the land in these parishes is very variable; it lets at from 25*s.* to 50*s.* per acre.

The cost of labour per acre is reckoned at about 25*s.* yer acre.

The rate of wages in the district is from 10*s.* to 12*s.* a week; the lower sum being accompanied with cider.

Mr. Pitman, on his farm of 350 acres, 100 of which are arable, pays his men on the following terms: He allows no cider, to which he objects on principle, though he believes that the men would prefer it. His regular wage throughout the year is 13*s.* a week, to which he adds 2*s.* a week to the ordinary men and 3*s.* a week to the carters for the whole of the harvest quarter. While actually harvesting they are allowed a meal (bread and cheese and tea) in the afternoon, and supper as well when they work late. He paid women engaged in harvest 1*s.* 3*d.* a day.

Children's labour is very useful to the farmer, bird keeping, stone picking on the grass land after the manure has been spread, thistle drawing, beating abroad the cow droppings, potato setting, turnip weeding, apple picking, driving plough, &c. &c.

It is the custom also to let the grass to be mown and made at so much per acre. The price is 12*s.* an acre without drink. The job is generally taken by a man and his family, or by two families combined; and this again employs children.

Mr. Tooth's experience of the state of things in Falfield school is, that his bigger boys, those above nine or ten, are at work, and not at school, for the five busiest months in the year, and the statement of the farmers is, that the boys and girls are both of use to them for many little jobs on a farm, for which otherwise they would have to employ men.

It is the unanimous opinion of the meeting that the half-time system, in either of its forms, is entirely inapplicable to agriculture, but there are about four months in the winter during which many boys who are employed in the summer might be spared from the farms, and, if their parents were so disposed, sent to school.

Upon the question as to the age at which child labour should be prohibited on the land, of 13 gentlemen present, seven were in favour of nine, four in favour of ten, and two declined to vote.

The meeting would rejoice to see the opportunities of education placed within the reach of every child, but (with two exceptions) they are strongly opposed to any form of compulsion being employed to oblige children to make use of these opportunities.

Signed in behalf of the meeting,

HERBERT JENNER-FUST, Chairman.

Jan. 14, 1868.

No. 89. *Wednesday, January* 15, 1868.

Meeting at Berkeley, for Berkeley (including the tithings of Alkington, Breadstone, Hinton, and Hamfallow).

Berkeley - Pop., 4,039 - Acr., (about) 14,000
R.V., (about) 28,000*l.*

Present at Meeting:

Lord Fitzhardinge.
Rev. James C. Norman, curate in charge.
Rev. F. Bingham, assistant curate.
W. Gaisford, Esq., solicitor and coroner.
J. T. Bridgman, Esq., surgeon.
Rev. W. Hurd, Independent minister.
Mr. W. Worden, churchwarden and occupier of 90 acres.
Mr. W. King, occupier of 250 acres.
Mr. H. Cooke, guardian and occupier of 170 acres.
Mr. John Hodgson, certificated schoolmaster.
Mr. W. Smith, butcher and occupier of 80 acres.
Mr. Saml. Parsons, occupier of 200 acres.
Mr. Charles Ford, occupier of 220 acres.
Mr. Joshua Bennett, occupier of 240 acres.
Mr. G. N. Leonard, occupier of 150 acres.
Mr. G. Holborow, churchwarden and timber merchant.
Mr. Thos. Adams, churchwarden, draper, and occupier of 30 acres.
Mr. M. Neale, occupier of 140 acres.
Mr. Elias Barton, occupier of 250 acres.
Mr. John Taylor, relieving officer.
Mr. Thos. Croome, land surveyor and occupier of 80 acres.
Mr. J. G. Phillips, plumber and glazier.
Mr. John Jones, guardian and occupier of 160 acres.
Mr. Thos. Clarke, jun., occupier of 40 acres.
Mr. D. Legge, guardian and auctioneer.
Mr. W. Cornock, occupier of 110 acres.
Mr. J. H. Cooke, land agent to Lord Fitzhardinge.
Mr. O. Long, steward to Lord Fitzhardinge.

Mr. George Adams, guardian and occupier of 130 acres.
Mr. H. F. Pullen, druggist.
Mr. Thomas Grove, occupier of 160 acres.
Mr. Henry Barber, occupier of 90 acres.
Mr. W. Jones, occupier of 150 acres.
Mr. T. Pearce, occupier of 270 acres.
Several ladies were also present.

By the kindness of Lord Fitzhardinge the meeting was held in the great hall of Berkeley Castle.

The chair was taken by Lord Fitzhardinge, and in consequence of his being obliged to leave at an early hour, the usual order was inverted, and opinions were taken on the general questions before eliciting the particular facts.

It is the unanimous opinion of the meeting that either form of the half-time system (half-day or alternate whole day) as applied to the employment of children in manufactures is inapplicable to their employment in agriculture, at least as far as this district is concerned. Each system could only be worked in relays, and there is not any such redundancy of boys in this district as to make relays possible. In fact, such is frequently the scarcity of boy labour, that farmers are often obliged to employ their own sons in farm labour whom they would gladly send to school.

There appears to be some diminution in the number of boys required on the farms in the winter months, from November to March. One gentleman affirmed that not one-fourth as many boys were employed, and the schoolmaster stated that he finds an additional 25 per cent. of boys at school in the winter, who were earning wages in the summer; but it was the general opinion of the gentlemen present conversant with the management of schools, that intermittent education in the case of farm boys would be of very little value, and that it would be a much more desirable thing to secure continuous and regular attendance at school up to a fixed age.

The question being put to the meeting, in the event of an age being fixed by the legislature below which child labour on farms should be prohibited, what that age should be, 27 gentlemen voted for the age of 10, seven were in favour of 11. The opinion of the majority was mainly determined by the consideration that the higher age would inflict excessive hardship upon the parents in the maintenance of large families.

It was unanimously agreed that a requirement that children who have passed the prohibited age of 10 should still attend school for a certain number of hours (say 150 or 200) during the four winter months, up to the age of 12, might be enforced without hardship, and would materially improve their education, by preventing the loss of the learning which they have previously acquired.

It was also unanimously thought that in the case of a child being able to produce a certificate of attainment, issued upon sufficient examination, at an earlier age than 10, he might be relieved from the restriction imposed generally up to that age, though he should not be relieved from the necessity of attending school for the proposed number of hours during the winter months.

The meeting would not wish to see more than 12 hours of labour in the day (including 1½ hours for meals) exacted from a lads under 12 years of age; but they think that the exigencies of farm labour are so various, and impossible always to be foreseen (as *e.g.* in the case of a boy being sent with a waggon to the market town) that to absolutely prohibit such employment under penalties would often inflict very great hardship and injustice.

[At this period of the meeting Lord Fitzhardinge was obliged to leave, and the chair was taken by Rev. James C. Norman.]

Berkeley is a parish of from 14,000 to 15,000 acres of land, with a population of about 4,300. The houses are grouped principally into a town and about 12 hamlets. Little knots of cottages are also generally dispersed throughout the area. This circumstance makes it a difficult parish to deal with, both in respect of pastoral supervision, and also as regards the provision of schools.

The principal landowner, to the extent probably of three-fourths of the acreage, is Lord Fitzhardinge, who is resident. There are six or seven other considerable estates, and perhaps 200 smaller proprietors.

The farms vary much in size; the largest farm does not exceed 300 acres, the smallest would be about 80. There are, however, smaller occupations held by persons who unite other businesses to that of farming. An average farm would be 150 acres.

Nineteen-twentieths of the land are in grass. The farms are almost exclusively dairy farms, and the staple produce of the parish is cheese. The ordinary proportion of labour required would be two men and one boy (with a dairymaid in the house) for 100 acres. The farmer's wife superintends the dairy work; in fact, as one gentleman remarked, "A man without a "wife has no business with a dairy."

A certain proportion of the population find employment on the Severn and on the Gloucester and Berkeley Canal, and there is somewhat of a deficiency of farm labour in the hay and corn harvest, for which a substitute is found in machinery. Another difficulty experienced by the farmer lies in the distribution of the cottages, which, in some districts of the parish, particularly on the side adjacent to the river, are occupied by persons who do not work on the land.

There has been a considerable improvement in the last 20 years in the condition of the cottages, particularly on the Berkeley estate; but there are still a great many cottages in the parish in a very unsatisfactory condition. A large proportion of them have been built by their occupants on the waste, and are held under the lord of the manor, at a nominal rent, on a life interest. The rent of the cottages occupied by the agricultural labourers is from 3*l.* to 5*l.* a year, generally with a garden of from 20 to 30 perches; many gardens, however, would be less than this. There are no regular field allotments, but it is a habit with many farmers to let to their labourers a plot of potato ground (varying according to the size of their families, but seldom exceeding 30 perches), which the farmer ploughs and manures, and the labourer plants and hoes, at a rent of from 9*d.* to 1*s.* per perch.

The parish of Berkeley is at present inadequately provided with the means of education. There is a school, known as Lord Fitzhardinge's school, which is about to be placed in the condition of a Church of England school, in receipt of Government aid, and practically worked with a conscience clause. It is in three departments—boys, girls, and infants; there are 100 boys, 60 girls, and 80 infants on the register, with an average attendance respectively of 70, 40, and 50. The boys' school is under a certificated master, and the mistress of the girls' school is to be certificated when it is brought into connexion with the Government. Up to this time the entire cost has been borne by Lord Fitzhardinge, with the exception of the school pence, which have amounted to about 31*l.* 10*s.* The total annual cost, meanwhile, has been about 100*l.*

There is also a free school, in which the number of scholars is limited to 40. By the terms of the trust the master ought to be a B.A. of one of the universities, but the income is not more than 70*l.*, which is charged with a mortgage, so that at the present moment the vicar of the parish is the nominal master, and he appoints a deputy to whom the salary is actually paid. The trustees are the mayor and four senior aldermen of Berkeley.

The trustees nominate the scholars, and it is provided by the founder's will that they should be the sons of persons who have not received parochial relief. The present scholars are the sons chiefly of labourers.

There are several private adventure dames' schools in different parts of the parish, but there must be

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many children in Berkeley who have no school fairly accessible to them.

There has been a night school for the last two winters, but there are only eight attendants this season, and it is on the point of being discontinued in consequence.

Signed on behalf of the meeting,
JAMES CHARLES NORMAN, Chairman.

Jan. 15, 1868.

COUNTY OF GLOUCESTER: NEWENT UNION.

No. 90. *Monday, January* 20, 1868.

Collective Meeting at Redmarley, for

Redmarley - Pop., 1,265 - Acr., 3,669 - R.V., 6,512*l.*
Bromsberrow Pop., 305 - Acr., 1,767 - R.V., 2,737*l.*
Staunton - Pop., 507 - Acr., 1,350 - R.V., 2,677*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Redmarley—
- Rev. E. H. Niblett, rector.
- Rev. G. Buck, curate.
- Mr. Chas. Stokes, guardian and occupier of 400 acres.
- Mr. John Buck, waywarden and occupier of 300 acres.
- Mr. Joseph Cooper, churchwarden and occupier of 420 acres.
- Mr. Joseph Hawkins, churchwarden and occupier of 200 acres.
- Mr. John Allen Beech, guardian and occupier of 350 acres.
- Mr. William Hodgetts, occupier of 140 acres.
- Mr. Robert Dobbins, constable and occupier of 40 acres.
- Mr. William Robinson, rate collector and occupier of 220 acres.
- Mr. Charles Rivers, occupier of cottage and garden, and schoolmaster.
- Mr. James Russell, occupier of 200 acres.
- Mr. Joseph Stallard, overseer and occupier of 600 acres.

From Bromsberrow—
- Rev. Reginald P. Hill, rector.
- Rev. D. Evans, assistant curate.
- Mr. Wm. Hawkins, overseer and occupier of 300 acres.

From Staunton—
- Mr. John Halford, guardian and occupier of 140 acres.
- Rev. W. Sevier, rector.

The chair was taken by Mr. CHARLES STOKES.

The principal landowners in Redmarley are the Earl Beauchamp, and O. Ricardo, Esq.; there are perhaps 20 smaller landowners, ranging from 200 down to 20 acres.

There is a redundant supply of agricultural labour. Many Redmarley men work in the adjoining parishes. A good deal of gloving is done in the parish, employing women and children.

There is also a redundant supply of cottages; 16 were vacant a short time ago. Mr. Fergus O'Connor chose Redmarley, about 25 years ago, as the site of one of his land settlement schemes. He purchased about 150 acres of land (known as Lowband's estate), and erected upon it about 45 cottages, which he allotted to as many tenants, distributing the land among them in parcels of from two to four acres. The tenants were imported from different towns, and were mostly entirely unacquainted with agricultural life. The experiment did not succeed, and at the present moment, not more than three of the original settlers occupy their allotments. One of these settlers has absorbed and now occupies 10 or 12 of the original parcels with the cottages that were attached to them. The cottages, which were built of a uniform pattern, of lias stone, with only one floor and three rooms, lying low, and many of them damp and badly provided with conveniences, are now underlet; many of them occupied by paupers, and one or two vacant. They are held in fee, subject to a rentcharge amounting to about two-thirds of their annual value. If the rentcharge falls into arrear, the owner of the fee loses his right, and the owner of the rentcharge would enter into possession. The whole arrangements now governing the tenure of this property were made under a decree of the Court of Chancery which was issued upon the failure of the original scheme.

The other cottages in Redmarley belong partly to the landowners and partly to independent proprietors. There are believed to be nearly 200 cottages in the parish. The minority of these belong to the large landowners.

A great many of the cottages are described as being in bad condition. The worst are those which are held in freehold by their occupiers, and which give votes for the county.

The rent ranges from 2*l.* to 5*l.*; the average rent would be 4*l.* The gardens vary from 10 to 40 perches. There are no field allotments, but it is the custom of many of the farmers to allow their men a certain quantity of potato ground, which they plough and manure for them, at the rate of 5*l.* an acre.

There are two elementary schools in the parish, one national and the other private adventure. The national school is held in a spacious room, built about seven years ago, not connected with Government, under the sole management of the rector. It is taught by an uncertificated mistress, and has 50 children enrolled, with an ordinary attendance of 35. The mistress's salary is 38*l.* with lodgings, and the whole annual cost of the school is about 40*l.*

The school needs more liberal support, the bulk of the expense having now to be borne by the rector. He would gladly improve its condition if he could reckon on the co-operation of his parishioners.

The private adventure school is carried on in a building which was originally erected for the parochial school, but was inconveniently situated for that purpose. It received a Government building grant; but has since been abandoned as a public school. It is now divided after a somewhat singular fashion into two establishments, conducted by two different parties. There are about 35 children in attendance.

In consequence of the size of the parish and the dispersion of the population, many Redmarley children attend school in no less than four adjoining parishes, Pauntley, Staunton, Bromsberrow, and the Berrow. The gloving trade carried on in the parish, and the state of the roads and footpaths in parts of the parish (particularly on the Lowband's estate), are found to be hindrances in the way of the attendance of children at school. A night school has been carried on this winter, and is attended by about 20 scholars; but the way in which the people are scattered is unfavourable to the maintenance of a night school. Those who attend are found to be very anxious to learn.

The chief landowners in Bromsberrow, are Osman Ricardo, Esq. (who is resident), Rev. R. Brooke, (whose son is resident and farms the estate), Mrs. Webb (who is also resident), and Earl Somers.

There are 43 cottages in the parish, which, with 13 exceptions, belong to the landowners. There is a sufficient supply of available labour, though some of the labourers reside just outside the boundaries of the parish. No man working in Bromsberrow has to travel more than a mile to his work. The cottages differ considerably in their condition; some are recently erected, and are very good; others are very inadequate in their accommodation. Not more than seven cottages have three bedrooms. All have good gardens, many of them having been erected by squatters, who took in a good slice of land from the waste. These squatters' cottages, with two or three exceptions, have since passed into the hands of the lord of the manor or other proprietors. The rent varies from 2*l.* to 7*l.*; the account of the higher rent is that there

is in those cases attached to the cottage a good garden well stocked with fruit trees. The value of the produce is commensurate with the amount of the rent.

There are no field allotments, and there is no need for them.

There is a girls' school in the parish, held in one of the lodges of Bromsberrow Place, and entirely supported by Mrs. Richardo. The boys in the parish attend school at Pauntley and the Berrow, a distance respectively of 2½ and 1 miles. These schools perfectly supply the wants of the parish; and it is believed that there is not a child in the parish between the ages of 5 and 10 who is not attending school. Dr. Henry's school at Haffield (which is not more than half a mile distant) also receives some of the younger children of Bromsberrow.

There is no night school, the people being very much scattered. The experiment has been tried, but not with sufficient success to encourage its continuance.

The principal landowner in Staunton is Sir Edmund Lechmere, Bart., who is not resident. There are three or four other landowners. There is abundance of labour. The condition of things in Staunton in general is as nearly as possible a repetition of what has been already described in Redmarley. Mr. Fergus O'Connor planted another of his settlements at Staunton, with 50 houses on it, which, though in a somewhat better state of cultivation than the Redmarley settlement, has fallen into the same general condition.

There are about 110 cottages in Staunton; about 20 belong to the landowners; many are freehold. Their general condition is pretty fair, but very few have three bedrooms. The rent ranges from 2*l.* to 5*l.*, and generally they have good gardens. There are no allotments.

There is a national school receiving annual aid from Government, mixed, under a certificated master assisted by a sewing mistress. There are about 80 names on the register, with an average attendance of 65. The attendance has been affected unfavourably by a change of teachers. Last year there were 120 on the books, and the numbers are rapidly rising again now.

The total annual cost is about 100*l.*, of which the master receives 60*l.* The voluntary contributions are 30*l.*; the pence, 20*l.*; the Government grant last year was about 50*l.* Her Majesty's inspector reports it to be a thoroughly efficient school.

There is a small private adventure dame's school, attended by about a dozen children.

No night school is maintained in the parish at present, but the experiment will be tried next year.

The quality of the land in this district varies considerably—passing from a stiff clay, through a sandy loam, to a light drifting sand. The latter is known by the local name of "ryeland," and is the character of nearly half the land of the district. The rent varies, according to the quality of the land, from 20*s.* to 40*s.* an acre. The yield of wheat ranges ranges from 15 to 40 bushels per acre. About 75 per cent. of the land is under the plough. The ploughing is done on the light land with G. O. ploughs and two horses; on the stiffer land, from three to even five horses are required. The cost of labour is about 25*s.* per acre, per annum. An adequate supply of labour would be three men, one boy, and one woman to 100 acres. The poor rate in the Union is about 2*s.* in the pound.

The standing weekly wage in the district varies from 9*s.* to 10*s.* a week, exclusive of cider, which is reckoned as worth another shilling. One gentleman who pays only 9*s.* allows his men to buy their flour of him at a rate never exceeding 10*s.* a bushel. It is not the practice to pay a discriminating rate of wages to labourers according to their capacity and skill in work, though masters generally keep an eye on the best men, and take indirect ways of showing their appreciation of them. Much of the manual labour on the farms is done by the piece; and the farmers prefer that mode of dealing with the labourer when it is practicable. Three-quarters of an acre is considered a good day's ploughing on the stiff land. The ploughing of an acre of land, with a 9-inch furrow, which is the usual width, involves walking 11 miles.

Women are largely employed in agricultural operations; wheat and turnip hoeing, haymaking, wheat tying in harvest, apple picking, pulling, topping, tailing, and stacking turnips, &c. &c.. Indeed for any light farm work, where a number of hands is required, the labour of women is very valuable. A woman's wage is from 9*d.* to 10*d.* a day, with a quart of cider.

A boy's labour is of no value to the farmer under 12; and he would find no difficulty in doing without boys under that age. If a younger boy is employed, it is generally in consequence of pressure on the part of the parents, who want their children's earnings.

Young girls are scarcely ever employed under 16 years of age, except a few at haymaking. Those that do not go out to domestic service occupy themselves at gloving.

It is the opinion of most of the farmers present that the habit of paying part of the men's wages in cider is a bad one, and is physically injurious, but the men themselves prefer it, and many of them would not work on other terms.

There are some excellent schools in this neighbourhood, which retain boys to a higher age than ordinary, and the opinion of several farmers present who employ boys who have been educated at these schools is that the boys are the better labourers for their education, and that the age of 12 is quite early enough for a boy to begin his apprenticeship to farm work.

It is the unanimous opinion of the meeting that neither form of the half-time system (as adopted under the Factory Acts) is applicable to agriculture, and the preference of the meeting was decidedly expressed in favour of fixing upon an age under which children should be prohibited from working on the land, with a view to their education. On the question being put to the vote as to what that age should be, six gentlemen were in favour of 10, one was in favour of 11, and ten were in favour of 12.

If as high an age as 12 were fixed upon, it was considered that some relief or relaxation of the prohibition should be granted in the case of large families. In the event of the labour of children up to a certain age being prohibited by law, 12 gentlemen present were in favour of their being *compelled* to attend school; the remainder of the meeting (six in number) preferred to trust to the twofold influences of the labour prohibition and the attractiveness of an efficient school.

These opinions of the meeting were delivered on the understanding that these restrictions are not to apply to the seasons of haymaking, corn harvest, or hop picking.

The meeting would be sorry that any boy under 12 years of age should be employed for more than 12 hours in the day (including 1½ hours for meals and rest), but the contingencies of farm labour are so various that an absolute prohibition to this effect would often produce serious inconvenience and embarrassment to the employer.

The meeting are strongly impressed with the importance of two facts directly bearing on the social condition of the agricultural labourer; the state of his home, too often incompatible with the decent accommodation of his family; and, secondly, the temptation that is thrown in his way wherever he turns by the unnecessary multiplication of houses licensed to sell beer and cider. Till the importance of these two facts has been fully recognized, and steps have been taken to remove the evils produced by them, the meeting fears that the labour and money spent upon the education of the young will be to a great extent, as far as their moral results are concerned, thrown away.

The meeting, further, would desire to impress upon the owners of property the importance of a *good* garden as a most valuable addition to the comfort of the

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labouring man's home. A good garden attached to the cottage is infinitely more advantageous to the labourer than a remote allotment.

Signed in behalf of the meeting,

CHARLES S. STOKES.

Jan. 20, 1868.

No. 91. *Tuesday, January* 21, 1868.

Collective Meeting at the British School, Tibberton, for

Tibberton	Pop., 301	Acr., 1,115	R.V., 2,723*l.*
Taynton	Pop., 689	Acr., 2,220	R.V., 3,965*l.*
Rudford	Pop., 105	Acr., 550	R.V., 1,150*l.*
Highleadon	Pop., 97	Acr., 604	R.V., 1,312*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Tibberton—
- Mr. Daniel Phelps, churchwarden and occupier of 230 acres.
- Mr. John Loveridge, guardian, churchwarden, owner and occupier of 110 acres.
- Mr. George Need, occupier of 200 acres.
- Mr. Charles Teague, owner of cottage property and builder.
- Mr. Enos Webb, certificated schoolmaster.
- Mr. Benjamin Palmer, owner and occupier of 200 acres.

From Taynton—
- Rev. C. Y. Crawley, rector and guardian.
- Henry Evans, Esq., magistrate and landowner.
- Mr. James Smith, churchwarden and occupier of 160 acres.

From Rudford and Highleadon—
- Rev. J. G. Evans, rector.
- Mr. W. E. Humpage, occupier of 140 acres.
- Mr. W. Phelps, guardian, owner, and occupier of 210 acres.
- Mr. Robert Jakeman, occupier of 200 acres.
- Mr. Thos. Smith, of Westbury-on-Severn, occupier of 230 acres.

The chair was taken by HENRY EVANS, Esq.

About half the land in Tibberton is the property of W. P. Price, Esq., M.P., who is resident. There are seven or eight other proprietors, most of whom are resident and occupy their own land. There is no difficulty about the supply of labour. The harvest is earlier here than it is in the Forest of Dean and Herefordshire, and many men come into Tibberton from those districts during the harvest months.

There are about 40 cottages in Tibberton, most of which are in good condition; about 15 of them have been recently erected by different parties in replacement of older cottages. About a dozen are 40*s.* freeholds, erected by squatters on the waste. Some of these are in very bad condition. About half the new cottages have three bedrooms. Mr. Teague, who has built several, estimates the cost of a double cottage, of 9-inch outside brick walls and 4½-inch partition walls, with tiled roof, Brosely square floors, and stone window sills, containing two rooms and a pantry on the ground floor (the living room about 12 feet square), and three chambers above, with outhouse and pigstye, at about or a little over 200*l.*

Each such tenement, with 20 perches of garden ground, would let at about 5*l.* a year; if the property of a landowner it would probably be let at 4*l.* 4*s.* In Tibberton the occupier would pay the rates, which amount to from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* in the pound. There are no field allotments in Tibberton.

There is a large British school in Tibberton, which is used also by children from Rudford and Highleadon, who have to travel from one to two miles. It receives annual aid from Government, and is taught by a certificated master, whose wife gives instruction in needlework. There are 90 names on the register, and an ordinary attendance of 60. The total annual cost is about 110*l.* The Government grant last year was 33*l.*; the school pence (at the rate of 1*d.*, 2*d.*, and 6*d.* a week, according to the means of the parents) are about 30*l.*; the balance is made up by Mr. Price. The schoolroom is excellent, and the school is thoroughly adequate to the wants of the parish.

There was a night school last winter, which numbered about 20 scholars. The schoolmaster taught it; but he found that the extra work exhausted him, and thought that the school was not sufficiently appreciated to encourage him to continue it.

In Taynton the principal landowners are W. Laslett, Esq., Chas. B. Atherton, Esq., Mrs. Grove Price, Mrs. K. Martin; of whom only Mr. Atherton is resident. Mr. Evans also resides in Taynton, though the bulk of his property is in Newent. There is a considerable number of small landowners.

The population of Taynton may be divided into two remarkably distinct classes, those on May Hill and those in the vale. The former are either squatters or descended from squatters, living in cottages originally built on the waste, but which in the course of time have mostly passed into other hands, the occupants remaining. They will hardly consent to be bound by regular employment, but will take jobs of mowing, reaping, or fruit picking, which they do at their pleasure, and sometimes leave undone if a more attractive object comes in their way. It would be hard to say how they live; but the men are reported to take care of themselves pretty well, though their wives and families are often in considerable destitution. There are about 65 families of this class, forming more than half the population of the parish. There are some very bad cases of overcrowding among them; in some instances a family of six or seven living in only one room for all purposes. The two worst tenements in the parish belong to the parish, and are let at 1*s.* a week, the rent going in diminution of the rates.

The vale population are a different class, are better housed (though even here there are several very indifferent cottages); are in regular employ, and generally steady and industrious. In consequence of the indisposition of the hill men to regular work, and the natural reluctance of the farmers to employ them, there is a scarcity of labour in Taynton. The rent of cottages range from 4*l.* to 5*l.* There is generally a pretty good garden. There are also six acres of field allotments let in quarter acre parcels at 12*s.* a parcel. It is let in the bulk to a middleman (in consequence of the trouble which the landlord experienced in getting his rents), who sublets the lots to the occupiers.

There is a parochial Church of England school, managed by the rector and churchwardens, and practically worked on the principle of the conscience clause. No claim for exemption from the religious teaching has ever been made, though there are several dissenters' children in the school.

The school receives Government aid and is taught by a certificated mistress. It is held in a room attached to the south end of the church, which stands north and south instead of east and west, built in 1825 partly as a vestry and partly for a Sunday school. It is a very fair room, containing 7,000 cubic feet, and able to accommodate from 80 to 90 children. There are 77 names on the books, and an ordinary attendance of 40. There are very great local difficulties in the way of regular attendance, in consequence of the distance from the school at which some of the children live, the dispersion of the cottages, and the miry state of the soil in wet weather, which renders it almost impossible for small children to travel any distance. The total annual cost is between 50*l.* and 60*l.* The Government grant would be 20*l.*; the school pence (at 1½*d.* and 1*d.*) about 12*l.* There is a voluntary subscription of 25*l.* The school, though sufficient for the vale population, does not adequately supply the wants of the hill people, who stand very much in need of education, and for whom a second school is required. Some of the hill children, however, attend school in the parish of Huntley.

There is also a very small dame's school on the hill, which used to be attended by about 30 children. At

that time the children's pence were supplemented by a voluntary subscription, but the mistress has become old and inefficient, the scholars have dwindled to five or six, and the subsidy has been withdrawn.

There is no night school, the parish being unfavourably circumstanced for its establishment. The vale people are very scattered; those on the hill, though more concentrated, are three miles distant from the church and school.

An offer is stated to have been made a few years ago to form and endow a new ecclesiastical district out of the parishes of Taynton, Newent, and Long Hope, which would have been a great boon to the population residing on and around May Hill, amounting probably to about 1,000 souls; but owing to difficulties arising in the way of the proposed arrangements, the offer was withdrawn and has not since been renewed.

Rudford and Highleadon form a consolidated ecclesiastical parish. The principal landowner in Rudford is Mr. Price; in Highleadon, Mr. Ellis, Mr. Edmonds, Mr. Phelps, and Mr. Knight. These gentlemen reside either in the parish or in the neighbourhood.

The resident labourers are hardly enough for the wants of the parish, but (except in the harvest month) there is no difficulty in supplying the deficiency from adjoining parishes. About half-a-dozen Irishmen have been in the habit of coming for the last 20 years for the summer months to Highleadon, coming in June and leaving in October or November. They are described as good, conscientious workmen. Two Irish lads are in permanent employ on Mr. Jakeman's farm.

The cottages in Rudford are mostly the property of Mr. Price, and are in good condition, though in no case, it is believed, having more than two bedrooms. In Highleadon about half the cottages are fair; the rest are indifferent. The gardens in Rudford are mostly small; two cottages have none at all. In Highleadon it is believed that there is only one garden less than 20 perches. There are no field allotments. About a dozen of the cottages are freehold; where rent is paid it ranges from 4*l.* to 6*l.* There is no school in Rudford; the children attend either at Tibberton or Highnam, both of which are fairly accessible. The rector, when he first came into the parish two years ago, contemplated a parish school; but he found the parents quite satisfied with the existing arrangements. There is no night school, but there are Sunday schools both at Rudford and Highleadon, the former in connexion with the church, the latter attached to the Wesleyan chapel. The rector finds a good many people in the parish unable to read or write, or reading and writing too imperfectly to put their acquirements to any practical use.

The soil in these parishes is marly loam, mixed with clay. It is good wheat land, producing on its best qualities 40 bushels to the acre, and averaging from 25 to 30. About half is in pasture, and half under the plough. The pasture land is farmed both for stock feeding, and for dairy purposes. The rent runs from 25*s.* to 40*s.* per acre, the larger half of the land would be let at the lower rent. The cost of labour is from 20*s.* to 25*s.* per acre per annum, and a proper supply of labour would be three men, one woman, and one boy per 100 acres, with further requirements in the busy seasons. It is believed that no man in the district at the present time is receiving less than 10*s.* a week, with cider, which is valued at 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. It is found generally that the men prefer drink to its value in money. Mr. Humpage is attempting to pay his men wholly in money, but finds a prejudice in favour of the drink. Mr. Phelps of Highleadon has two farms, on one of which he has abandoned the system of paying part of his wages in drink; the men are satisfied, and he himself likes the plan much better. The men are better workmen without the drink than his other men with it.

Young girls are very seldom seen working on the land in these parishes; in Taynton, however, a few girls from the hill come down to work in the vale for wheat hoeing, haymaking, and fruit picking. Adult female labour is in request, but the women themselves are not disposed to work in the fields, and more than are employed would be employed if they could be obtained. They are paid 8*d.*, 10*d.*, and 1*s.* a day. A woman's day is from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

A boy, unless he were unusually well grown, would not be fit to drive plough before he is 13; but there are many jobs, such as crow keeping, sheep minding, apple picking, driving the horse in the chaff cutter, &c., for which he would be useful at an earlier age.

The opinion of the meeting on the question of how best to deal with the employment of children in agriculture with a view to their better education, was that either form of the half-time system is impracticable, and that the best mode of improving that education would be to secure the regular attendance of the children at school for the five years preceding the age of 10; and then to require their attendance at school for (say) 150 hours in the winter months of the two succeeding years. It was thought that this latter requirement might be enforced without any practical inconvenience to the farmer or any real hardship to the parent.

It was the unanimous fear of the meeting that the regular attendance at school up to the age of 10, which was felt to be all-important, could not, in many cases, be secured without some form or other of compulsion; though at the same time there was a full appreciation of the difficulty of making any form of compulsion fit in happily with English habits and feelings or the general circumstances of agricultural employment and a rural population.

The meeting expressed themselves as deeply sensible that in any efforts to improve the social condition of the agricultural labourer, the attention of landowners should be called to the duty of providing him with a more decent home and a good garden; and that of the legislature to the enormous amount of evil in respect both of poverty and crime that is produced by the number, increasing far beyond the natural wants of the community, of houses licensed to sell beer and other intoxicating drinks. They would wish to see the licensing power over all such houses placed in the hands of the magistrates.

HENRY EVANS, chairman of the meeting.

January 21, 1868.

No. 92. *Wednesday, January* 22, 1868.

Meeting at Corse, for

Corse	- Pop., 552	- Acr., 2,000	R.V., 3,478*l.*
Hartpury	- Pop., 843	- Acr., 3,500	- R.V., 5,757*l.*
Upleadon	- Pop., 237	- Acr., 1,059	- R.V., 2,126*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Corse—
- Mr. Robert C. Fulljames, churchwarden and occupier of 400 acres.
- Miss J. E. Banks, schoolmistress.

From Hartpury—
- P. R. Gordon Canning, Esq., landowner.
- Rev. W. G. S. Addison, vicar.
- Rev. H. V. F. Ricketts, assistant curate.
- Mr. Richard New, churchwarden, guardian, and occupier of 260 acres.
- Mr. John Millard, guardian and occupier of 190 acres.
- Mr. William Goulding, occupier of 170 acres.
- Mr. William Herbert, road surveyor and occupier of 210 acres.

From Upleadon—
- Rev. Andrew Sayers, perpetual curate and magistrate.

The chair was taken by P. R. GORDON CANNING, Esq.

The principal landowners in Corse are Mrs. Hull (500 acres), who is resident; Sir Edmund Lechmere (140 acres); Mr. Ford Sevier (200 acres); the

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vicar (200 acres of glebe); Mr. John Butler (140 acres); Mr. Hawkins (160 acres). The rest of the parish is divided among several small proprietors, ranging from 20 to 60 acres. An estate in the parish called Snigsend, containing about 80 acres, was selected by Mr. Fergus O'Connor as the site of one of his co-operative allotment schemes. About 30 cottages were erected, which still remain, and are occupied by parties who cultivate their allotments and take an occasional job of work from the farmers at their spare time. The scheme as originally conceived failed, and the allotments are now in the same condition as those described at Redmarley. Of the original allottees, only one remains. The general size of the allotments is two acres, but in some instances a man holds two or three parcels, which he cultivates, sub-letting the cottages. The present allottees are an industrious race of men, who maintain their families in tolerable comfort off their land. The failure of the first settlers, who were mostly Irish, is attributed to the fact that most of them had no experience of agricultural life, and did not know how to use a spade.

For the ordinary purposes of farming there is an adequate and almost redundant supply of labour; there are generally men out of work in the winter. In bad weather there is nothing to be done in the way of general labour on these wet clays. A superior labourer, who can lay a hedge, &c., can always get work; but the younger class of labourers show no inclination to learn the higher branches of their craft, and consequently often can find no work which they are competent to undertake.

The cottages in Corse, taken altogether, are above the average, and have been considerably improved within the last 10 years. They mostly belong to small proprietors, who have a few acres of land with them. The worst cottages in the parish, four in number, belong to a gentleman who ought to be able to repair them. All the cottages in Corse have good gardens. There are about eight acres of the glebe let out in half-acre allotments. The rent of cottages varies from 40*s.* to 5*l.* and 6*l.*

The cottages are dispersed over the whole area of the parish. In a few instances they are attached to the farms; but in the case of the great majority the tenant holds direct from the landlord, on a yearly tenure with six mouths' notice. There are no weekly tenants. Such seems to be the practice of the neighbourhood generally.

There is a National school, situated at one end of the parish, at a distance from the bulk of the population. There was a difficultyin raising an adequate sum of money to purchase a more suitable site. It is taught by an untrained young mistress, and has 25 names on its register, with an ordinary attendance of 20. In the summer the school is fuller, then reckoning 40 to 45 scholars. The distance at which the children live from the school, and the state of the roads in the winter, will account for the difference. The mistress's salary is 6*s.* a week, with the children's pence, which amount to about 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. There is no teacher's residence.

There is no night school; the dispersion of the population would render one almost impracticable.

In Hartpury Mr. and Miss Gordon Canning are the principal landowners, to the extent of about five-sixths of the parish. There is an estate of 300 acres belonging to Mr. Farrell (non-resident); another estate of 150 acres; and the rest divided among small proprietors.

The supply of labour is about equal to the demand. It is not believed that there is any able-bodied man at the present moment out of employ. In the summer time men are occasionally drawn away into Gloucester, if any special job is going on there which offers them higher wages. There are also two or three brick-works in the neighbourhood where the men get occasional work.

The cottages generally are in good condition. With a few exceptions they belong to the landowners. There are 10 or a dozen freehold cottages which are in the worst state. There are 130 or 140 cottages in all, a considerable proportion of which have been erected within the last 20 years. It is stated that Hartpury need not fear comparison with any parish in Gloucestershire in respect of its cottages. They are, almost without exception, built of brick. They have all gardens; but there are no field allotments. The rent ranges from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*

There is no public school at this moment in Hartpury. One used to be kept in a cottage, which was unfortunately burnt down. It had about 45 names on the register, with an ordinary attendance of 35. The total annual cost was about 18*l.* It was free. The vicar considers it would have worked much better if school fees had been charged. It is hoped to build a suitable school in the course of the present year, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners having given a site. The site is tolerably accessible to the bulk of the population; but the people generally are very scattered, and no site, consequently, could be convenient to all.

Many Hartpury children, however, attend school in adjoining parishes.

There is also a private adventure dame's school, attended by about 20 children.

There is no night school. The experiment was tried a few years ago for two or three winters, but did not succeed. The educational condition of Hartpury up to this time has been unsatisfactory, but when the new school is fairly started there are hopes of improvement.

In Upleadon about 500 acres belong to Mr. Hodges, who is non-resident; 250 acres to the executors of Mr. Hook; 87 acres to Mr. Edwin Ford; 90 acres to Mr. Henry Thompson; and there are 42 acres of glebe. There are a few other small proprietors. There are a great number of small freeholds in this parish, the land having been "cribbed from the waste." There are 32 cottages, of which three-fourths answer to this description, and are in most cases heavily mortgaged. The condition of several of the cottages is bad, both in respect of repair and of accommodation. Nearly all have two bedrooms, and a few have three. All have good gardens, and 11 acres of the glebe are let in allotments of from half an acre to an acre and and a half The allotment is found to be most beneficial; not one of the allottees is a recipient of parochial relief. Mr. Sayers considers that a man with his family is quite competent to cultivate his acre of land, without interfering with his capacity as a farm labourer. Some of this land, which when held in the bulk did not produce 25 bushels of wheat per acre, under the allotment system, when cultivated with the fork, has produced 40 bushels. The allotments are let at 3*l.* per acre, the landlord paying tithe, rates, and taxes. Where the cottages are let, the rent ranges from 4*l.* to 5*l.* The supply of labour is about sufficient (except in the harvest seasons). There is scarcely ever a man out of employ. Men cannot be procured at this moment for the work that is required on the roads.

There is a National school in Upleadon, under Government inspection, taught by a certificated mistress. There are 36 names on the register and an average attendance of 28. The mistress's salary is 20*l.* and the children's pence (about 8*l.*) and half the Government grant, which last year amounted to 15*l.* She has a furnished residence. The voluntary subscriptions are 13*l.*

There is no night school. The incumbent tried one, but as he could not turn himself into its teacher, it did not succeed. Mr. Sayers thinks that if he could employ a master (which he has some idea of doing) he could attract 50 or 60 children to his school from outlying districts of neighbouring parishes, as well as retain his own boys, who now, as soon as they get to eight years of age, are drawn off to Mr. Ricardo's school at Pauntley.

The soil in these parishes is a lias clay and marl

clay, very stiff and wet; good wheat land, producing, when well cultivated and in a good season, 35 to 40 bushels an acre. The land in Upleadon is of a superior quality, and lets at about 2*l.* an acre. In Corse land lets at from 25*s.* to 30*s.*; in Hartpury, from 30*s.* to 40*s.* In Corse about 80 per cent. of the land is under plough; in Hartpury and Upleadon about 50 per cent. It is expensive land to work, requiring four or five horses to plough. In Corse, to plough half an acre would be an average day's work; and the ploughing of an acre of land once would cost 25*s.* A steam plough could do the same work at 16*s.*, and ten times better. But the implement is costly, and the holdings in this district are small. The land is so stiff that it requires about an average of eight horses to 100 acres. The enclosures also are small; and this requires a larger amount of manual labour. One gentleman present, on 260 acres, half of which is under the plough, constantly employs six men, three boys, and four women in the summer, and whenever else they like to come. The cost of manual labour per acre per annum would be from 18*s.* to 25*s.*, according to the goodness of the cultivation, and to the proportion of the farm under pasture.

The standing wage of the district is 10*s.*; in Hartpury it is 11*s.* There is an allowance of two quarts of cider a day in addition. About 12*s.* or 12*s.* 6*d.* a week would represent the total annual earnings (without drink) of a first-class agricultural labourer in this district. Women work on the land for perhaps nine months out of the 12. Their wages would be 10*d.* a day.

Young girls are rarely employed on the land.

Mr. Fulljames wishes he could do without boys; and it was the general opinion of the meeting that their labour could be dispensed with under the age of 10. Mr. Fulljames believes that when the steam plough becomes general boys may be dispensed with under 15.

The meeting believe that it would be the unanimous feeling of farmers, as it is the unanimous feeling of this meeting, that instead of attempting to apply the half-time system to a state of circumstances to which it is quite unsuitable, it would be better, in the interests of education, to fix upon an age up to which children should be required to attend school, and when that age is reached, to leave their labour free.

They would not object to see this age fixed at 11 if the parents could dispense with their children's earnings to that age; but as they fear that such would not be the case, they think that 10 should be the age; and they would be glad to see children required to attend school for 30 continuous days (six weeks) in the course of the winter up to the age of 12 in order to prevent their forgetting what they had previously acquired. They believe also that the Sunday school might be made a powerful agency for good, both morally and intellectually, and they would gladly see attendance at that for the same period made obligatory.

There was a difference of opinion in the meeting as to whether attendance at school should be made compulsory. Some gentlemen were in favour of compulsion; but the majority were inclined to trust to the labour prohibition acting naturally upon what they believe to be the growing desire of the parents to secure a good education for their children.

The meeting desire earnestly to call the attention of the legislature to the evils generated by the excessive increase in the number of houses licensed to sell intoxicating drinks. They would wish to see the licence issued under much more stringent conditions, and the houses placed under much more effective control. Under the present system of licensing they believe that a most mischievous influence is being exercised both upon the general condition of the labourer and specially upon the bringing up and education of his children.

P. R. Gordon Canning, Chairman.

No. 93. *Thursday, January* 23, 1868.

Gloucester.

Rev. J. Fraser.

a.

Meeting at Dymock, for

Dymock	- Pop., 1,870	- Acr., 6,700	- R.V.,	11,055*l.*
Kempley	- Pop., 311	- Acr., 1,700	- R.V.,	1,762*l.*
Preston	- Pop., 78	- Acr., 884	- R.V.,	1,183*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Dymock—
- John Cam Thackwell, Esq., D.L., magistrate and landowner.
- Rev. W. Baird, vicar.
- Osman Ricardo, Esq., D.L., magistrate and landowner.
- Dr. W. C. Henry, magistrate and landowner.
- Major S. N. Raikes, magistrate and landowner.
- Mr. Guy Hill, churchwarden, landowner, and occupier of 500 acres.
- Mr. Joseph Hill, guardian and occupier of 200 acres.
- Mr. J. H. Morgan, overseer and occupier of 1 acres.
- Mr. Charles Smith, occupier of 350 acres.
- Mr. W. Price, overseer and occupier of 360 acres.
- Mr. W. Thurston, churchwarden, landowner, and occupier of 250 acres.
- Mr. John Stock, occupier of 540 acres.
- Mr. John Birt, overseer, owner, and occupier of 160 acres.
- Mr. W. Fowler, occupier of 50 acres.
- Rev. Joseph White, assistant curate.

From Kempley—
- Mr. Allan Palmer, guardian and occupier of 200 acres.
- Rev. Arthur Street, vicar.
- Mr. Cornelius Cadle, churchwarden and occupier of 244 acres.

From Preston—
- Rev. A. Newton, rector.
- Mr. William Hartland, guardian and occupier of 320 acres.
- Mr. W. Drew, churchwarden and occupier of 120 acres.

The chair was taken by J. C. Thackwell, Esq.

Dymock is an extensive parish, containing 6,700 acres of land. The principal landowners are Earl Beauchamp (800 acres), who is lord of the manor of Great Dymock; R. Wynniatt, Esq. (1,200 acres); J. C. Thackwell, Esq. (700 acres); Guy Hill, Esq. (500 acres); O. Ricardo, Esq., Dr. Henry, General Drummond. All these landowners are resident either in the parish or neighbourhood. There are probably 50 smaller proprietors.

The population is increasing, and is believed to amount at present to 2,000. The supply and demand of labour are about equal.

There is a sufficient number of cottages, but many of them are in bad condition, both as regards their state of repair and their capacity for accommodating their inmates. The worst cottages are freehold, erected in past years by squatters on the waste. About a moiety belongs to the landowners. They are both clustered into hamlets (four or five in number) and dispersed over the whole area of the parish. Most of the cottages have good gardens, in some cases as large as half an acre. Many of the squatters appropriated a considerable slice of land, on which they have subsequently erected a second or even a third cottage. There are no field allotments, but it is the custom with many of the farmers to allow their men a patch of potato ground, which they cultivate for them, and let at from 4*d.* to 6*d.* per score yards run. The rent ranges from 2*l.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* and 5*l.* The highest rent by no means always implies the best cottage or the largest garden. There are from 300 to 350 cottages, and the average rent would be from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.*

There are two public elementary schools in the parish:

(1.) An endowed school, known as Ann Cam's

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school, held in an excellent building, erected in 1825, in two departments, under a master and mistress (man and wife), and an assistant teacher for an infant department. The amount of the endowment is about 100*l.* a year, of which 64*l.* is applied to payment of teachers, and the balance to meet the other expenses of the school, including the occasional partial clothing of some of the children. The master and mistress are untrained and uncertificated, and the school does not receive any aid from Government, but the trustees have placed it under diocesan inspection. The foundation is limited to 50 boys and 50 girls, whom it was originally contemplated to educate and clothe. But the funds do not allow of this, and a school fee is charged (to labourers' children at 1*d.* a week, to tradesmen's at 2*d.*), and an extra number of children is admitted. There are at present 99 children on the register (66 boys and 33 girls), with an ordinary attendance of 55. The funds of the school are not supplemented by any voluntary contributions.

(2.) The second public school in Dymock is one established and maintained by Dr. Henry, in a part of the parish, thickly peopled, about 2½ miles distant from the church and endowed school. It is under Government inspection, and taught by a certificated mistress. There are about 70 children on the register (chiefly girls and small boys), with an ordinary attendance of 50. The total annual cost is about 90*l.* The mistress receives 40*l.* (with a furnished residence) and one-third of the Government grant, which has varied from 25*l.* to 30*l.* The children pay 1*s.* a quarter in advance.

There is no private adventure elementary school in the parish, but the schools in Oxenhall, Little and Much Marcle, Kempley, and Pauntley are accessible to children living in the outlying districts, and are to a greater or less extent attended by them. Children come to the school at Pauntley (which bears a high character) for a considerable distance.

There is no night school in Dymock.

Altogether the vicar is not satisfied with the condition of education in his parish.

The chief landowner in Kempley is Earl Beauchamp (about 1,000 acres); St. Catharine's Hospital, Ledbury, has two farms containing about 300 acres; there are three or four other small estates.

There is a sufficient supply of labour. There are between 50 and 60 cottages, many of which originally were erected by squatters; some of these have recently passed (by purchase) into the hands of Earl Beauchamp, and are likely to be improved. Many of the cottages are very defective in chamber accommodation. Improvements have been and are being made, but further steps in this direction are much required. The people themselves are in many cases very indifferent in the matter. Cottage rents range from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*, the average would be about 4*l.* Almost all the cottages have gardens, varying in size from 20 to 40 perches, in most cases stocked with fruit trees. There are no field allotments.

There is a National school, recently erected by Earl Beauchamp, who at present retains the freehold. There is a small endowment of 5*l.*; the children's pence (at 2*d.* a week) amount to another 5*l.*, and the voluntary subscriptions are 15*l.* (10*l.* of which are guaranteed by Lord Beauchamp). The mistress's salary is 25*l.*, and the children's pence, with coals and residence. There are about 35 children on the register, with an average attendance of 28. The people generally express very great satisfaction at the establishment of this school.

There is a night school, conducted by the mistress. There are about 10 scholars, some of them 16 or 17 years of age. The mistress, who is a young and untrained person, is singularly competent to conduct such a school, and has hitherto found no difficulty in her work.

In Preston the sole landowner (except 30 acres of glebe) is the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, whose estate is about 850 acres.

There is not a sufficient supply of resident labour, and there are only eight cottages. The deficiency of labour is supplied chiefly from Dymock and Ledbury. These labourers would not, however, have to travel more than a mile to their work. There are four farms in Preston. Of the eight cottages, four belong to the bishop. Two squatters' cottages are in bad condition, the others are fair. The rent ranges from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* They all have good gardens, a quarter of an acre each. Each labourer employed in the parish has a piece of potato ground allotted to him by his employer, in proportion to the size of his family, rent free. The employer does the ploughing and manuring.

There is no school in Preston, the population being too small to maintain an independent establishment. There are only nine children in the parish, seven of whom go to school, either at Little or Much Marcle; the two other children are too young to attend school.

There is no night school, but there is a Sunday school attended by about six boys and six girls.

The soil in these parishes is very various; in Kempley and Preston clay loam predominates; in Dymock two-thirds are stiff clay, sometimes requiring four horses to plough it; the remainder is a light sand. About 65 per cent. of the soil would be in tillage. An average yield of wheat in an average year would be about about 25 bushels per acre. Steam cultivation has been occasionally tried, and with good results, but the holdings are generally too small to justify a tenant farmer in purchasing a steam plough of his own, and there are not many steam cultivators for hire yet introduced into the district. All the farmers present fully appreciate the value of the steam cultivator for occasional use, but the country, frequently covered with fruit trees on the arable land, is not very favourable to its operation.

The average cost of labour per acre per annum would be from 20*s.* to 25*s.*, the higher sum representing the cost where the bulk of the farm is under the plough.

The weekly wage in this district at present is 10*s.*, but there are men past their prime who are receiving only 9*s.* Waggoners are receiving 11*s.*, 12*s.*, and 13*s.* In all these cases the men receive an allowance of cider, varying from two quarts to a gallon per day. Two of the farmers present have occasionally and for a time paid their men wholly in money instead of partly in drink, but the custom of the country and preference of the men set the other way.

The majority of the farmers present state that it is possible, by a variety of expedients, to recognize and reward the superior skill of a labourer by a discriminating rate of wages.

The labour of women is in much request in the district, nearly all through the year, whenever the weather is open and they are themselves inclined to come. There would be no compulsion exercised on the women, obliging them to work if disinclined; but if the wife of a man working for a farmer refused to work for her husband's master, but worked on the land elsewhere, objection would be taken to that. A woman's wages are 9*d.*, 10*d.*, and 1*s.* a day, depending on the season, the sort of work, and the length of the day. Weeding is often done by the piece. A woman's day is from 8 a.m. to 4 or 4.30 p.m.

Young unmarried girls are scarcely employed at all on the land. The farmers would rather see them go out into domestic service.

Boys are of no real use to the farmer under 10 years of age, but it was particularly remarked that unless a boy goes to work at a tolerably early age, he is likely to fall into the habit of lying in bed in the morning, from which he would find it difficult to break himself, and which would quite unfit him for the position of an agricultural labourer.

It is the unanimous opinion of the meeting that either form of the half-time system is wholly unsuitable to the case of boys employed in agriculture.

It was proposed by Major Raikes, and seconded by Rev. A Street, that children in an agricultural district should be required to attend school up to the age

of 10; and further, during the three or four winter months should be required to attend school for a limited number of hours (say 200 hours) between the ages of 10 and 12.

An amendment was moved by Mr. Guy Hill, and seconded by Mr. Joseph Hill, that, "The present state and progress of education in agricultural districts is sufficiently satisfactory to make any interference with it by legislation unnecessary and undesirable."

On the amendment and resolution being put to the vote, the resolution of Major Raikes was affirmed by a majority of 12 to 7.

Signed on behalf of the meeting,

J. C. THACKWELL, Chairman.

No. 94. *Friday, January* 24, 1868.

Meeting at Linton, for

Linton - Pop., 915 - Acr., 2,889 - R.V., 3,466*l.*
Aston Ingham } Pop.. 568 - Acr., 1,800 - R.V., 4,602*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Linton—
Rev. E. Palin, vicar.
Mr. Philip Matthews, vice-chairman of the board of guardians, churchwarden, landowner, and occupier of 250 acres.
Mr. John Marfell, churchwarden and shopkeeper.
From Aston Ingham—
Rev. H. L. Whatley, rector and magistrate.
Mr. Sampson Holder, occupier with his father of 260 acres.
Mr. George Perkins, churchwarden, owner and occupier of 300 acres.
From Linton—
Mary Marshall, labouring woman.
Eliza James, carpenter's wife.
William Gillett, labouring man.
Martha Rock, single woman, glover.
Eliza Gillett, labourer's wife.
Mary Arkwell, labourer's wife.
Sarah Wintle, labourer's wife.
Mrs. Jordans, schoolmistress.

The chair was taken by Rev. E. PALIN, vicar of Linton.

The principal landowners in Linton are Lord Ashburton (1,000 acres); Rev. John Herbert (250 acres); Mr. Philip Matthews (250 acres); Mr. Money Kyrle (200 acres); Mr. Roberts (140 acres); Mr. Stallard, &c. There are also a great many small holdings.

There is a sufficient supply of labour, but no overplus. Almost every operation of husbandry, except ploughing, is more or less done on some or other of the farms by machinery. On Lord Ashburton's farms (two in number) the fields are large and open, and favourable to machinery. Other parts of the parish are very hilly, and of course less suitable to this mode of cultivation. The farming in the parish is generally of a high order.

The land varies in quality, part is clay and part sandy loam, good for everything. The rent ranges from 25*s.* to 40*s.* per acre. The good land on an average will produce 30 bushels of wheat to the acre; and sometimes 40 bushels. About 70 acres out of every 100 would be under the plough. The cultivation of a hundred acres (exclusive of the seasons of hay and corn harvest) would require four men, one woman, and one or two boys. The farms range in size from 50 to 400 acres; there are also many occupations of a few acres merely, attached to a cottage.

The annual cost of labour per acre would be about 27*s.* Wages at present are in most cases 10*s.* Cowmen, shepherds, and carters get 11*s.* In all cases an allowance of drink is added. It is the custom of the country, and the men prefer it. One of the women present remarked that, "the poor man don't get much "victuals, and wants the drink to support him." The harvest earnings are reckoned not more than enough, and in the case of large families hardly sufficient, to pay the house-rent and the shoemaker's bill. Mary Marshall's shoemaker's bill, when she had seven children at home, came to more than 5*l.* a year. A woman's wages are 9*d.*, 10*d.*, and 1*s.* a day, according to the season and the job.

Gloucester.
Rev. J. Fraser.
a.

A plough boy from 12 to 14 years of age would have 3*s.* or 3*s.* 6*d.* a week, and a quart of cider a day.

The custom does not exist in this parish of labourers in husbandry residing in the farm house, and the rule of the district is that all farm labourers are hired by the week only.

The cottages in Linton vary considerably in condition. Very few have three bedrooms, and some are in very bad order. In a hamlet called Gorsley there are some cottages that ought not to be inhabited. It is a squatters' settlement, and the cottages are freehold, but in many cases heavily mortgaged. Generally, in the parish it would be the exception to find a staircase; the chambers are reached by steps or a ladder.

Throughout the parish the gardens are good generally a quarter of an acre in size, and fairly kept. The rent ranges from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*

There are three parish cottages, the rent of which is distributed as a dole on Good Friday among the poor, which are described as in a deplorable condition.

There is a mixed parochial school, not in connexion with Government, under the management of the vicar, and supported by voluntary contributions. It is held in a spacious room (built originally as an Odd Fellows' clubroom) rented for the purpose. It is taught by an untrained mistress, and has 40 names on the register, with an average attendance of 30. The annual cost is about 42*l.*, of which 6*l.* arise from school pence and the rest from voluntary subscriptions. There is an infant department, attended by 25 scholars.

There is also an endowed school (one of Goff's free schools) attached to the Baptist chapel at Gresley, with an endowment of 50*l.* a year. It is believed to be attended by about 50 children (not all from Linton parish).

The vicar conducts a night school, in which there are 12 scholars, varying in age from 12 to 19. He holds it in a room on his own premises three nights a week for two hours a night. There are prospects of a new and more suitable schoolroom being erected in the parish.

In Aston Ingham the principal landowners are Capt. M. Power (who is lord of the manor), Mr. John Garrold, Mr. Thomas Howell, Mr. Thos. Perkins, and Rev. H. L. Whatley. There are besides several small landowners, whose property ranges from five to 50 acres.

There is a sufficiency of labour. Some of the cottages are very creditable, others "would be all the "better for being pulled down." There are a good many freehold squatters here also. Some of the worst cottages belong to landowners. Some of the cottages have four or five acres of ground attached to them, and all have good gardens. The rents are exceedingly low, and might in some instances be largely increased if the cottages were put into a better state of repair.

There is an endowed parochial school. The endowment is 10*l.* a year, payable out of a farm in Linton, with a house and good garden, for the free education of 10 boys. Any additional number of children are admitted at a weekly payment of 1*d.* It is under a schoolmistress, and has an enrolment of 60 children, with an average attendance of 40. The voluntary subscriptions are from 10*l.* to 12*l.* a year, and the children's pence amount to 6*l.* or 7*l.*

There is a night school, conducted by Mr. Sampson Holder, jun., assisted by the rector, attended by about 20 scholars, varying in age from 11 to 19. All can read out of the Testament and work sums in the first four rules of arithmetic, and about half a dozen can read very well and work compound sums up to the rule of three. The scholars are most anxious to learn, and Mr. Holder is very proud of them.

Gloucester.

Rev. J. Fraser.

a.

In legislating for the employment and education of children in an agricultural district, the meeting feel that there ought to be a great deal of liberty, otherwise there would be caused great inconvenience to the farmer, as well as in many cases hardship to the parents.

The meeting would gladly see every child kept regularly at school at least to the age of 10, but they fail to see how this attendance can be enforced by compulsion.

They believe that the most effective system would be a system of encouragement.

There are admitted to be slack months in the winter of which advantage might be taken, if the parents were so disposed, to send the children to school.

The meeting further believe entirely in the attractive power of an efficient school, and they consider that many schools might be made much more efficient than they now are if the conditions of Government aid were relaxed, and assistance were given to all school simply in proportion to the results they can produce, and independently of the possession of a certificate by the teacher.

The labouring women present think that it would be a hardship if the law were to lay restrictions upon the employment of women in the fields. Their families would often have gone to bed hungry if they had had not earned money in that way.

All present at the meeting desired to express their opinion very strongly upon the present state of the beerhouse question. The licence is issued with too great facility, and the houses are not under sufficiently effective control. Mr. Whatley would wish to see the power to sell drink to be consumed on the premises entirely abrogated.

Signed on behalf of the meeting,

E. Palin, Chairman.

No. 95. *Monday, January* 27, 1868.

Meeting at Newent, for

Newent	Pop., 3,182	Acr., 7,213	R.V., 15,639*l.*
Oxenhall	Pop., 272	Acr., 1,475	R.V., 2,607*l.*
Pauntley	Pop., 233	Acr., 1,802	R.V., 2,440*l.*

Present at Meeting:

From Newent—

R. F. Onslow, Esq., magistrate, chairman of board of guardians, and landowner.
Rev. Frederick Wood, vicar.
Osman Ricardo, Esq., magistrate and landowner.
Rev. Morris Burland, assistant curate.
John Wood, Esq., landowner and occupier of 300 acres.
Mr. Henry Thomson, owner of 160 and occupier of 600 acres.
Mr. T. Holloway, occupier of 350 acres.
Mr. John Hill, sen., landowner.
Mr. Joseph Hill, occupier of 200 acres.
Mr. John Hill, jun., occupier of 200 acres.
Mr. C. Cooke, solicitor.
Mr. G. Crooke, occupier of 100 acres.
Mr. J. Randal, occupier of 100 acres.
Mr. J. Hatton, tanner and guardian.
Mr. H. Turner, schoolmaster.
Mr. H. Simmonds, occupier of 100 acres.
Mr. J. H. Frowde, landowner.
Mr. R. Cromwell, chemist.
Mr. F. Thomson, occupier of 200 acres.
Mr. E. T. Ferris, draper.
Mr. T. Jauncey, relieving officer.
Mr. Chas. Tunnicliffe, clerk to the board of guardians.
Mr. C. Clark, owner and occupier of 100 acres.
Mr. E. Wilcox, exciseman.
Mr. E. Pocock, grocer and occupier of 200 acres.
Mr. H. Hartland, grocer and occupier.
Dr. Cooke, medical practitioner.
Mr. A. Hartland, occupier of 250 acres.
Mr. T. Hartland, occupier of 100 acres.

From Oxenhall and Pauntley—

Rev. T. P. Little, incumbent.
Mr. J. Butler, of Pauntley Court, occupier of 300 acres.
Mr. R. Niblett, occupier of 100 acres.
Mr. F. Thurston, occupier of 150 acres.
Mr. T. Wigley, overseer.

The chair was taken by Richard Foley Onslow, Esq.

The principal landowners in Newent are R. F. Onslow, Esq., John Wood, Esq., Mr. John Hill, Mr. Thomas Hook, Mr. John Hook, O. Ricardo, Esq., Mr. J. H. Frowde, Mr. W. J. Phelps, Mr. Henry Thomson, Mr. T. Holloway, &c. There are also a great many small proprietors. There would be upwards of 50 farms, ranging in size from 350 acres down to 25, and some even as small as 10.

There is generally a sufficient supply of labour resident in the parish, and in fact there are men of a certain class, and that not the most satisfactory, who are often out of employ; but the case of one farm was mentioned where, owing possibly to a deficiency of cottages (there being only two attached to 250 acres), the farmer has to import labour. It is believed, however, that considerably more labour goes out of the parish than comes into it. There is a large number of men who are employed in the woods, and who take harvest work elsewhere.

There is a sufficient supply of cottages, but they might be more conveniently distributed. Mr. Holloway believes that on his side of the parish a dozen more cottages than exist are required.

The cottages vary considerably in condition; some are satisfactory, others very much the reverse. A large proportion of them belong to small proprietors, and a good many are freehold, having been erected on the waste. They are generally well supplied with gardens. There are perhaps 40 or 50 acres of field allotments, mostly let in quarter-acre, but a few in half-acre parcels. The rent of the cottages ranges from 1*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. The average rent would be 5*l.*; in some instances the rent is as high as 8*l.*, but there would be a larger extent of land attached to the tenancy, as much perhaps as an acre.

There are five public elementary schools in the parish:—

(1.) A National school, in two departments, under Government, taught by a master and mistress, both certificated, held in an excellent building, and supported at an annual cost of about 200*l.* There are about 300 names on the register and an average attendance of 170. The summer is the season in which the school is fullest, owing to the distances which the children have to travel and the state of the ways. The income of the school is only raised with some effort.

(2.) A small school at Clifford's Mesne, under an untrained mistress, with 35 children on the register and an ordinary attendance of 30. The school is maintained at an annual cost of 30*l.* The mistress is said to be very efficient; the school acts as a feeder to the National school.

(3.) A school of the same character, and answering the same purposes, at Kilcote, attended by about 25 children, and costing about 20*l.* a year.

(4.) A school attached to the Wesleyan chapel, not under Government inspection, attended by about 20 children, who are taught by an elderly woman, at the rates of 3*d.* and 6*d.* a week.

(5.) A school attached to the Independent chapel, attended by from 30 to 40 children. It is taught by a young untrained mistress, It is supported by voluntary subscriptions in addition to the children's pence.

There are four private adventure schools attended by children of a superior class.

There is a night school, attended by about 60 scholars, pronounced by the Government inspector last year to be the best in the district. It is under the superintendence of the curate, assisted by four

other teachers, two of whom are certificated schoolmasters. The chief difficulty in conducting it is the late hour at which many of the scholars, who are carter-boys, leave their work.

In Oxenhall the chief landowner is R. F. Onslow, Esq. There are four or five other proprietors. There are nine farms.

There is a sufficient supply of labour. There are enough cottages, but their condition varies as described in Newent. The rent is about the same as at Newent. They have pretty good gardens, but there are no field allotments.

There is no public day school in Oxenhall, but the children have the privilege of attending the Newent school.

Vhere is a little dame's school with about 15 children, and the Misses Onslow are in the habit of gathering together and teaching about a dozen children twice a week in the room which is used as a Sunday school.

The vicar has a small night school attended by about half a dozen boys.

In Pauntley the chief landowner is Osman Ricardo, Esq. There are four or five other proprietors. There are eight or ten farms.

The supply of labour is sufficient. The cottages are much in the same state as those in Oxenhall and Newent. Very few are attached to the farms or belong to the landowners. They mostly belong either to small proprietors or to the people who occupy them, and these are generally in a very unsatisfactory condition.

Mr. Ricardo maintains a boys' school in Pauntley, attended by from 60 to 70 scholars, under a certificated master. This school justly enjoys a high reputation, is liberally maintained, and attracts scholars from long distances. Mr. Ricardo entirely believes in the attractive power of an efficient school. The girls in the parish attend school either in Newent or at Upleadon.

There is a night school in Pauntley, attended by about a dozen scholars, taught by the vicar and two volunteers. The same difficulty is felt as at Newent in consequence of the late hour at which the boys leave their work; but they are otherwise attentive and anxious to learn.

The land in these parishes varies considerably in quality, passing from clay (rarely strong enough to grow beans) through sandy loam to light drifting sand. About 80 per cent. is under the plough. The annual cost of manual labour is about 25*s.* per acre. About four men, two women, and a boy would be an adequate supply of labour to 100 acres. Female labour is constantly employed on the farms of this district throughout the year. It is valuable to the farmers, and believed to be helpful to the families themselves when they are large. A woman's wage is 9*d.* and 10*d.* a day, and 1*s.* in harvest. They are allowed a quart of cider a day.

The more general rate of wages of an able-bodied man at the present moment is 10*s.* a week, though there are cases in which men are receiving 9*s.*; of course waggoners, shepherds, and cowmen are paid from 2*s.* to 3*s.* a week more, and all have an allowance of from two quarts to a gallon of cider a day. The maximum earnings of an able-bodied labourer in this district in constant employ throughout the year would be from 32*l.* to 35*l.* It is the general practice of the farmers of the district to find work for their constant labourers wet or dry if they are inclined to come and take it.

With regard to the question how to deal with the education of children employed in agriculture,—

It was proposed by Mr. Ricardo, and seconded by Mr. Frowde,

"That no child should be employed in farm labour under the age of 10; and that children having reached that age and earning wages should be required to attend school for 40 days during the winter between the ages of 10 and 12."

The resolution was carried unanimously.

The meeting were strongly impressed with the feeling that in any attempts to elevate the social condition of the people, the state of the labourer's home, and the needless multiplication of houses licensed to sell intoxicating drinks are two points imperatively requiring to be dealt with before any considerable improvement of that condition can be expected.

Signed on behalf of the meeting,

RICHARD FOLEY ONSLOW, Chairman.

Jan. 27, 1868.

The following paper was handed to the assistant commissioner at the conclusion of the meeting:

"In regard to a resolution passed at a meeting held in the town hall, Newent, on the 27th day of January 1868, for the parishes of Newent, Oxenhall, and Pauntley, for the purpose of considering how best to promote the education of the children of the agricultural labourer, we the undersigned feel assured that if an Act of Parliament should be passed simply prohibiting the employment of any child in agriculture under 10 years of age, there would not be in consequence of such Act, a single additional child under education at any of the day schools in this district.

MORRIS BURLAND H. BURLAND, Curate of Newent.
CHARLES TUNNICLIFF, Certificated Schoolmaster.
JOSEPH WILKS, Certificated Schoolmaster.
ELEANOR SUMNER, Certificated Schoolmistress.
HENRY TURNER, Certificated Schoolmaster."

No. 96. Meeting of labouring men at Newent Vicarage.

Wednesday, January 29, 1868.

Present at Meeting:

Rev. F. Wood, vicar of Newent.
Christopher Preedy, married, with six children.
William Griffin, married, six children.
Joseph Beale, married, eight children.
George Lewis, married, six children.
Richard Braid, married, nine children.
Thomas Jones, married, six children.
George Ainge, married, seven children.
George Phillips, married, four children.

The chair was taken by the Rev. F. WOOD.

Wages in this district are 10*s.* a week. Carters get 11*s.* and 12*s.* Wm. Griffin is a cowman; he has 9*s.* a week, and his house (worth 1*s.* 3*d.*) rent free, with 16 perches of garden ground.

Women get 8*d.*, 9*d.*, and 10*d.* a day. Boys get 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a week for crowkeeping; and 2*s.* to 3*s.* a week as carter boys. There are a good many carter boys who get no more than 2*s.* a week. A carter boy would be expected to get to his work between 5 and 6 a.m., and perhaps does not leave off till between 7 and 8. George Lewis has a boy turned 12, who is so tired with his day's work that, though he goes to night school, it is as much as he can do to get there. The hours are too much for little boys, but they can't be shortened, and the change that is wanted is to employ bigger boys who can stand the time better. A boy of 14 to 16 would make a deal better carter boy than one of 12 or 13. Then, as to crowkeeping, the lads get off to play, and an old man with a gun would be much more useful.

None of the men present would like their girls to work on the land. They should be kept at school and then go to service. There is not such a good chance to get a young girl into a farmhouse for her first place as there used to be. The farmer's wife wants an experienced servant, and often the only first place a young girl can get into is a public house.

It is the custom in this part of the country to pay part of the wages in cider. The general quantity is three quarts a day; when the farmer is short of fruit the cider is often half water. When at its best it is not worth more than 1*d.* a quart.

Gloucester.

Rev. J. Fraser.

a.

The men present, with one exception, would prefer their allowance of cider to an extra 1*s.* 6*d.* in wages. When a man's day's work is from 12 to 14 or even 16 hours a day, his drop of drink along with his bread and cheese is very comforting.

Just now flour is so dear that there's not much cheese to be got, nor meat; there are a good many families that have not got bread enough. A family of eight will use from three pecks to a bushel of flour in the week, and the week's wages won't pay for that with flour at 11*s.* 6*d.* The men, therefore, are obliged to run in debt in the winter, which they try to pay off in the summer. A man was a good deal better off with wages at 8*s.* and flour at 7*s.* or 8*s.* a bushel than he is now.

The men present pay the following rent for their cottages: Christopher Preedy, 4 guineas for a cottage with two bedrooms, out of repair very bad, with about 25 perches of garden, ground very good.

Joseph Beale, 5*l.* for a cottage with two bedrooms, very much out of repair, wattle and dab, with the walls all to pieces, with 16 perches of very good garden ground. He has been in it 15 years; and he thinks there has been about 7*l.* or 8*l.* laid out in repairs.

George Lewis pays 6*l.* for a cottage with two chambers, in middling repair, built of brick and slated, with 35 perches of pretty good garden.

George Phillips pays 5*l.* 5*s.* for a cottage with only one bedroom (a large one). The cottage is a good deal out of repair; the garden is very small, about 12 perches, but of good land.

Wm. Griffin has his cottage rent free, but it is reckoned worth 1*s.* 3*d.* a week. There are two bedrooms and about 16 perches of garden. The cottage is in good repair.

George Ainge has his cottage rent free. It has two small bedrooms and about 16 perches of garden. It is in pretty fair repair.

The men all feel that there ought to be three bedrooms to a cottage wherever there is a large family.

A quarter of an acre is about as much garden ground as a man can cultivate in his own time; but if his master could spare him occasionally for a day of two, he could occupy half an acre profitably. If a man has a good garden close to his cottage it is much better for him than an allotment at a distance. The men think cottage rents in this district are too high for the wages they receive.

None of the men present lose any time by reason of weather; but there are masters in the neighbourhood who do send their day labourers (but not their carters or cowmen) back on a wet day. These are not the masters a man would work for if he could help it.

The men think that an able-bodied man in constant employment throughout the year would earn at the rate of about 11*s.* a week, exclusive of drink, which would be worth 1*s.* 6*d.* a week more.

Of the six farm labourers present three were no scholars, two could read a little, only one could read and write. The two men who can read "a little" picked up that they knew at Sunday school.

The men present say they couldn't pay their way, pay rent, buy food and coal and clothes out of 10*s.* a week unless their wives went out to work occasionally. But they know it is not all profit; if a woman earns 4*s.* a week, it is not more than half profit. If their wages were enough to maintain their families on, they would rather their wives did not go out to work at all. They don't consider turnip pulling, or dung spreading, or helping the steam thrasher proper work for a woman to do, but she can hoe wheat or turnips, make hay, help her husband in harvest, pick fruit, &c. If it could be helped, a woman, where there is a family, had better not go to work at all except in haymaking or to help get the corn in at harvest.

All the men desire their children to be good scholars. As far as they know, what is taught in the schools is what they would like their children to learn. They would like them all to be able to read, to write, and cipher. One man said that he thought it was money in any man's pocket who had a family to have his children at school instead of at home. They don't feel that there is any hardship in being called upon to pay 1*d.* a week for a child's schooling. They think that no child ought to go to work before he is 10 years of age; but at the present price of flour and rate of wages it would be very hard, when there was a large family, if a labouring man were compelled to maintain his children at school up to that age. Joseph Beale has six children at home (with only one boy earning 1*s.* 6*d.* a week and his victuals), and he is running into debt to maintain them.

They think that if the law were to prohibit children's labour under a certain age, most people would send them to school of their own accord without compulsion. People have got to value education more than they used to do.

FREDERICK WOOD, Chairman.

E. ANSWERS to the COMMISSIONERS' CIRCULAR of INQUIRIES on the EMPLOYMENT of PRIVATE GANGS.

1. "The system exists so rarely, and employs so few together, as not to be worth mentioning."—*Rev. H. Howes, Spixworth, St. Faith's.*

2. "Occasionally, to a small extent, for planting beans, picking stones, picking twitch grass, and weeding corn. Their conduct is generally orderly, and we are not aware of any moral evil or hardship as the system is carried out in this parish. We think, therefore, that legislation is unnecessary. The usual hours of work on the land would not exceed eight hours."—*Rev. J. Stevenson, and Messrs. J. Mickleburgh and F. Dix, Dickleburgh, Depwade.*

3. "The employment of children, young persons, and women is so intermittent that even private gangs are said not often to be employed. Some years twitch abounds, and then I have seen 20 or 30 boys, girls, and women engaged in collecting and burning this in one large field. The sexes are sometimes mixed, sometimes kept apart. In the former case there is a terrible destruction of modesty. I consider that the recommendations made by the Commissioners in reference to public gangs should be applied to private gangs also."—*Rev. G. T. Hall, Hempnall, Depwade.*

4. "There are 12 males between 10 and 13, and 4 males between 13 and 18; 14 married, and 8 unmarried females over 18 employed in private gangs in this parish. Their day's work is from 8 to 10 hours. The sexes usually work apart. The demand on their physical powers certainly does not injuriously affect their health or constitution, nor are they subject to any ill-treatment. The evils complained of in reference to public gangs do not exist here in private gangs. I think that recommendations viii. and x., viz., 'that restraint should be placed on the practice 'of employing females in weeding high wet corn,' and 'that a certain amount of school attendance should 'be compulsory on all children from the time of their 'beginning to earn wages by working in a gang,' should be applied to private gangs."—*Rev. Charles Gape, Rushall, Depwade.*

5. "Private gangs exist only on one or two farms, but the farmer pays the girls himself *directly*, who work under a man. The girls are from 16 to 25 years of age, and several of them have had illegitimate children, and are thus incapacitated for service. About six work in a group together. On one principal farm, where some six married and single women work nearly all the year, they have no man to superintend them, but do their work together. There are no boys in these private gangs. The girls have had little education since they were 10 years old. Some can read, several cannot. A night school was opened for them one winter, but did not attract many. In the private gangs on two of the farms in this parish no very young girls are employed. They are chiefly girls who are of damaged character or unfitted for service. I think that similar restrictions to those recommended for public gangs should be brought to

bear on private gangs."—*Rev. Hugh J. Hare, Docking.*

6. "There are some private gangs in this parish, but at the present season of the year (October) they are not embodied. It is therefore impossible to give the information asked for."—*Rev. J. A. Ogle, Rural Dean, Sedgeford, Docking.*

7. "There are no private gangs in this parish. I think that recommendations ii., vi., viii., and x. should be applied equally to public and private gangs [ii. that the age of children employed in the gang should be restricted; vi. that the sexes should be separated." For viii. and x., see above, No. 4].—*Rev. Alexander Thurtell, formerly H.M. Inspector of Schools, Oxburgh, Swaffham.*

8. "The system of private gangs exists in this parish to a small extent. In the summer of last year there was a gang employed, composed entirely of boys, 10 in number, of whom two were under 8; two between 8 and 10; four between 10 and 13; and two between 13 and 18. They were employed in picking twitch close to their homes. Their hours were from 6 in the morning to 6 in the evening. I do not believe that they were subjected to any ill-treatment. The state of their education was deficient."—*Rev. Francis T. Hurst, Ridgewell, Halstead, Essex.*

OPINIONS expressed in the ANSWERS to the QUESTIONS contained in the COMMISSIONERS' CIRCULAR.

A. *On the effect of the employment of females in agriculture, and the possibility or desirableness of restricting it.*

1. "Very decidedly it has a bad effect, and such girls or young women as are employed for any length of time in agricultural labour become unfitted for domestic service, and I think also for domestic duties generally. No female labour should be allowed in the fields between the ages of 13 and 18."—*Rev. Campbell Wodehouse, Alderford (St. Faith's), Norfolk.*

2. "I know of no special employment physically injurious, but it has a bad effect morally, especially when the sexes are not separate. There having been no abuse in this neighbourhood, there is no need of any restriction; but if one should be made it should be limited to females under 13 years of age."—*Francis Parmeter, Esq., Booton (St. Faith's), Norfolk.*

3. "No restriction is needed in this parish."—*Major Bourchier, Felthorpe (St. Faith's), Norfolk.*

4. "Though no special employment injuriously affects females, I personally do not like to see them serving a threshing machine. I consider field work for females (particularly the young) detrimental to their morals, and unfitting them for service—rendering them averse to the restrictions they meet there. I cannot, however, recommend restrictions under present circumstances. Women only get 8*d.* a day, and full-grown men 2*s.*, so that to restrict women altogether would lay a heavy burthen on the farmer; but I myself should like to do so, if feasible; at least, young women."—*Rev. James Shirley, Frettenham (St. Faith's), Norfolk.*

5. "If the young women have been always employed in field work, we consider that it unfits them for domestic duties, and they generally make the worst wives for agricultural labourers. We would recommend that no female under 13 should be employed in field work, and as much as possible no unmarried female under 18 years of age."—*Rev. T. L. Fellowes, Honingham (St. Faith's), Norfolk.*

6. "The girls become rude and unfitted for service, especially if employed in the same field with boys. I would altogether prohibit girls from labour in the fields, and allow married women who had no families at home to take care of to do the work."—*Rev. J. D. Ballance, Vicar, Horsford (St. Faith's), Norfolk.*

7. "Fortunately there are few females employed in farming in this parish, and I think such employment is injurious to their character, and unfits them for domestic duties. I would, however, impose no restriction beyond that of preventing girls under 13 years of age working on the land."—*Mr. J. Minns, Churchwarden, Horstead (St. Faith's), Norfolk.*

8. "It would be advisable, if practicable, to dispense with female labour in agriculture, but it is in most instances indispensable, and we are not prepared to recommend any restriction being placed upon it."—*Rev. N. M. Manby, Rector, and Mr. Thomas W. Gaze, Guardian, Morton-on-the-Hill (St. Faith's), Norfolk.*

9. "Its general effect is to make them unsettled and disinclined to remain either in places of service or in their homes after marriage. So few unmarried girls are employed in this parish, that happily the results in the matter of unchastity are not so glaring as I have seen in former parishes, where more worked together and damaged one another. I do not recommend restrictions by legislation."—*Rev. Thomas Harrison, Rector, Rackheath (St. Faith's), Norfolk.*

10. "Generally speaking, the employment of young females in agriculture is unfavourable to morals and domestic duties. I would prohibit young girls from field labour altogether, but not when grown up and without families requiring care at home."—*Rev. Henry Howes, Rector, Spixworth (St. Faith's), Norfolk.*

11. "I consider females brought up to agricultural employments less fitted for domestic duties than those trained as household servants; but I cannot recommend any restriction, the supply of labour being scarce, and the labourers very improvident."—*Rev. Henry Banfather, Incumbent, Sprowston (St. Faith's), Norfolk.*

12. "I think such employment highly injurious to morals, and also to training for domestic duties. On the score of morals I would allow no young female to be employed."—*Captain Hastings Parker, Magistrate, Swannington (St. Faith's), Norfolk.*

13. "I am not aware of any special employment that injuriously affects females, unless it may be the 'topping and tailing' of turnips in the fields in the bad wet weather of winter. This is bad work, for young females especially. Habitual employment of young females in field work at all seasons and in anything that partakes of the character of a gang seems objectionable; but I do not think that any harm is done by their employment singly or in small groups in lighter work in the spring and summer, as in singling turnips, which is really more suitable work for children than for adults, or the hayfield."—*Rev. W. Howard, Vicar and Chairman of Board of Guardians, Great Witchingham (St. Faith's), Norfolk.*

14. "Unless employed with their husbands, I consider it dangerous to their morals, and very injurious to their training for the discharge of domestic duties, unless such employment be very occasional."—*Rev. P. Rivers de Jersey, Aslacton (Depwade), Norfolk.*

15. "Though no employment in which females are here engaged is physically injurious to them, such employment, if constant, renders them unwilling to submit to the restraints of domestic service, and unfits them for the performance of home duties. I would prohibit the employment of females under 18 years of age, unless accompanied by their mothers."—*Archdeacon Bouverie, Denton (Depwade), Norfolk.*

16. "Their employment on the land would seem to leave sufficient time for proper training for domestic duties. Under existing circumstances in this parish we think legislation unnecessary."—*Rev. J. Stevenson, Rector, and Mr. F. Dix, Guardian, Dickleburgh (Depwade), Norfolk.*

17. "A few words will give my view. The demoralizing effect is fearful. I have known nice promising girls thoroughly corrupted in a month's dibbling or stone-picking. I have often talked the matter over with mothers. The one answer is, we cannot get on without the help. It would be a great thing if no females were allowed to work in the fields. Homes and families would be better looked after, and often

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the married women are the corrupters of the young girls. Still it would be a gain if some restriction as to age were adopted. During the gleaning the women seem in far too many cases to forget all sense of propriety and decorum. I dread the approach of that blessed season almost as much as that of the annual fairs. Often we see 100 waiting to enter a field about to be cleared. The conversation of some depraved ones is listened to and heard by all, and much harm is done."—*Rev. G. T. Hall, Hempnall (Depwade), Norfolk.*

18. "As far as I have had an opportunity of judging, I think that the employment of females in agricultural labour has not a worse effect on their morals than lace-making, glove-making, or any other sedentary occupation."—*Rev. J. H. Mules, Rector, Moulton (Depwade), Norfolk.*

19. "Female labour is necessary, but young females under 18 should be restricted."—*Rev. L. R. Henslow, Rector, Pulham Magdalen (Depwade), Norfolk.*

20. "Young and unmarried females would be better in domestic service."—*Rev. R. Bond, Rector, Pulham St. Mary (Depwade), Norfolk.*

21. "I think it makes them rough and undomestic; the rudeness which gleaning engenders for a time in this case is chronic."—*Archdeacon Ormerod, Rector, Redenhall (Depwade), Norfolk.*

22. "Females employed in agriculture are frequently lax in morals, and consequently more troublesome under control when engaged as domestic servants. There would be far less difficulty in providing repectable servants were young females prohibited working in the fields under the age of 18."—*Rev. C. Gape, Vicar, Rushall (Depwade), Norfolk.*

23. "The employment of females in agriculture, I think, has no injurious effect on their morals or their training for domestic duties; but girls kept too long at field work make slow and awkward servants."—*Rev. J. W. Millard, Rector, Shimpling (Depwade), Norfolk.*

24. "I believe it to be morally injurious to them; in the case of married women it makes them rough and hard, careless of their children's training, and of home duties, which, wearied out with field labour, they have no heart for. In the case of the unmarried, and especially the young, I believe that field labour tends to make them bold in character, leads them into temptation from evil associations, and renders them unfit for household service. I am prepared to recommend that women's work in field labour should be restricted. I would forbid the employment of women under the age of 18, in all field labour, except hay-making."—*Archdeacon Hopper, Starston (Depwade), Norfolk.*

25. "I think that the effect is bad on morals. I should be inclined to prohibit female labour in the fields."—*Rev. F. W. H. Jerrard, Rector, Long Stratton (Depwade), Norfolk.*

26. "We think that the employment of females in agriculture after the age of 13 has a bad effect upon their morals, and is also detrimental to their proper training for domestic duties."—*Rev. W. Wallace, Rector, and J. L. King, Esq., Churchwarden (Chairman of Board of Guardians), Thorpe Abbott's (Depwade), Norfolk.*

27. "I am of opinion that the employment of females in agriculture is detrimental both to their morals and their proper training as domestic servants. I cannot recommend that any legal restriction should be placed upon it, at least at present, as the earnings of the male members of a family are in some cases insufficient unless supplemented by the earnings of the females. But I am strongly opposed to the employment of females in agricultural labour."—*Rev. C. Grain, Rector, Wacton (Depwade), Norfolk.*

28. "Our young people are particularly healthy; but the employment of females in agriculture is injurious to morals, and unfits them for service altogether. The young girls should not be employed in field work under 16 years of age; but I would not prohibit in cases where persons are of the age of 30, 40 or 50, if their living depend upon it."—*Rev. J. B. Winckworth, Curate, Great Bircham (Docking), Norfolk.**

29. "I consider it has an injurious effect on morals, and unfits them for domestic duties. It would be desirable, if possible, to prohibit female labour in the fields altogether, excepting at harvest, but if not, to restrict it to married women, and girls between 10 and 13."—*Rev. O. Sadler, Rector, Brancaster (Docking), Norfolk.*

30. "Employment of girls in agriculture gives them unsettled habits (to say the least), and so, if not otherwise, unfits them for domestic service. And even in the case of married women, field labour is generally thought to be prejudicial to the well-being of families. I should think the total prohibition of female labour in the fields too stringent a measure, but should be glad to see it restricted. I find such to be the opinion likewise of labourers generally in this parish."—*Rev. E. B. Everard, Rector, Burnham Thorpe (Docking), Norfolk.*

31. "I do not think that the employment of females in the fields injuriously affects their health. Several women in this parish are early ruptured, but I think it is more from carrying water, &c. But I am certain that on young girls the effect is most prejudicial to their morals, and proper training for servants. I am of opinion that were no girls suffered to be employed in field labour under 16, the parents of girl families would not suffer such loss as might at first be feared; but would be more likely to get them out early to service. The age of 16 has been suggested by several of our leading farmers."—*Rev. Hugh J. Hare, Curate-in-Charge, Docking, Norfolk.*

32. "Rheumatism among the poor is more commonly caught in the cottages than in the fields. Women who work in the fields are not in general the most respectable, but there are some workers who are of good moral character. The homes of women working in the fields are for the most part neglected. As far as this parish is concerned, however, there is no occasion for restriction. A large occupier in this parish employs no females."—*Rev. E. Oakley, Heacham (Docking), Norfolk.*

33. "It lowers their morals and unfits them for domestic duties. I should prohibit female labour altogether, excepting at hay and corn harvest."—*Rev. N. J. Raven, Thornham (Docking), Norfolk.*

34. "There are employments which injuriously affect females and the young generally. The getting or plucking up turnips and mangolds, which is very heavy work, may strain and even rupture the child or woman, and the hoeing in wheat, mangolds and swedes after rain and heavy dew is injurious. I am most decidedly of opinion that the employment of girls in field work is injurious to their physical development, most prejudicial to their constitution, when they become women, corrupts their moral character both from the nature of the work and the society into which they are frequently thrown, and totally unfits them for domestic service and their domestic duties. I do not think that in this parish and neighbourhood there is the slightest necessity for female labour,

* Mr. Winckworth, in another part of his return, states that he "finds fewer cases of immorality" in his parish "every year;" and add "there is a general improvement going on "here, and during the time, 14½ years, I have held the sole "charge of the parish, I can speak of the morality, education, "health, and comfort of the labouring poor." Corresponding with this improvement are certain facts stated in his return; (1) that no girl under 18 years of age is employed in field labour in Great Bircham; (2) that "many of the cottages have "three bedrooms"; (3) that "there are only about three cases "of overcrowding out of 70 cottages"; (4) that every cottage has a good garden and is let at a moderate rent; and (5) that the landowner, the Marquis Cholmondeley, takes a deep interest in the moral, as well as in the material welfare of the people. There are to be 30 cottages new-built, and 15 re-built, each to have three bed rooms, within the coming three years. If all properties were thus managed, there would soon be a change in the face of England.

except in the time of haymaking and harvest; at all other seasons, it could be dispensed with. If females are employed in the fields, I would prohibit their working in the same fields with men or lads. I would prohibit their being employed in long wheat, barley, or oats, or in fields of mangolds and swedes when wet from rain or heavy dew. I would limit the actual time of labour to 8 hours, and would not allow them to be employed in pulling mangolds or turnips. I would certainly not permit any girl under 16 years of age to be employed in field labour. There might be a hardship in entirely prohibiting female labour, looking to the case of widows, who could not obtain their livelihood in country villages in any other way. If female labour was generally prohibited, a dispensing power might be given to the magistrates, with permission to grant a licence in such cases, and in that of the mothers of large families."—*Rev. W. T. Beckett, Rector, Ingoldisthorpe (Docking), Norfolk.*

35. "Such employment is most injurious in its moral effect, and unfits the women so employed for domestic duties. There are labourers (males) sufficient for our work, except at odd times. I am in favour of restriction."—*Rev. W. M. H. Church, Hunstanton (Docking), Norfolk.*

36. "In this parish scarcely any but women of mature age are employed, and not many of them. There labour is of great use at times, though not absolutely necessary. As no out-door parochial relief is granted to an able-bodied woman, the prohibition of all female labour would deprive some of the means of living."—*Rev. W. L. Hussey, Ringstead (Docking), Norfolk.*

37. "I believe the employment of females in gangs, private or public, to be beyond measure demoralizing, and habitual field work of the ordinary kind, to unfit females for the performance of domestic duties. If a restriction is imposed, I would limit it to females of a defined age."—*Rev. J. A. Ogle, Rural Dean, Sedgeford (Docking), Norfolk.*

38. "Females in small numbers, as on my farm, and under the eye of their mothers, who generally work with them, in my opinion take no harm in any way. It appears to me necessary both for the farmer and the labouring class, that females to a limited extent should be employed in field work."—*Mr. John Williamson, Churchwarden and Occupier, Shernbourne (Docking), Norfolk.*

39. "We do not recommend the employment of females in field work under 16 years of age."—*Rev. Thomas Carpenter, Syderstone (Docking), Norfolk.*

40. "I could not recommend a girl for domestic service, who has been habituated to field work. Under no pretext whatever, should boys be allowed (or men), to work in the same field with females. I have observed that girls lose nearly every feeling of delicacy when they go to field work. Wheat, barley, turnip and mangold hoeing are all very unfit employments for females. I have seen women in a distressing condition after a day's work at wheat or barley hoeing in wet weather. I am strongly of opinion that no girl under 12 or 13 years of age should be allowed to engage in field work of any description, excepting harvest."—*Mr. Thomas Harrison, Certificated schoolmaster, Thornham (Docking), Norfolk.*

41. "It makes them bold, coarse, rude and wild, unfits them for domestic service, and is destructive of all tidy, notable, housewifely ways, with the needle and in the home. In view of the two considerations of the demand for labour in this parish and the pecuniary resources of the agricultural labourer, I am quite prepared to recommend the placing restrictions on the employment of female labour. Many, if that alternative were closed to them, would be spurred on to do better. Debarred from field labour till 15, they would, if good for anything, be then beyond the danger of it; those only would fall into it, who proved fit for nothing else. I would gladly see none but married women employed in field labour at all; but I would hardly venture to prohibit female labour in the fields, except perhaps until the age of fifteen."—*Rev. E. S. Stocker, Rector, Titchwell (Docking), Norfolk.*

42. "Female labour, except at hay and corn harvest, should be altogether prohibited."—*Rev. C. Stephenson, Waterden (Docking), Norfolk.*

43. "Perhaps such employment cannot be considered injurious to their morals, though it cannot fail to interfere with their proper training for domestic duties. I would not prohibit female labour altogether, but limit the restriction to females of a defined age."—*Rev. B. Edwards, Rector, Ashill (Swaffham), Norfolk.*

44. "It has a tendency to unfit them for domestic duties. I would limit their employment to a defined age."—*Rev. G. R. Winter, Rector, East Bradenham (Swaffham), Norfolk.*

45. "The employment of females in agricultural work seems to me injurious to their morals, and fatal to their subsequent fitness for domestic duties. I would prohibit it altogether except at hay and corn harvest."—*Rev. L. Morgan, West Bradenham (Swaffham), Norfolk.*

46. "The special employment that injuriously affects females is getting wet in the winter among the turnips. Once in field labour, they are never fit for domestic servants. I would not recommend their being employed, except in hay or corn harvest."—*Rev. C. Taylor, Rector, Great Cressingham (Swaffham), Norfolk.*

47. "The early employment of young females in the fields unfits for domestic duties. I think some restriction as to age might be put upon their employment. Limit the age to 16 years. If female labour were entirely restricted, many women (adults) could hardly exist, as there is no other employment for them."—*J. T. Mills, Esq., Landowner, Little Cressingham (Swaffham), Norfolk.*

48, "Weeding in wet corn, and generally exposure to much wet or cold, affect females injuriously. I have scarcely known an instance in this parish of a young woman working on the land, and remaining virtuous. I think neither the farmers nor the labourers would take much harm from the non-employment of females in field work. I would allow no female under the age of 20 to work on the land."—*Rev. Charles W. H. H. Sidney, Gooderstone (Swaffham), Norfolk.*

49. "I think, generally speaking, it has an injurious effect upon their morals, and there is no doubt that it utterly unfits them for domestic service, and the duties of wives and mothers. It would be a happy thing if female labour could be prohibited altogether, excepting at hay and corn harvest, and there should be some restriction placed upon the employment of females in field work. But, in the case of large families, some hardship would attend it."—*Rev. H. Milne, Rector, Holme Hale (Swaffham), Norfolk.*

50. "For females, the weeding high corn in spring and the work for mangolds in the autumn, are very unsuitable, and even injurious to health. The moral effect, too, is very injurious, when they are employed in numbers together, especially; and when not under good regulation. The females of very large families *must* be permitted to work, in order that they may live. In other cases, I am disposed to say, that girls under 16 should not be permitted to work in the fields at all."—*Rev. A. Thurtell, Rector, Oxburgh (Swaffham), Norfolk.*

51. "Weeding high wet corn injuriously affects females. I think their employment on the land in some degree injurious to their morals, and more so to their proper training for domestic duties. But I should not recommend any direct restriction."—*Rev. W. H. Parker, Rector, Saham Tony (Swaffham), Norfolk.*

52. "They are rougher in manner; are often seduced; and if this does not take place, they are found to be more awkward than others in learning and performing household work, and mistresses are shy of taking them. But I consider the work rather beneficial, physically. I would limit restriction to the employment of all females under 18; it would

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make the younger ones and the parents keener for employment as servants, and confine the field labour to those who for sufficient cause have found domestic service closed against them, and to the married."—*Archdeacon Wise, Stanford (Swaffham), Norfolk.*

52. "I do not consider that the employment of females in field labour injuriously affects their health, on the contrary. But I do not employ women myself and wish others did not; domestic servants are more difficult to obtain in consequence. I am not, however, prepared to recommend restriction being placed on such employment, because other employment often is not open to females, *who must live.*"—*Thomas Barton, Esq., Landowner and Occupier, Threxton (Swaffham), Norfolk.*

53. "Working in the fields makes girls unmanageable in school, unfits young persons to become domestic servants, and prevents married women from devoting themselves sufficiently to domestic duties. There are objections to it at all ages, but I am not prepared to recommend legislation on this subject. The number of women and girls employed in agricultural work in Earl's Colne is much less than it used to be."—*Rev. Samuel Blackall, Vicar, Earl's Colne (Halstead), Essex.*

54. "I have but small experience, but do not think the effect likely to be favourable. Unless, however, the females had other employment, restriction would be a pecuniary hardship. The women and girls here are chiefly employed in straw-plaiting."—*Rev. W. Webster, Rector, Colne Engaine (Halstead), Essex.*

55. "There is only one woman who works on the land in this parish," out of a population of 400, and on an area of 1,419 acres.—*Rev. G. J. Taylor, Vicar, White Colne (Halstead), Essex.*

56. "We have no females employed in field labour." Population, 450, acreage, 1,929.—*Rev. E. S. Corrie, Vicar, Great Maplestead (Halstead), Essex.*

57. "I do not think that any females are employed in agriculture in this parish." Population 795, acreage, 1,717. "I think such employment should be prohibited altogether, excepting at hay and corn harvest."—*Rev. Francis T. Hurst, Vicar, Ridgewell (Halstead), Essex.*

58. "I have not the least doubt it must affect them very injuriously as regards both morals and their proper training for domestic service. But our wages are low, and are eked out by straw plaiting. When there is no demand for this, or if it should be stopped by the 'Workshop Act,' I do not think they could live on present wages. I would define an age, if a restriction is imposed, excluding the young women, where men work also."—*Rev. John Forster, Rector, Stambourne (Halstead), Essex.*

59. "We should not allow weeding in high wet corn. It would injure the corn, if not the weeders. The thing is not done. It is very seldom here that a woman is employed in field work, but I should not think much of its good as a training for domestic servants. Nor should I deem it good for morals, but I think the sauntering and gossiping habits of the straw plaiter no better. I do not foresee occasion for female field labour being restricted at all here. Were they to be generally employed, I would restrict that of women as well as of children. Women here do not do harvest work."—*L. J. Way, Esq., Landowner and Magistrate, Tilbury (Halstead), Essex.*

60. "No women are employed in agriculture here." Population, 307, acreage, 920.—*Rev. J. Gaselee, Rural Dean and Rector, Little Yeldham (Halstead), Essex.*

61. "It does them more harm than good. I would prohibit the employment of unmarried women and girls over 15 years of age."—*Rev. B. L. Clarke, Little Braxted (Witham), Essex.*

62. "I am of opinion that much evil results from young girls being employed in agriculture from 13 to 18 years of age; frequently great immorality."—*Rev. G. P. Bennett, Vicar, Kelvedon (Witham), Essex.*

63. "No injury has followed, as far as I have observed. The young girls generally work with their parents. The employment of females on the land exists to so small an extent here, that I am not prepared to recommend any restriction being placed upon it."—*Rev. A. Snell, Vicar, Feering (Witham), Essex.*

64. "We have not found it demoralizing, but as a general rule, those females who have been much employed in out-of-door labour, do not make the best domestic servants. I should greatly prefer that none of the young women in my parish were so employed."—*Rev. James Hoare Masters, Vicar, Lower Beeding (Horsham), Sussex.*

65. "Few of our women ever work in the fields, and then only at weeding or haymaking in the fine weather."—*Captain E. J. Bunny, Magistrate and Landowner, Slinfold (Horsham), Sussex.*

66. "I am glad that women are not employed in field labour with us; were it otherwise, I should be glad to see any restriction placed on their employment. The mother and wife cannot be taken from home duties without damage. The girls go out to farm-houses very much too early as domestic servants. I fear they are not always carefully looked after. There is sad immorality amongst young women."—*Rev. A. H. Barwell, Incumbent, Southwater (Horsham), Sussex.*

67. "The number of women employed, exclusive of hay, corn, and hop harvests, is exceedingly small; average, two on a farm of 200 or 300 acres; the largest number I have heard is three. They are all women, over 18, no young persons or (female) children. They are only employed occasionally at hoeing, weeding, and (principally) hop-tying. They all live on or near the farms on which they work, and their working hours are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. There is no injurious demand on their physical powers, nor in the course of my experience (21 years) has any case of ill-treatment come under my cognizance. I ought perhaps to mention that some of our lowest class of women with their children (girls and boys) are occasionally, in the winter months, employed in bark-scraping, or, as it is called here, 'tan-flawing.' These are not employed by the farmers, but by the persons who buy the timber. It appears to me upon the whole that, were all agricultural districts similarly circumstanced to our own, there would be no sufficient case for demanding legislative restriction."—*Rev. J. H. Vidal, Vicar, Chiddingly (Hailsham), Sussex.*

68. "The most suitable employment for females on the farm is weeding the corn in the spring. Any legislative restriction is unnecessary, and would be felt by the labourers to be most oppressive and unjust."—*Mr. Wm. Mannington, Occupier, Laughton (Hailsham), Sussex.*

69. "It is not thought to have any injurious effect, and I am not prepared to recommend that any restrictions should be placed upon it."—*Rev. G. Rainier, Ninfield (Hailsham), Sussex.*

70. "Work in the hop gardens does not unfit females for domestic service. Other work does, except perhaps hay-making. The conversation in hop gardens is sometimes demoralizing. I am not prepared to recommend restriction."—*Rev. G. E. Haviland, Warbleton (Hailsham), Sussex.*

71. "I think the effect on morals must be bad where men and women work constantly together, and must tend to unfit girls for domestic service. But as only two married females are employed in this parish, I do not see the need of restriction in this case. I do not think it right that young girls should work in the fields."—*Rev. Henry C. Bones, Binsted (Westhampnett), Sussex.*

72. "Where a woman has no home ties, it would be a hardship to debar her from doing a day's work. No females work constantly on the land in this parish."—*Rev. J. W. Miller, Birdham (Westhampnett), Sussex.*

73. "In a small parish like this, no ill effect can arise from such a cause, not more than one or two women being employed together in a field, and that for only a few days at a time, and at intervals of

months between each time. Of course, in large parishes, and in the case of men and women working in fields together, the effects must be most injurious, if one only takes into consideration the conversation usual under such circumstances; but situated as this parish is, I have never had reason to look upon the little field work which the women have as objectionable, but on the contrary I have noticed that it has had a beneficial effect upon their health, by way of a change from the confinement of their home."—*Rev. E. Stansfield, Donnington (Westhampnett), Sussex.* [The relieving officer of the district spoke to me in praise of the extreme "tidiness" of the women in this parish.]

74. "Females rarely go out to field labour, except a few in harvest. In harvest, the work is usually undertaken *by families*, and is altogether unexceptionable."—*Rev. M. Parrington, New Fishbourn (Westhampnett), Sussex.*

75. "I am not aware of any evils arising from their employment in this parish. I can see no objection to the labour of females, if of a light kind, such as weeding, root-trimming, &c. Spreading dung, driving horses, &c., are most objectionable, but women are not so employed here now, though they were to some extent about 15 years ago."—*Rev. Henry Legge, Rector, East Lavant (Westhampnett), Sussex.*

76. "Mothers having young children are better at home, but, as for those without young children, the proper accomplishment of home duties depends entirely on the character of the woman, and whether she has been in domestic service or not. As to morals, there is no difference, but those who have been in domestic service have better manners. Certainly I am not prepared to recommend restrictions being placed on field labour of women. Many females are all the better for out-door work, *i.e.*, as to their health and offspring. Bonelace workers, straw plaiters, and factory girls and women have not the good health and strong muscle of the agricultural girls and women; and earnings are needed, as well as labour."—*Rev. A. P. Birrell, Vicar, Oving (Westhampnett), Sussex.*

77. "The domestic duties must be neglected, and consequently the young children of such women are neglected also, and are the most troublesome, when grown up. St. Paul says that young women should be 'keepers at home.' I would restrict all female labour to hay and corn harvest."—*Rev. F. A. Bowles, Singleton (Westhampnett), Sussex.*

78. "I do not know any case where the health has been injured; the hardest working woman here says, 'It is far lighter work in the fields than at the washtub.' The hardest work is the harvesting by piece-work. I have known women go out to that sort of work too soon before or after childbirth; then it would be dangerous, but no injury has actually happened. Speaking of what I see here, *i.e.*, in a small, well-ordered parish, no ill effect follows, but generally I should say that the effect on morals and domestic training must be bad. I think that girls under the age of 18 or 20 should not be so employed, there is no necessity for it. But as regards married women without families at home to engage them, it would be hard to debar them. It seems that the women are now less inclined to field work than they were. Hay and corn harvest work should be allowed, whatever other restriction might be made."—*Rev. G. Gaisford, Tangmere (Westhampnett), Sussex.* [At Singleton I was told of two cases of miscarriage that had occurred out of circumstances similar to those to which Mr. Gaisford has referred].

79. "In my opinion the effect upon young females must be decidedly injurious as regards their morals. It gradually deprives them of feminine modesty, and is certainly an unsatisfactory training for domestic service. I have heard the elder women affirm that they gain nothing by their labour in the end, as their domestic duties and comforts suffer by their habitual absence from home. As far as this parish is concerned, there is no special need for legislation, as so few women work in the field. I should think, as a general rule, the labour of women cannot be dispensed with altogether, for instance, in swede-trimming, weeding, &c., as in this they perform an equal task with a man at a much smaller rate of remuneration."—*Rev. W. D. Underwood, West Wittering (Westhampnett), Sussex.*

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80. "We would restrict the employment of females in field work till 15 years of age."—*Messrs. Charles Turk and George Radway, Churchwardens, Barnsley (Cirencester), Gloucester.*

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81. "The females employed in this parish are all married women, the girls are all engaged in domestic service. I do not recommend any restriction."—*Rev. G. F. Master, Rector, Baunton (Cirencester), Gloucester.*

82. When young females are employed, it would be desirable they should have an elderly female with them. The young girls, generally, on leaving school, go out as domestic servants. We think that girls under 18 should not be employed in field work, excepting at hay making and harvest."—*Mr. R. White Winning, Churchwarden and Guardian, Brimpsfield (Cirencester), Gloucester.*

83. "Females who have worked on a farm more readily obtain situations as domestic servants than those who have been bred or brought up in the town. I do not recommend restriction. Not half the number of women are employed in the fields now that were 20 years ago, and that number is gradually decreasing."—*Mr. James Newman, churchwarden, North Cerney (Cirencester), Gloucester.*

84. "The effect is decidedly injurious both in respect of morals and of training for domestic duties. I would prohibit all female labour out of doors altogether in winter, and at all times on work that is clearly unsuited to women."—*Rev. W. W. Liddell, South Cerney (Cirencester), Gloucester.*

85. "No young females are employed in farm labour in this parish."—*Rev. Thomas Atkinson, Curate, Colesbourne (Cirencester), Gloucester.*

86. "Field work renders the girls disinclined and unfit for domestic service; and the married women neglect their home duties. I would only allow it at hay and corn harvest."—*Rev. Thomas Hayes, Duntisbourne Abbotts (Cirencester), Gloucester.*

87. "The employment of females in agriculture decidedly, as a rule, is objectionable, both in its effect on morals and on training for domestic duties. But my opinion is to let it alone."—*Rev. J. Wilson, Meysey Hampton (Cirencester), Gloucester.*

88. "We have no instance of *young* women at work except at haymaking, but women are employed generally. I think it would be better for the women not to be out all day in the fields, and not to be thrown together with men at work so much. I am glad to get the girls out to service at once. I am not able to recommend any restriction, as the wages of the men are so low."—*Rev. B. Mallam, Rector, Poole Keynes (Cirencester), Gloucester.*

89. "So very few young females are employed in agriculture in this parish that I cannot say it has any bad influence on their morals. I do not recommend restriction."—*Rev. C. Fawcett, Somerford Keynes (Cirencester), Gloucester.*

90. "In my parish, as a rule, the parents and children are generally at work together, and consequently are protected from moral injury; and there is no female under 18 employed regularly—only at special times. My opinion is that *mothers* should stay at home and mind the house, and that the wages of the husband should be sufficient to support himself, wife, and young children. This restriction would amount to a prohibition to female labour in my parish and in this neighbourhood, as most, if not all, the young women are employed as domestic servants in and about Cheltenham."—*Rev. Thomas Wolstencroft, Rector, Syde (Cirencester), Gloucester.*

91. "Young females are never encouraged to take field work. Cheltenham and a general prosperity in the neighbourhood attract them to domestic service.

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When married they generally take to field work. I would not recommend restriction; leave it to themselves. The farmers want female labour, and it is not desirable to interfere with it. If anything be done—of the expediency of which I have grave doubts—for physical reasons no girl ought to accept field labour until she is 15."—*Rev. F. W. Hohler, Winstone (Cirencester), Gloucester.*

92. "Milking in the yards where there is a herd of cattle is found in my long experience injurious to morals. I wish this were restricted to men and boys; better still to men only. When there are children the earnings of the women cannot be given up. How can clothing, especially shoes, and food be provided sufficiently without earnings by wife and children? Men's wages average about 12*s.* per week when dry weather."—*Rev. Thomas Murray Browne, Vicar, Almondsbury (Thornbury), Gloucester.*

93. "I consider that young women are exposed to much that is objectionable in going to the fields with the men for the purpose of milking, and also in milking with the men in the farmyard; but I see no remedy for the evil, except not to allow women to milk where there are more than five or six cows."—*Rev. R. W. Vigors, Aust (Thornbury), Gloucester.*

94. "I do not conceive that such occasional employment of females as is only known hereabouts has any injurious effects. No restriction is necessary."—*Rev. W. J. Copleston, Rector, Cromhall (Thornbury), Gloucester.*

95. "I do not think there is anything especially to affect their morals. The milkmaids generally milk in company with the men; but generally the master or daughter, or some trustworthy person, is present to take care that the work goes steadily on and that order is kept. I do not consider that restriction is at all needed here. Field labour is so little practised by females that there is no scope for remark. If a child goes to the fields to help to pick stones, or such like, it is almost always in company with its mother."—*Rev. Sir E. H. V. Colt, Bart., Hill (Thornbury), Gloucester.*

96. "There is scarcely an instance in the parish of a young girl remaining at home with the view of devoting herself entirely to agricultural labour, when of fit age for service. I should say that such employment would tend to lower the tone of the moral character considerably. Many acres of land are let as allotments to the poor, in the cultivation of which the children of families, of both sexes, assist. Total prohibition of female labour in the fields would in such cases be undue oppression; otherwise it would be no grievance. From the above consideration female restriction might be limited to the age of 14 or 15, when girls are of age for domestic service."—*Rev. Robert Hiles, Curate, Olveston (Thornbury), Gloucester.*

97. "Females are seldom employed in this parish except as dairymaids. If a restriction is imposed, which I am not prepared to recommend, I would limit it to females of a defined age."—*Rev. C. Cripps, Stone (Thornbury), Gloucester.*

98. "None but married women are employed, who have generally been in service. I recommend no restriction whatever."—*Rev. H. L. Whatley, Rector and Magistrate, Aston Ingham (Newent), Herefordshire.*

99. "Agricultural labour decidedly unfits girls for domestic service. The restraint of domestic life becomes irksome, and no girl can fail to become masculine and bold by working with men where proper conveniences for retirement of either sex cannot be provided, and there is no restraint over the language used or the topics discussed. I do not recommend restriction, but this opinion is limited to this neighbourhood at the present time; for cases are frequent in which masters have compelled mothers of young families to go out to work, by which the children lose home ties very much, clothes are unmended, food ill-cooked, house uncleaned, and the husband coming home tired finds his wife too tired to make him comfortable."—*Rev. R. P. Hill, Bromsberrow (Newent), Gloucester.*

Norfolk.

100. "I do not think that there is more immorality amongst females employed in agriculture than those otherwise employed. In many cases a certain roughness may be observed, which seems to arise from out-door work. Female labour is absolutely required by the farmers, and the additional wages are as greatly needed by the labourers' families. The only restriction that I should wish to see is that the young married women who have children under 4 or 5 years should be prohibited from out-door work, inasmuch as they leave frequently those even of a younger age under the charge of one not more than 7 or 8, with many risks."—*Rev. W. G. S. Addison, Hartpary (Newent), Gloucester.*

101. "Very few females are employed at all in this parish."—*Rev. E. H. Niblett, Rector, Redmarley (Newent), Worcestershire.*

102. "While young women are employed in agricultural labour they are necessarily altogether without training for domestic duties. I dislike very much the employment of females in field work, except at hay and corn harvest; but I do not see how it can be altogether dispensed with.—*Rev. C. H. Crawley, Rector, Taynton (Newent), Gloucestershire.*

Note.—The above extracts contain every opinion that has been expressed upon this subject in the returns which I have received. Seventeen of the extracts (Nos. 2, 3, 7, 8, 12, 16, 26, 38, 39, 47, 52, 59, 65, 68, 80, 82, 83) are the opinions, wholly or jointly, of laymen; the remainder are the opinions of the clergy, in many cases, however, delivered after consultation with others.

OPINIONS expressed in the ANSWERS to the QUESTIONS contained in the COMMISSIONERS' CIRCULAR.

B.—*Whether any restriction should be placed on the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed in farm labour, or on the number of their hours of work; and to what extent, or with what modifications, it is considered that the principles of the Factory Acts can be adopted in reference to children employed in agriculture, especially with a view to the better education of such children.*

N.B.—The attention of the persons receiving the circular was called to the three modes by which the prescribed amount of school attendance of children employed in trades and manufactures is obtained, viz.:—

By the Factory Act (7 Vict. c. 15. ss. 31–9.).

1. By half day at school and half day at work.
2. By alternate whole days at school and whole days at work.

By the Printworks' Act (10 & 11 Vict. c. 70. ss. 2, 3, 26.)

3. By school attendance for a certain number of hours during the preceding six months.

And they were requested to state which of such modes of enforcing some amount of school attendance would seem most applicable to the circumstances of their parish and neighbourhood; or whether a combination of one or more of them would better meet these circumstances; or whether any other mode they might wish to suggest appeared to them preferable.

COUNTY OF NORFOLK.

ST. FAITH'S UNION.

1. "A boy should not be employed in farm labour till he is 11 years old. I have looked upon this question with a clergyman's eyes, and especially with a view to the boy's education; but the farmers generally would prefer the age of 9.

"The above methods seem quite impracticable in agricultural parishes. But the third would be the best plan of the three—very much according to Lord Shaftesbury's plan."—*Rev. C. Wodehouse, Attlebridge cum Alderford.*

2. "The two first modes are impossible. The third is the only practicable scheme; but in country districts would require to be modified by substituting 12 months for six months."—*F. Parmeter, Esq., Booton.*

3. "No restriction should be placed on the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed in farm labour."

"An evening school is the best mode of securing for such children a better education."—*Mr. Horatio Howlett, Crostwick.*

4. "I should prefer that no boy be sent to labour before 10 years of age. The three suggested modes of obtaining school attendance are impossible and impracticable."—*Rev. Hinds Howell, Rector, Drayton.*

5. "No boy should be employed in farm labour below 8 years of age.

"The establishment of an evening school would be desirable; but compulsory attendance during the day is, as regards agricultural employment, impracticable."—*Major Bourchier, Magistrate, Felthorpe.*

6. "I think nine quite young enough; but to make good labourers they must begin early. Seven hours a day is enough for any child up to 13; but in keeping birds off the corn, in which very young children are occasionally employed, they must be early and late to be of any use.

"I cannot think that any of the modes prescribed under this head are applicable to this parish, though in one instance, in the case of twins, they come to school on alternate days. No enforced attendance is necessary."—*Rev. James Shirley, Rector, Futtenham.*

7. "Ten years."—*Rev. W. A. W. Keppel, Haynford.*

8. "Not under 10 years. We see no reason to limit the hours, considering the age of the children we have recommended, their work being so intimately connected with that of the older labourer.

"Of the three modes suggested we would recommend the third. We have found the quarterly payment for education *in advance* of great benefit in keeping the school in an efficient state."—*Rev. T. L. Fellowes, Vicar, Honingham.*

9. "10 or 11 years. Boys also should be allowed to leave off work sooner during the winter months on condition of regularly attending the evening school; for instance, that they may reach their homes at six o'clock; and the same boy should not be employed in labour on two successive Sundays, but on alternate Sundays.

"Farmers state that if they hire a boy they want his services regularly for a period, and not intermittently; nor is there a sufficient number of boys unemployed to take the places of those at work when sent to school; in fact boys are in request on farms; hence, I prefer the third mode indicated above."—*Rev. J. D. Ballance, Vicar, Horsford.*

10. "Not under 8. I see no reason to restrict the hours. The two first modes are impracticable; the third is desirable and possible."—*Rev. J. G. Tipper, Horsham and Newtown, St. Faith's.*

11. "I would require a certain number of hours of school attendance during the preceding six months."—*Mr. J. J. Minns, Churchwarden, Horstead.*

12. "Boys are of no use under 9. We would not restrict the hours. We do not think it practicable to compel attendance at school after once commencing work."—*Rev. N. Manley and Mr. Thomas W. Gaze, Overseer, Morton-on-the-Hill.*

13. "Certainly boys ought not to be employed under 8. The boys employed here are wanted quite as much in the winter as in the summer. I fear, therefore, that when they once leave off regular attendance at school, there is no plan by which they could be satisfactorily educated. If only the attendance were really regular up to the age to which most are now continued in this school, *i.e.*, 9 or 10 years old, probably reading and writing would be secure. My own experience does not lead me to hope for any solid results from less than six months' constant attendance in case of *agricultural* labourers' children."—*Rev. Thos. Harrison, Rackheath.*

14. "Boys are of little use under 10 in the fields. I consider that the third mode is the only one applicable to agricultural districts."—*Rev. H. Howes, Rector, Spixworth.*

15. "I would require school attendance for certain hours during the leisure months."—*Rev. H. Banfather, Sprowston.*

16. "Not under 9 years of age. The number of hours should be regulated by the labour required; for instance, a boy merely watching stock might be employed the usual working hours.

"The first and second modes would not answer here, and the third would be very difficult to regulate. Something might be done if employers could be induced to adopt a system of tickets or labour-books, so that at the end of the week some check could be kept as to the spare days for school.—*Hastings Parker, Esq., Magistrate, Swannington.*

17. "I do not see any great occasion for interference so far as my own parish is concerned; but no inconvenience would follow from a restriction on very young boys of 8 or 9 years of age.

"The third of the above plans is more practicable than the others, but it must have many difficulties and probably a boy would learn more by a regular continuous attendance at school for three months than by broken, irregular, desultory attendance for the same number of hours spread over six months. The loss of the earnings of boys from 11 to 12 years of age would be seriously felt in many families."—*Rev. W. Howard, Chairman of Board of Guardians, Great Witchingham.*

18. "Ten years. After this age they should be encouraged to attend evening school."—*R. B. Humfrey, Esq., Magistrate, Wroxham.*

Union of Depwade.

19. "I am of opinion that whether it be carried out by legal restriction or otherwise, no boy should be employed in field labour till he can read, write, and do an addition sum. I should like him to be at school till 10 years of age. I would avoid legal restrictions, if possible.

"I am of opinion that the only plan in agricultural districts (if legal restrictions are imposed which I fear would be difficult to carry out), would be that children should be compelled to attend so many hours in the year as should be deemed necessary, at times most convenient to their employers and parents. I am also of opinion that every parochial school, whether in a small parish or a large should be aided by a money grant from Government, to be paid out of the national funds, not by a local rate."—*Rev. Charles Grain, Rector, Wacton.*

20. "Eight years. I think also that some restriction on the hours of work would be wise. I cannot think the half or alternate day system at all desirable or possible; but of the two would prefer the half-day, which I think would answer all *educational* purposes. But I think a certain number of weeks would be preferable."—*Rev. P. R. de Jersey, Aslacton.*

21. "Ten years. If a regular attendance up to the age of 10 years could be secured at the daily school in the case of boys and girls under 18 were not employed in field labour, an evening school for the former and a Sunday school would supply all that is required."—*Archdeacon Bouverie, Denton.*

22. "We think no legislation necessary. They are not employed long hours. If any restriction is made, of the three modes indicated, the last is preferable."—*Rev. G. Stevenson, Messrs. Mickleburgh and Dix, Dickleburgh.*

23. "Twelve years. I cannot see my way clearly on these points, though I am a decided advocate for compulsory education as carried out and enforced in Sweden, Prussia, &c. In too many instances the parents are careless and indifferent, and the farmers are decidedly opposed to educating the poor."—*Rev. J. T. Hall, Hempnall.*

24. "Eight years as to age. I can give no opinion as to hours, nor can I give an opinion upon the best

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mode of securing school attendance."—*Rev. E. N. Rolfe, Rector, Morningthorpe.*

25. "Ten years. I think the best plan is that numbered 3. By the other arrangements, I think they would lose the day they are absent what they gain the day before."—*Rev. J. H. Mules, Moulton.*

26. "I am not prepared to recommend a restriction as to age nor as to hours of work (in this parish). We think the matter of education best left to the parents. In this parish we have no school and no resident clergyman; a great evil."—*Mr. J. B. Pratt, Occupier, Needham.*

27. "Boys should be kept at school till 9. The hours of work here are not excessive. With regard to modes of securing school attendance, No. 3 should be *enforced.* It is utterly hopeless to expect an agricultural labourer to send his children regularly to school."—*Rev. L. R. Henslow, Pulham Magdalen.*

27*a.* "I would place no restriction on age or hours of work. Boys are seldom employed till 10 years of age. I do not think that any of the plans suggested are applicable to this parish. I am of opinion that an evening school is the best supplement to the parish school."—*Rev. R. Bond, Pulham Mary.*

28. "It should be understood that in this parish (one among many) the parents know that they can press for what is quite (I think) a fair payment, as population now stands, and the moment *cheap* labour is at an end, there is no fear of overwork. The real question is not one of work, but of utilizing the time before work-years come.

"In any parish where reliable registers are kept, I would be content with 10 & 11 Vict. c. 70. ss. 2. 3. 26.; where not, I would suggest that the Quarter Sessions should fix a (low) standard, and that the children should be examined, either by the Union house teachers, or actual practising teachers of other schools than where they have attended. Let the magistrate or magistrates settle these details; for every reason not ministers of religion."—*Archdeacon Ormerod, Redenhall.*

29. "I recommend that none under 10 years of age be employed in agricultural labour of either sex, and that children of either sex, from 10 to 13 years, be required to produce a certificate of school attendance for the period of three months during the winter."—*Rev. C. Gape, Vicar, Rushall.*

30. "I do not recommend a restriction of age, nor of hours of work. Of the plans proposed I prefer No. 3. Five months would be better than six. Forbidding any children to work until they could read fairly, which they might well do at 8 or 9, would, I think be very useful."—*Rev. J. W. Millard, Rector, Shimpling.*

31. "I am prepared to recommend that no boy should be employed under 8 years of age. I see no reason from the practice of this parish, nor from the habit of the neighbourhood to restrict the hours of work; they are generally fair. I believe that all the modes laid down under the Factory and Printworks Acts are inapplicable to the circumstances and requirements of farming operations. A boy ought to be kept at school till he has completed 10 years of age, not by a compulsory enactment which I do not advocate, but by an appeal to the good sense and feeling of the employer and parents. At that age he should go to farm labour, to learn the work of his future life. Then his education must be supplemented by the evening school. Girls should remain at school till 13 and then be trained to dairy work and domestic service."—*Archdeacon Hopper, Starston.*

32. "I think that the third mode would alone be applicable in agricultural districts."—*Rev. F. W. H. Jerrard, Rector, Long Stratton.*

33. "Our opinion is that boys should be kept at school till 10 years of age, and afterwards attend evening school during the winter months, and the girls till the age of 13."—*Rev. W. Wallace, Rector, and Mr. John L. King, Churchwarden and Chairman of Board of Guardians, Thorpe Abbotts.*

34. "I am not prepared to recommend a restriction of age; but some of our employers think boys may be dispensed with until 10 years old. Nothing compulsory is needed in my parish. I think efficient teaching will secure good attendance in all parishes of this description."—*Rev. T. W. Thompson, Vicar, Tibbenham.*

Union of Docking.

35. "Boys should not be employed below 10 years of age. The three plans suggested are not practicable. It would be better to keep every boy at school up to the age of 10 years, and then, if required by the farmer, permit him to be employed."—*Rev. J. B. Winckworth, Great Bircham.*

36. "Ten years. The best plan to improve education in an agricultural district is to shorten the hours of labour so as to enable the boys to attend at night schools."—*Rev. O. Sadler, Rector, Brancaster.*

37. "I wish no boy to be employed in farm labour till he can read, write, and cypher. I would name no age but require an education certificate. I should not be inclined to adopt any restriction of the hours of work; the work of children is never laborious. The main object being to secure for the children of the agricultural poor a fair amount of instruction with as little inconvenience as possible to the farmer, I think that object would be best attained by making it illegal to employ boys or girls until they could produce a certificate of sufficient instruction, let their age be what it might. I have ascertained that in this parish both farmers and parents favour this arrangement."—*Rev. E. B. Everard, Rector, Burnham Thorpe.*

38. "I would have none employed under 9 or 10. I think in the three winter months boys should leave off work at 4.30 or 5 at latest. I am of opinion that if boys can be secured till they are 10 years of age, with opportunities afterwards of evening education, there need be no adoption of any half-time system or alternate day, which could not, I think, work advantageously."—*Rev. H. J. Hare, Docking.*

39. "They should not be employed under 10, provided they are at school. I see no reason for restricting the hours of work. The Printworks system seems the only practicable one."—*Rev. E. Oakley, Heacham.*

40. "I would recommend the non-employment of boys under 8. The hours during which they are employed in this parish are reasonable."—*N. J. Raven, Holme-by-the Sea.*

41. "Not under 10 years. Plans Nos. 1 and 2 are quite out of the question for agricultural districts. No. 3, *if carefully arranged,* would answer best, but a good deal of care must be bestowed on it to make it work really well and fairly for all parties."—*Rev. W. M. Church, Hunstanton.*

42. "I certainly would limit the age of the employment of boys, particularly as boy labour is taking the place of man labour. Boys certainly should not be employed below 10, and I do not think 11 or even 12 would be too high a limitation. No boy or girl under 12 years of age ought to work more than nine hours a day, including two hours for meals; no boy or girl under 16, more than 10 hours a day, including two hours for meals; and no woman more than the same time.

"The half-day and alternate day systems are impracticable in agricultural districts, on account of the nature of the work, and the distance children would have to go to and from work and school. The periodic system on education for so many months might apply, but there would be difficulties in carrying it out, especially in the fact that boys who had been for some months in the fields would dislike the restraint and discipline of the school, and would introduce insubordination and disobedience among the other children. The best mode in my opinion would be to limit the age at which they might commence field work to 10 or 12 years of age, to compel their attendance at school up to that time, to force them to pass an examination in simple reading, writing, and arithmetic, to grant them a certificate of having done

so, and then to make the night schools supplementary in maintaining the education they had received."—*Rev. W. T. Beckett, Diocesan School Inspector, Ingoldisthorpe.*

43. "Not to be employed under 11 or 12. I see no need to restrict the hours of work. The half-day and alternate day systems are both incompatible with the demands of labour in this parish. The periodic system would interfere so much with the discipline of the school that I should be very reluctant to adopt it. The best plan which I have heard suggested is enforced regular attendance of children until a certain age, say 11, and requiring a certificate of the child having undergone a sufficient course of instruction before he is allowed to go to field work."—*Rev. J. A. Ogle, Rural Dean, Sedgeford.*

44. "Not under 10 years of age. There is no reason for restricting the hours of work. Mixing school work with field work would not answer any good purpose." — *Mr. John Williamson, Churchwarden, Shernbourne.*

45. "Not under 10 years of age. I would not restrict the hours of work."—*Rev. Thomas Carpenter, Syderstone.*

46. "Not under 10. From 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. seems as much as a boy under 12 or a girl under 13 is equal to. I do not think that any of the indicated plans is applicable to agricultural parishes. I would suggest that if it be penal to employ a boy in field work under 10 or a girl under 12 the boy should attend school from harvest to February, or other slack seasons, or a stated number of days from his 10th to the expiration of his 12th year. As 10 should be the minimum age under which boy labour should be penal both to employers and parents, so the requirements of the 4th Standard ought to be the minimum of instruction before a child finally leaves school. To encourage this would it not be desirable to offer a grant to all schools under uncertificated teachers, *for instruction only*, for passes in the standards, and in such schools to confine the grant to passes in Standards I., II., III., IV." — *Mr. Thomas Harrison, Certificated Schoolmaster, Thornham.*

47. "Ten at least. The work of all girls, if employed at all, should cease at sunset in winter, so as to allow them to reach home before dark. The two first plans are quite impracticable, the third perhaps feasible, but doubtful."—*Rev. E. S. Stocker, Titchwell.*

48. "Not under 12 years of age. I prefer the third method."—*Rev. Charles Stephenson, Waterden.*

Union of Swaffham.

49. "Nine years. I would not restrict the hours of work. It appears to me that the only mode by which school attendance can be enforced is under the Printworks Act, securing such attendance for a certain number of hours during the preceding six months."—*Rev. B. Edwards, Rector, Ashill.*

50. "None of the children in Bodney are employed in agriculture under 12 years of age." — *Rev. E. Tearle, Bodney.*

51. "No boy under 10 should be employed. No need to restrict hours of work. I would suggest that boys should be required to remain at school uninterruptedly up to 10 years of age."—*Rev. G. R. Winter, East Bradenham.*

52. "Not under 10 years of age. No. 3 (Printworks Act) seems preferable."—*Rev. Lewis Morgan, West Bradenham.*

53. "Boys should not be employed under 13 years. I should recommend to keep children wholly at school till 13, and then let them be wholly employed in agriculture."—*Rev. Charles Taylor, Great Cressingham.*

54. "They should not be employed under eight. No restriction of hours of work is necessary. The last mode (Printworks Act) seems the most practicable."—*J. T. Mills, Esq., Little Cressingham.*

55. "I would allow no boy under the age of 10 to be employed in farm labour. I would propose that no child be employed more than six, and no young person more than eight hours a day. I think the principle of half-day at school and half-day at work might be adopted in reference to children employed in agriculture."—*Rev. C. W. Sidney, Gooderstone.*

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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56. "The mode which seems to me preferable is compulsory attendance at school from the age of six to that of 10 for boys, and after that age the boys to be at the unrestricted disposal of their parents for agricultural or other labour, or, if not compulsory attendance at school, boys to be interdicted from labour, which in most cases would ensure their attendance at school."—*Rev. C. Hardy, Hillborough.*

57. "I should say the age of 10. I would restrict the hours of work from 8 to 12 a.m., and from 1 to 6 p.m. during the greater part of the year, shorter time in the afternoon during the winter months. The best mode I should say would be to enforce school attendance for a certain number of hours during the preceding six months."—*Rev. H. Milne, Holme Hale.*

58. "I think they should not be permitted to be so employed before 9 or 10. I do not think restriction of the hours of work necessary. I think a certain number of hours' schooling should be required during the preceding six months."—*Rev. W. H. Parker, Saham Toney.*

59. "Ten years of age. The first two plans are unsuitable, the third not necessary, if the age at which they are allowed to work be fixed. I should recommend a certificate of previous school attendance or proficiency when the child is first permitted to work." —*Rev. A. Thurtell, formerly one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, Oxburgh.*

60. "Not under 10 years. I recommend that boys should not be employed under 10 years of age; no restrictions above that age."—*Mr. Charles Palmer, Vice-Chairman of Board of Guardians, Sporle.*

61. "I would recommend that no boy under eight should be allowed to work. Of boys between eight and ten 150 days' schooling should be required in each year. From 10 to 13 no compulsion should be used to enforce school attendance, but they should be encouraged to attend by a certificate of merit and small pecuniary reward for attending a given number of hours yearly and passing a simple examination. I think no boy under 16 should be allowed to be kept at work the whole seven days of the week, as shepherd's pages often are, and boys in crow-keeping, and feeding stock. I would allow the *encouraged* attendance of which I have spoken for boys between 10 and 13 to be reckoned either in day or night schools." —*Archdeacon Wise, Stanford.*

62. "I do not recommend restriction, but boys under 10 are of little advantage to the farmer, though their earnings are to their parents. No reason to restrict the hours of work. The Factory Acts could not be acted upon; perhaps the best thing would be that the child should attend three months in the winter at school."—*Thomas Barton, Esq., Landowner and Occupier, Threxton.*

63. "With regard to the prison youth, we find that those who have been at school *under* three years know little more than those who have never been at school at all. My impression is that had such been subjected to longer consecutive training at school they would turn out more respectable members of society. Prisoners generally are quick enough to learn, but neglect of early education diverts their mind into a wrong groove."—*Rev. B. Houchen, Chaplain to Swaffham Gaol.*

COUNTY OF ESSEX.

Union of Halstead.

Essex.

64. "Ten years. I do not think that any of the modes of obtaining school attendance of children employed in trades, &c., would be applicable to the circumstances of the agricultural poor in my district. And I believe it would answer better to fix an age (say 10 years) before which children should not be allowed to work in the fields."—*Rev. S. Blackall, Vicar, Earl's Colne.*

Essex.

Rev. J. Fraser.

Sussex.

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65. "Restriction would be a hardship on a large family. The third mode would be best, making the period 12 months, or requiring boys to pass a definite examination, leaving the hours of school attendance undefined."—*Rev. Dr. Webster, Rector, Colne Engaine.*

66. "I think the parents cannot afford to do without the labour of their children. They take their children away from school as soon as they can earn *anything.*" —*Rev. G. J. Taylor, Vicar, White Colne.*

67. "Ten years of age."—*Rev. Duncan Fraser, Rural Dean, Halstead.*

68. "Ten years of age. I think that the third mode would be most applicable to the circumstances of this parish."—*Rev. F. T. Hurst, Ridgewell.*

69. "Not below 10. I think that from 10 to 15 a lad ought not to work more than six hours a day."—*Rev. J. Forster, Rector, Stambourne.*

70. "Ten years to ensure education. I do not see any reason for restricting the hours of work *here*, except for the purpose of education. The work is adapted to the age, strength, and capacity of the child employed. I never knew a child injured by agricultural employment. I find that very seldom is a boy employed under 10 years old. I think if the distance is restricted the work need not be anywhere, reckoning the agricultural day to begin at 6 a.m. and end at 6 p.m. Where children are *under a driver*, as in gangs, the case may be different.

"For this neighbourhood No. 2 would be the best of the three modes given, believing that if No. 1 or 3 were adopted parents would work their children at straw-plait unlimitedly, except while at school, whereas the mode No. 2 would insure some leisure on the school days, supposing *all* work forbidden by law on those days that the children go to school. So few children under 10 years of age are employed on the land in this neighbourhood that the restriction of farm labour under that age would scarcely have any effect. I would not say, omit such restriction; but restriction on the employment of children at braiding or straw-plait is in my opinion the thing needed here. Children are put to this at a very early age."—*Lewis J. Way. Esq., Magistrate, Tilbury.*

71. "Ten years. I do not consider any amount of out-door occupation injurious to boys above 10. I do not consider any of the three modes proposed applicable to a rural population."—*Rev. J. Gaselee, Rural Dean, Little Yeldham.*

Union of Witham.

72. "Not to be permanently employed under 10 years of age; after that to be subjected to no legal restrictions."—*Rev. B. S. Clarke, Little Braxted.*

73. "Not under 10 years. As far as regards this parish I see no reason for restricting the hours of work. I am not in favour of enforcing school attendance."—*Rev. R. Marsh White, Rector, Fairstead.*

74. "Boys should be compelled to attend school till 10."—*Rev. F. Spurrell, Faulkbourne.*

75. "A compulsory system of education would be an infringement on the liberty of the subject, and an undue interference with parental authority. The principles of the Factory Acts cannot be brought to bear on our agricultural parishes. Our schools are well attended, children are not employed at too early an age, and no legislative interference is consequently required. Out of a population of 1,600 there are about 250 children under daily instruction, including the attendance at the Dissenting schools."—*Rev. G. P. Bennett, Vicar, Kelvedon.*

76. "I do not recommend restriction being placed either on the age of boys or on the hours of work. They generally attend school till 10 years of age, and the work is easy and healthful. Of the three modes No. 3 would suit this parish best, because the demand for child labour is periodical, according to agricultural seasons, though the demand is very slight in this parish."—*Rev. Alfred Snell, Vicar, Feering.*

COUNTY OF SUSSEX.

Union of Horsham.

77. "Not under 10. With regard to hours of work there is apparently no need of restriction."—*Rev. James H. Masters, Vicar, Lower Beeding.*

78. "I should recommend that attendance at school should be enforced up to the age of 10, but that above that age the children should be free."—*Rev. J. H. Milne, Rector, Itchingfield.*

79. "No boy should be employed under 10 years. I would not restrict the hours of work. I consider none of the three modes applicable."—*Rev. J. H. Gore (assisted by others) Rusper.*

80. "Boys are not required until 10 years old. The hours of work do not require restriction, unless on the score of education. None of the systems proposed are applicable to this agricultural district. School attendance up to 10 years and then absolute freedom is the only feasible plan."—*E. J. B u n Esq., Magistrate, Slinfold.*

81. "Ten. I do not think that they are now employed below 10, except in two or three cases. I would be quite content if children were unemployed until 10. As a matter of fact, I believe I should secure their attendance after for a time without compulsion. I would rather not have them irregularly or under compulsion after 10."—*Rev. A. H. S. Barwell, Incumbent, Southwater.*

Union of Hailsham.

82. "I would not restrict the age of employment. —*Rev. W. A. Dearsley, Bodle Street Green.*

83. "It appears to me that were all agricultural districts similarly circumstanced to our own there would be no sufficient case for demanding legislative interference. I am of opinion that not one of the three modes suggested for securing a prescribed amount of school attendance would work satisfactorily, or be even practicable in a district like this. But if legislation is attempted at all, I should much prefer that no boy be employed in any kind of farm work until he be 10 years of age, or can produce a certificate signed by some competent examiner of his ability to *read* at least."—*Rev. James Henry Vidal, Vicar, Chiddingly.*

84. "Nine or 10. No restriction on hours of work. Not one of the above modes could come into operation in our parish with any advantage."—*Rev. Henry Geldart, Vicar, and Mr. Edwin Akers, Churchwarden. Hellingly.*

85. "Ten years. No restriction of hours."—*Mr. Joseph Cuthbert, Overseer, Hooe.*

86. "I would restrict neither age of employment nor hours of work, but I think no child should be allowed to go to work under 10 years of age unless he can read, and produce a certificate to that effect." —*Thomas Arkcoll, Esq., Magistrate, Herstmonceux.*

87. "In many instances a restriction on the age of employment would be a serious hardship on the parent. I advise no restriction of hours of work. The usual custom in this parish is to employ children (boys) during the summer, and send them to school in the winter, and this plan answers well."—*Mr. W. Mannington, Occupier, Laughton.*

88. "I am not prepared to recommend restriction of age or of hours. There is no hard labour imposed on children in this parish. But I think no child should be employed in labour until he or she can read intelligibly."—*Rev. G. Rainier, Ninfield.*

89. "Not under 8. As a general question relating to the country generally, we should recommend that restriction should be placed on the hours of work. We would not allow children to be taken from school for work till 10 years of age, unless before this they are able to pass an examination that they can at least read well."—*Rev. E. C. Graham, Vicar, and Mr. W. Tickner, Guardian, Wartling.*

90. "I see no reason for restricting age of employment or hours of work. The third mode is the

preferable one."—*Rev. G. E. Haviland, Rector, Warbleton.*

Union of West Hampnett.

91. "No child or young person should be employed without a certificate of education."—*Rev. George Daniell, Vicar, Aldingbourne.*

92. Ten. The usual plan in this neighbourhood is for boys under 12 to attend school during the winter months, when they are not wanted by the farmers."—*Rev. R. A. L. Nunns, Appledram.*

93. "I would restrict the hours of work to eight hours. If possible, I should prefer No. 2, alternate *whole* days at school and *whole* days at work."—*Rev. A. P. Cornwall, Vicar, Barnham.*

94. "Not before 10 years of age. I think that eight hours a day, one hour of this allowed for dinner, for a boy under 13 years is quite sufficient, but it is a great question if the farmer could get his work done; were this compelled he would require a relay of boys. I cannot think that any of the three ways stated, or a combination, would be found to answer; better let the boy go to school up to a certain age (say 10) and then to work."—*Rev. Henry C. Bones, Binsted.*

95. "Ten years. There is no need to restrict the hours of work here. There is no hardship whatever in the labour of this district. The hardship lies in their being allowed to work at all until qualified by previous schooling. The two first plans are inapplicable, nor is the third much more applicable, unless at evening school. 'Combination' seems impossible here. The only course seems to be the restriction of infant labour without guarantee of previous education. The greatest curse of all would be remission or prohibition of labour without obligation to attend school."—*Rev. J. W. Miller, Rector, Birdham.*

96. "Not under 10. I do not consider either of the three modes applicable to children employed in agricultural labour, and should prefer that no child be employed under 10 years of age."—*Rev. W. Burnett, Rural Dean, Boxgrove.*

97. "Ten years. No restriction on hours of work. We think if boys were kept at school until they were 10 years of age, and the girls to 14, and then left free as to their labour, it would answer the only good purpose."—*Rev. Henry Cogan, Vicar, East Dean.*

98. "I would not restrict the age of employment. I have never heard a complaint of any kind with regard to the number of hours during which the boys are employed here. And I find that after having been at work all day there is no appearance of fatigue or weariness at a singing practice twice a week from 7 till nearly 9 o'clock. Of course there are exceptional occasions. I do not think that either No. 1 or No. 2 could be carried out. I should imagine that the only way of meeting the difficulty would be to insist upon attendance at school until a fair amount of proficiency had been attained in plain reading and writing, and in arithmetic so far as the first four rules applied to money."—*Rev. Edmund Stansfield, Curate, Donnington.*

99. "I see no reason for complaint as to the hours of work in this small parish."—*Rev. J. P. Roberts, Rector, Eastergate.*

100. "No doubt boys in agricultural districts go to hard work much too early, and are injuriously affected thereby both mentally and physically. I don't think the hours are unreasonably long when the work is not of more than average difficulty, and this question is to be asked,—If more leisure were given, what security is there that it would be made good use of? No boy should be allowed to take farm work who cannot read, and who does not attend school, day, or night, or Sunday school, some portion of every week. Here children are very much kept away from school by farmers employing the father only on condition that the children come to work too."—*Rev. M. Parrington, New Fishbourn.*

101. "Ten, and at that age labour to be suited to it. I consider 6½ to 5, the usual hours of work upon the land, too long a time for any child under 15. The first and second plans are useless; such children could not find employers. In the third plan a longer period than six months would be desirable."—*Rev. Henry Legge, Rector, East Lavant.*

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Rev. J. Fraser.

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102. "Not under 10 years of age. No restriction on hours of work. It is recommended that children should attend school regularly until 10 years of age, and after that period there should be no interference."—*Rev. C. D. Holland, Vicar, North Mundham.*

103. "Ten, for labour. Agricultural children are not gentlemen's children, and they must begin young to work and walk. Employ adults instead of young persons and you add to the cost of the products of the farm, and, of course, add to the price to the consumer, the poor as well as the rich. As birds will come upon the land at all hours, upon the newly sown seed and upon the ripening crops, and as manure must be carried out at varying times, and as the sun will shine and the rain will fall, and agricultural work must be proceeded with accordingly, the Factory Acts, with the above three modes of attendance, are altogether unfit for agricultural children. The only, and seemingly the best, mode is *continuous schooling*, say from 5 to 8 or 5 to 10 years of age."—*Rev. A. P. Birrell, Vicar, Oving.*

104. "Not before 10 years of age. I think that children should be kept at school regularly, and without any intermission, till they are 10 years of age, and would trust to night schools or to their own application after that age."—*Rev. F. A. Bowles, Rector, Singleton.*

105. "Ten years. I would not restrict the hours of work; I do not see that they are now excessive. None of these modes appear to me desirable. I should like attendance at school to be required of all children from the age of 5 to 10. How such attendance could be made compulsory I do not see, but if no children could be employed under the age of 10 years that restriction would of itself tend to keep them at school until that age. Perhaps the employer might be compelled to employ none but those who can produce a certificate of reading."—*Rev. George Gaisford, Rector, Tangmere.*

106. "Let the child attend school until the age of 9."—*Rev. John Cooke, Rector, East Wittering.*

107. "Certainly not under 10. As to the hours of work, in some districts restriction may be required, but the circumstances of this parish do not call for any particular legislative interference on this head. [The 'usual hours of work' are stated to be from 6.30 a.m. to 5 p.m.] The Factory alternate system could not, I fear, be applied to the case of children employed in agriculture. It will be found a very difficult question to arrange what amount of labour and what amount of school attendance shall be required, so that the system may work satisfactorily both as regards the employer and employed. If it were made compulsory on children under 10 to attend school, they might obtain a fair amount of knowledge before they went but to work. Further than this I have no suggestion to offer."—*Rev. W. D. Underwood, Vicar, West Wittering.*

County of Gloucester.

Union of Cirencester.

Gloucester.

108. "Not before 11. No restriction on the hours. They are seldom employed before they are fit to work; the chief disadvantage is their being so soon removed from school. The two first plans would not work; the third is uncertain. If they were restricted from work before the age of 11, they would probably be at school till that age."—*Rev. E. J. Brewster, Amney Crucis.*

109. "Ten years. No restriction on hours of work. Not any of those three plans would suit."—*Messrs. Charles Turk and George Radway, Churchwardens, Barnsley.*

110. "Ten years. No restriction on hours of work. I would suggest that no boys shall go to work until they are 10 years of age; any plan other than

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Rev. J. Fraser.

a.

this would not answer."—*Rev. G. F. Master, Rector, Baunton.*

111. "Not under 10 years of age. We see no need for restriction in respect of hours; no boys are overworked. We think that a certificate of his being able to read intelligently might be required of every boy before he leaves school for agricultural labour."—*Mr. R. W. Winning, Churchwarden, Brimpsfield.*

112. "Eleven years. No restriction on hours of work. If boys were not allowed to work till 11, nor girls until 13, in my opinion would meet the case."—*Mr. James Newman, Churchwarden, North Cerney.*

113. "Ten, except perhaps during two or three months in summer. No boy should be kept later than 5.30 in winter, so that he may have an opportunity of attending the night school. Of the three plans proposed the first is generally impracticable, though by far the most desirable. The second probably might be done up to the age of 12 or 13, except perhaps during two or three of the busiest months of the year. The third would be better than nothing. On the whole, I should prefer the second. But perhaps a plan better suited to the *present* circumstances of this parish would be to prohibit boys going out at all under 11 years of age except at particular times and under particular circumstances, and after that age requiring them to attend the night school, if there be one within reach, during the winter up to 13."—*Rev. W. W. Liddell, South Cerney.*

114. "I should recommend that children be not employed under 10 years of age. I am of opinion that attendance at school from 4 or 5 to 10 years of age should be enforced if possible."—*Rev. T. C. Gibbs, Coates.*

115. "The above modes of enforcing school attendance appear to me to be inapplicable to agricultural districts."—*Rev. Thos. Atkinson, Colesbourne.*

116. "Not under 10 years. I think eight hours work quite sufficient. Boys should be kept at school until the age of 10, and the girls till 13."—*Rev. Thomas Hayes, Rector, Duntisbourne Abbotts.*

117. "Not under 10 years of age. I see no reason to restrict the hours of work. I prefer the third plan, one and two not being suited to this district."—*Rev. Richard Taylor, Vicar, Kemble.*

118. "We generally incline to a minimum of 10 years for boys. We have no reason here to restrict the hours. Of the three plans proposed, the third is least objectionable."—*Rev. J. Wilson, Rector, Meysey Hampton.*

119. "Eleven years. As to hours of work, I cannot recommend any restriction. The mode of the Printworks Act seems to be the mode of enforcing some attendance most applicable to this parish, as there are not enough children to work by relays."—*Rev. B. Mallam, Poole Keynes.*

120. "No restrictions would be desirable or feasible in this parish."—*Rev. Joseph Pitt, Rector, Rendcombe.*

121. "I should be glad if no boys under 11 years of age were employed. If such were the case I do not think the present hours of work would be found injurious. I do not think the half-day system is applicable to boys employed in agriculture, nor does the alternate day seem practicable; the supply of boys would be insufficient. The best plan, as it appears to me, is to restrict the age at which boys shall be allowed to work, say 10 or 11 years of age, and after that depend on the evening school."—*Rev. C. Fawcett, Rector and Landowner, Somerford Keynes.*

122. "I would recommend the same ages as in the Printworks Act. I do not see in my parish any necessity for restricting the hours of work. I think the Printworks Act specially adapted to children employed in agriculture. Judging from my experience in manufacturing districts, I believe employers of labour in agriculture might contrive to comply with the requirements of the Factory Acts, but certainly the Printworks Act is applicable."—*Rev. Thos. Wolstencroft, Rector, Syde.*

123. "I approve of boys not being employed till they are 10, it being understood that they are educated up to that age. I would not restrain the hours of work; leave them to the usual custom. If you do not employ boys till they are 10, you must make it penal on parents to see that they are educated. I think the whole system of *small school* education most defective; the only successful education is in large populatious. I don't think the question of distance would be a difficulty eventually."—*Rev. F. W. Hohler, Winstone.*

Union of Thornbury.

124. "None below 10 years. The three plans proposed are not practicable. The best mode of securing education is to limit labour to above 10 years, and require the child then to read well and intelligently. Qy. by certificate from last teacher, gratis."—*Rev. T. Murray Browne, Almondsbury.*

125. "Not below 11. Both the two first plans are impossible in this parish. The third plan might answer; but a better still would be to compel attendance at school up to 11 years of age, except when this might be attended with hardship to the parents. Children under 11 years of age are of very little use in agriculture in this neighbourhood; if therefore they could be kept at school up to that age it would be no hardship on the farmer, and the children would learn to read with ease before leaving school."—*Rev. R. W. Vigors, Aust.*

126. "Not below 10 or 11, but with some reserve for large families. I would not allow any below 15 to work more than 10 hours a day. Regulations as to distance could hardly be enforced without a degree of supervision that is next to impossible. It appears to me that none of the three above methods could be adopted with any prospect of general success. Secure schooling, if possible, up to a fixed age, and then let the matter be free."—*Rev W. J. Copleston, Rector, Cromhall.*

127. "I would recommend that no boy should be regularly employed under 11 years of age. I think none of the three modes prescribed by the Factory Acts for the better education of children are applicable to children employed in agriculture, or could possibly be carried out in agricultural districts. The best mode to obtain a better education for children in rural districts would be not allowing them to be regularly employed till they were 11 years old."—*Rev. W. Charlton, Vicar, Elberton.*

128. "11 or 12 for the plough; younger for keeping off birds. I do not see any need of restraint on the hours of work in this parish. I am not able to indicate in what way we could manage matters better in this small parish. The squire of the parish owns nearly all the labourers' cottages, and his daughters have the entire management of the daily school, and all the children that it is possible to cause to attend do so."—*Rev. Sir E. H. V. Colt, Bart., Vicar, Hill.*

129. "Under 10 years. I would not restrain the hours of work. The two first plans are utterly impracticable in agricultural districts; but school attendance might be required during the winter half year. The system of night schools for young persons and adults of both sexes seems the only method for getting at persons in rural places who have left school, say at 10, with an imperfect education."—*Rev. A. R. Ludlow, Rector, Littleton-on-Severn.*

130. "11 years. I should say that *whole* attendances might be enforced without inconvenience to employers till the children are 11 years of age, and afterwards *some* amount of school attendance by the Printworks Act until the age of 14. If such an arrangement did not tend to raise the wages of working men, measures might be adopted for helping parents with very large families."—*Rev. Robert Hiles, Curate, Olveston.* [I believe that with regard to the ages above indicated, Mr. Hiles expresses also the views of his Vicar, the Rev. Canon Moseley.]

131. "Labourers' wages are low, and they let the children earn something as soon as possible, and farmers *will* have them when they want them."—*Rev. W. A. Coates, Rockhampton.*

132. "I recommend 10 years; the farmers recommend 9. I don't think the children are employed beyond their strength generally in this parish. The two first plans are not practicable, but children employed in agriculture may be able to attend four months in the winter. I think if children are not employed under 10 years old, and if their education is made compulsory, they might keep up their knowledge by attendance at night-school, or during the winter months at day-schools, and that would be sufficient."—*Rev. C. Cripps, Stone.*

133. "Regular attendance up to a certain age, say 11 or 12, would be better than any intermittent attendance for a longer time."—*Mr. J. Y. Sturge, Churchwarden, Thornbury.*

Union of Newent.

134. "I think the younger boys are sometimes overtasked in hours. The three modes suggested are wholly impracticable."—*Rev. H. L. Whatley, Rector and Magistrate, Aston Ingham.*

135. "12 years. There would be no need to restrain the hours if this age were adopted. If 10 years is the age fixed for prohibition, I think 10 hours work would be as much as ought to be required; longer hours tell in after life. I consider the half-time system, whether of half or alternate days, is inapplicable to agriculture. The half day because of the distance to be travelled and the time occupied in changing clothes; the alternate system would require relays of boys; and independently of school, it is not desirable physically that boys should go to work under 12 years of age. I think with labour prohibited under 12 years of age (the age proposed and fixed by several farmers at a meeting presided over by Mr. Fraser) and *efficient* schools there will be no call for compulsion to secure attendance."—*Rev. R. Hill, Rector, Bromesberrow.*

136. "I do not recommend a restriction of age or of hours. The two first plans are objectionable."—*Rev. W. R. Jolley, Vicar, Corse.*

137. "I should wish that no children under 11 might be employed at all, because an earlier removal from school takes them from instruction just as their intellects are developing. I do not wish for compulsory education; I find parents sufficiently anxious for their children's schooling, and I think that the voluntary system will be the most effectual."—*Rev. W. G. S. Addison, Vicar, Hartpury.*

138. "The best mode of promoting education is to require attendance for a certain number of hours during the winter months."—*Rev. Alfred Newton, Rector, Preston.*

139. "Not under 12."—*Rev. E. H. Niblett Rector, Redmarley.*

140. "They should not be employed at all under 10. I don't think they are over-worked in this country. If compulsion is desirable or practicable, I think children should attend regularly at school till 10 years of age, and if possible till 12."—*Rev. C. H. Crawley, Rector, Taynton.*

[The above extracts contain every opinion that has been expressed upon the subjects to which they refer in the returns which I have received. Of the whole number, 140, 26 of the above opinions (Nos. 2, 3, 5, 11, 12, 16, 18, 22, 26, 33, 44, 46, 54, 60, 62, 70, 79, 80, 85, 86, 87, 89, 109, 111, 112, 133) have been given, wholly or partly, by laymen. In many of the others it is evident that the clergy, though alone signing the returns, have taken counsel with their parishioners before giving their answers.]

EVENING SCHOOLS.

Opinions expressed in replies to questions in the Commissioners' circular.

(*a.*) As to the adequacy of the evening school in supplying the deficiencies of the day-school.

(*b.*) As to the principal difficulties found to lie in the way of maintaining an efficient evening school.

COUNTY OF NORFOLK.

Gloucester.

Rev. J. Fraser.

Norfolk.

a.

Union of St. Faith.

1. "Only to a certain extent, though I despair of finding any thing that will do so more effectually. One great difficulty is that one is compelled to have in the same room some who can merely make out their A B C to the extreme annoyance and loss of time of the more advanced scholars. Also, I think, more support and encouragement should be given by government to night schools as such, and that they should be paid by results, quite regardless of the question whether there be a good day-school or not."—*Rev. Campbell Wodehouse, Alderford-cum-Attlebridge.*

2. "The night-school does not adequately supply the deficiencies of the day-school. The difficulties in its way are, (1) indifference; (2) dislike to the requisite discipline; (3) preference for the public-house."—*Rev. Hinds Howell, Drayton.*

3. "I regret to say there is no evening school. There is no room within half a mile of my house. Mistress employed all day could not attend also at night. Difficulty of finding an efficient master, and my own age precluding a regular attendance during winter; and I am told by neighbouring clergymen that without the constant attendance of the minister the school does not answer."—*Rev. James Shirley, Frettenham.*

4. The want of a master"—*Rev. W. A. W. Keppel, Haynford.*

5. "The night-school adequately supplements the day-school. There is no difficulty whatever in our case."—*Rev. T. L. Fellowes, Honingham.*

6. "It does not at all adequately supply the deficiencies of the day-school. The scholars attend irregularly. The great difficulty is to obtain teachers, the work devolving on myself or the scripture reader."—*Rev. J. D. Balance, Horsford.*

7. "The night school, *if used*, would supply the deficiencies of the day school. The chief difficulty in its way is the indifference of the people."—*Rev. J. G. Tipper, Horsham and Newton St. Faith.*

8. "It is not an adequate supply. Its difficulties are the distance many must walk, and the fact that many who do come (irregularly), and several who would come, are employed about horses, which occupies them too late to walk a mile or mile and a half to school in time."—*Rev. Thomas Harrison, Rackheath.*

9. "We have no night school, owing to a want of funds, in consequence of the non-residence of the principal landowers."—*Rev. Henry Banfather, Sprowston.*

10. "All evening attendances lead to evil.—*Hastings Parker, Esq., Landowner and Magistrate, Swannington.*

11. "It is a great help to those who wish to improve themselves and keep up what they have learnt, but it does not make up for the evil of too early a removal from school."—*Rev. W. Howard, Chairman of Board of Guardians, Great Witchingham.*

Union of Depwade.

12. "The difficulty is the want of teachers, and the consequent falling of the work upon the clergyman."—*Rev. P. R. de Jersey, Aslacton.*

13. "In great measure. The chief difficulty is the want of efficient teachers."—*Rev. F. G. Gill, Bunwell.*

14. "Only partially. The difficulty is to procure competent teachers."—*Archdeacon Bouverie, Denton.*

15. "We have found no practical difficulty."—*Rev. G. Stevenson, and Messrs. Mickleborough and F. Dix, Dickleburgh.*

16. "I could get over one of my difficulties by calling in the aid of *paid* teachers; but as I have 13 children I cannot afford any additional expenses. There is not a resident gentlemen in the parish and consequently the burdens already laid upon my

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

a.

shoulders press very heavily."—*Rev. G. T. Hall, Hempnall.*

17. "I do not consider that the evening school adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school." —*Rev. E. N. Rolfe, Morningthorpe.*

18. "No, it does not; and the children not having been sufficiently instructed previously do not care to come."—*Rev. L. R. Henslow, Pulham, St. Mary, Magdalene.*

19. "It may supplement, or revive, just like a Sunday school; more it cannot do. Its difficulties are: *often*, the want of a teacher; *always*, weary limbs, and indisposed minds among very many."—*Archdeacon Ormerod, Redenhall.*

20. "It does not adequately supply those deficiencies. The first great difficulty is in finding a properly qualified and *willing* teacher; the second is the distance which the lads, tired with their work, have to traverse, in scattered parishes like my own, to reach the school where, as here, it is not central; in a town or concentrated village attendance is easily secured; the third is the little personal help or part the farmers will take in it. I believe the lads, as a rule, to be most anxious for instruction. For 12 years I had an evening school of men above 25, and there are now seven men, fathers of families, in the parish, who all learnt to read and write and do simple sums in the homely teaching of this evening school."—*Archdeacon Hopper, Starston.*

21. "It is not an adequate supply. The chief difficulty is that of getting teachers."—*Rev. F. W. H. Jerrard, Long Stratton.*

22. "Its difficulties are the want of funds and indisposition to attend."—*Rev. William Biggs, Thurston.*

23. "It has not adequately supplied those deficiencies at present. The difficulty is want of funds for the purpose of obtaining an efficient master."—*Rev. W. Wallace and Mr. John L. King, Thorpe Abbotts.*

24. "It does not adequately supply deficiencies, but it is very useful. Hitherto we have found no great difficulty. There has been sufficient voluntary co-operation; but a good deal of expense falls upon the clergyman."—*Rev. T. W. Thompson, Tibbenham.*

25. "Upon the whole, I am inclined to say that it does. The principal difficulties, I believe, in larger parishes are lack of teachers and funds; the former difficulty, from the smallness of my population (243), I do not feel; the latter I do."—*Rev. Charles Grain, Wacton.*

Union of Docking.

26. "I consider, by the progress made, and the eagerness to attend, that the evening school adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school."—*Rev. J. B. Winckworth, Great Bircham.*

27. "It does so in a considerable degree. Our chief difficulty is want of funds."—*Rev. O. Sadler, Brancaster.*

28. "No; not even in Burnham Thorpe, where it is diligently and systematically carried on by the clergyman himself. The conditions of a night school duly considered—the scholars wild youths, their attendance wholly voluntary, and that too at the end of a day's labour, it cannot really succed, *i.e.*, maintain the requisite discipline, secure a sustained attendance, and produce a beneficial influence on the character, as well as instruct the mind, without the *earnest, personal* superintendence of the clergyman, or some person in equal position and authority. It is the too general want of such superintendence, which I believe to be the one great difficulty of maintaining an efficient night school. Nothing can make amends for that want; and because I fear it so generally exists, I have a low opinion of the efficiency of almost all our rural night schools. Though, on the other hand, where there is such superintendence, I look upon night schools as one of the most powerful instruments for good that a country village can possess."—*Rev. E. B. Everard, Burnham Thorpe.*

29. "The day-school master would be overtaxed, did he undertake it, and it is very difficult to supply volunteer teachers, and each class of rough and disorderly boys requires constant supervision. The whole trouble of it devolves upon the clergyman; and one or two ladies have assisted, and their presence tends to soften the boys. Some of the farmers either contribute to the warming and lighting of the room, or pay for their own boys. We hold the evening school in a room amongst the thick of the population, the boys sitting throughout the evening at *tables*. They have been much more manageable thus arranged, than in the large schoolroom at the desks."—*Rev. Hugh James Hare, Docking.*

30. "Certainly not. The night school is superintended by the clergyman, and is mainly self-supporting. There are no difficulties in maintaining it, but he lads are not forward to avail themselves of the opportunity thus given them of receiving some little instruction."—*Rev. Edwin Oakley, Heacham.*

31. "By no means. The chief difficulty is the providing efficient teachers, and such as may be expected to have influence. The National schoolmaster ought not to be so employed, though it often falls to him. The clergy, also, are too hard-worked to come fresh to such employment, any more than the schoolmaster. The best night schools are those worked by ladies. Any arrangement for distinct night school teachers, should place them under the control of the managers of the school, or discipline would be at an end."—*Rev. W. M. H. Church, Hunstanton.*

32. "Decidedly not. Unless a boy has been fairly taught in the day school, he can make little progress in the night school, which can be only looked upon as supplementary to the day school. There is the difficulty of finding a sufficient supply of teachers; as from the many different degrees of progress in those attending it, more teachers are required than in the day school; each scholar requires more direct personal teaching; collective class teaching is neither so practicable nor so efficient as in the day school. Irregularity of attendance, often caused by work, is another great hindrance. The long period in summer during which they receive no instruction, often causes scholars to forget what they have learnt during the winter, so that the teacher has constantly to begin afresh, and at the commencement of each season goes over again what was taught during the last; thus little progress is made. Besides this, the boys often come to the school so wearied and tired that they cannot attend to the instruction given, and often fall asleep, or at the best are in a dozing,* listless state. The night school can have but little, if any, influence upon the moral and religious training of the boys and lads, or upon the enforcing of discipline and obedience. The discipline of a night school is, of necessity, more lax than that of a day school. The most that can be done is to prevent improper language being used, or any excessive noise being created. The night school is decidedly useful as supplementary to the day school, and keeping up the education previously given; but is in most cases of little use to those boys and lads who have not been previously taught, and who may be made to attend it by their parents. Men, if taught separately from the boys and lads, often derive great benefit from the night school." †—*Rev. W. T. Beckett, Ingoldisthorpe, Diocesan Inspector of Schools.*

33 "No. The chief difficulties are: (1) want of efficient aid in teaching; (2) unwillingness of older men or young men to be taught in the same school

* This phenomenon is not peculiar to English night schools. The Rev. M. Pattison, in his report to the Duke of Newcastle's Commission (vol. iv. p. 196), describes the "poor girls," employed in the Saxon printworks, attending night school, "often "dropping asleep on the benches," yet "coming gladly to the "school where they meet with an attention and sympathy strange "to them elsewhere. Compassion on the one side and gratitude "on the other combat the fatigue, and the progress is not con-"temptible."

† See, in confirmation of this, Mr. Hopper's statement, No. 20.

with boys, for various reasons; (3) agricultural labour produces duller evening scholars than work in factories."—*Rev. W. L. Hussey, Ringstead.*

34. "The chief difficulty is in providing teachers. I have now no evening school, because I can find no one to assist me, and I cannot carry on a mixed school of boys and men single-handed, with much comfort or much result."—*Rev. J. A. Ogle, Rural Dean, Sedgeford.*

35. "In a great measure it does. The difficulty lies in the indifference on the part of the young persons themselves."—*Mr. John Williamson, Churchwarden, Shernbourne.*

36. "No. The great difficulty is to induce the young men and boys employed in labour to attend."—*Rev. Thomas Carpenter, Syderstone.*

37. "No. In this parish, the principal difficulty is want of voluntary interest, there being with many an aversion to the education of the poor. The exposure of the boys during the day in winter, unfits them for mental exertion at the night school. From the early age at which they leave the day school, I find they do not appreciate the night school, till they come to years of more discretion."—*Mr. Thomas Harrison, certificated schoolmaster, Thornham.*

Union of Swaffham.

38. "No. The principal difficulty is the insufficient influence of parents."—*Rev. B. Edwards, Ashill.*

39. "No. The chief difficulty is a want of the desire for self-improvement, except in the case of a few of the elder lads."—*Rev. George R. Winter, East Bradenham.*

40. "Not quite. I find no difficulty as to scholars and their attendance; but the instruction devolves altogether on me, the vicar."—*Rev. Lewis Morgan, West Bradenham.*

41. "No; because so few attend. The difficulties are, the indifference of the parents and of the children."—*Rev. Charles Taylor, Great Cressingham.*

42. "There is great indifference on the part of scholars to attend."—*J. T. Mills, Esq., Little Cressingham.* [There appears to be no night school here.]

43. "No. The chief difficulty is the little interest taken in it by the farmers in the parish."—*Rev. Charles W. H. H. Sidney, Goodestone.*

44. "No; it is supplemental to the day school in those cases only where a fair proficiency has been already made. If you attempt to supply the want of this proficiency at the night school, boys get disgusted and cease to persevere."—*Rev. C. Hardy, Hillborough.*

45. "I do not. After the boys or young men have done their day's work, they are for the most part unwilling to attend. If they do come, they too often lack the power of giving their attention to the school work so as to receive any permanent benefit. Too often, also, the beershop has greater attractions than the school."—*Rev. H. Milne, Holme Hale.*

46. "Usefully, but not adequately. The chief difficulty is the extra work given to the day school teacher, and the difficulty, or impossibility of finding other fit teachers."—*Rev. Alexander Thurtell, late one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, Oxburgh.*

47. "By no means. The difficulties arise: (1) from the distance from which the scholars have to come; (2) from their having been all the day at laborious work; (3) from their want of interest in general instruction and mental improvement. But much is required, and ought to be done on the part of Government, towards encouraging and promoting evening schools generally throughout the country."—*Rev. W. H. Parker, Saham Toney.*

48. "The chief difficulty is want of funds."—*Mr. Charles Palmer, Vice-Chairman of Board of Guardians, Sporle.*

49. "No, not adequately, but in some degree, and in a greater degree where boys from the time they leave the day school attend the night school regularly. Its difficulties are, weariness from the day's work; indifference on the part of the parents in many cases; carelessness and dislike of control on the part of the boys and young men."—*Archdeacon Wise, Stanford.*

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

Essex.

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COUNTY OF ESSEX.

Union of Halstead.

50. "No. There is no difficulty in maintaining an evening school, where the master of the day school is willing to undertake it, which is generally the case. The difficulty is in getting the boys to come to it, and to come regularly."—*Rev. Samuel Blackall, Earl's Colne.*

51. "It does not adequately supply deficiencies. The chief difficulty is want of teachers."—*Rev. George J. Taylor, White Colne.*

52. "Not entirely, but tending towards it. The evening school would be more efficient were it possible to keep it going for a longer period. Early in March the attendance falls off, because the lengthening days give opportunity for working in gardens and elsewhere. Yet even as it is, with all its imperfections, I consider the evening school to be one of the most useful institutions we have, and without it the state of education would be lower even than it is."—*Rev. E. S. Corrie, Great Maplestead.*

53. "No. The scholars are not willing to attend after their hard day's work."—*Rev. Francis T. Hurst, Ridgewell.*

54. "No. The difficulties are indifference and poverty, with ignorance of parents."—*Rev. John Forster, Stambourne.*

55. "No. Disinclination may deter some from attending; the attraction of the beer-houses others."—*Lewis J. Way, Esq., Tilbury.*

56. "By no means. Boys are hindered from attending by the late hours at which they are employed on the land."—*Rev. John Gaselee, Rural Dean, Little Yeldham.*

Union of Witham.

57. "I have no evening school. I cannot provide for its supervision. And I have reason to believe that in agricultural parishes there are great temptations to immorality after evening school."—*Rev. B. L. Clarke, Little Braxted.*

58. "It is not adequate. Its difficulties are distance and fatigue from work."—*Rev. R. Marsh White, Fairstead.*

59. "I consider it an adequate supply. No difficulties have been experienced."—*Rev. G. P. Bennet, Kelvedon.*

60. "Yes, entirely. The only difficulty is the expense. The payments of the scholars do little more than pay for the lighting and warming of the room. If the school is to be efficient, the teacher must be efficient, and, to secure this, should be liberally paid. The writer desires to add his full conviction that in this parish, and in nearly all well-to-do parishes, the existing schools are amply sufficient to educate the agricultural population, when assisted by Government exactly as they are now. The parochial system seems to the writer to succeed in almost all the parishes in this neighbourhood, to train and educate and care for both adults and young, at church, at home, and in the school. He speaks as an Inspector of Schools, that no new system is required; the young *are* being educated well, and more than that, the neglect of former years is being astonishingly neutralized by evening schools, superintended and worked by the village clergyman. Any new legislation which would impair the beautiful machinery of the parochial system would, in the opinion of the writer, be disastrous in its results."—*Rev. Alfred Snell, Vicar. Feering.*

COUNTY OF SUSSEX.

Sussex.

Union of Horsham.

61. "The great difficulty in the way of the night school is the scattered character of the parish."—*Rev. J. H. Masters, Lower Beeding.*

Sussex.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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62. No evening school in Ifield, Itchingfield, or Rusper. In the last-named the cause is said to be "Want of a proper teacher."

63. "Not adequately, but to a certain extent. The difficulty is in procuring efficient assistants. If the scholars are not kept closely to their work the whole time, they get noisy."—*Rev. C. A. Rosser, Slinfold.*

64. "No. It is a great help to older boys; I doubt of its being equally advantageous for younger ones. I have never found any difficulty in securing the regular attendance of most boys within a fair distance ($1\frac{1}{2}$ miles or 2 miles) for the months of November, December, and January. They fall off as the days lengthen. No charge is made, but I require regular and punctual attendance and perfect order. I am always present myself, and I believe that to be the best means of keeping up the attendance of the boys. I would never leave the night school in the hands of the schoolmaster. My chief difficulty is to obtain teachers; those I have are unpaid; their help is entirely voluntary."—*Rev. A. H. S. Barwell, Southwater.*

Union of Hailsham.

65. "I think in the case of the evening school, though not in that of the day school, distance does operate prejudicially, as the lads have not time in the remoter parts of the parish to reach school after their day's work. The evening school, therefore, hardly adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school."—*Rev. J. H. Vidal, Chiddingly.*

66. "A *good* evening school would. The difficulties are want of funds to pay a master; and to be of much use it ought to be open at least five nights a week during the winter."—*Thomas Arkcoll, Esq., Landowner and Magistrate, Hurstmonceux.*

Gloucester.

67. "The scattered nature of the population is the great difficulty here, many of them residing some miles from the village."—*Mr. William Mannington, Occupier, Laughton.*

68. "There was a night school for two or three years. It was closed owing to the unwillingness of the young people to attend, and the want of an efficient male teacher and of funds."—*Rev. G. Rainier, Ninfield.*

69. "Our main difficulty is want of teachers."—*Rev. E. C. Graham, Wartling.*

70. "Not quite adequately, but considerably. The chief difficulty arises from the unwillingness of the lads to attend in sufficient numbers."—*Rev. G. E. Haviland, Warbleton.*

Union of Westhampnett.

71. "We have no evening school. It has been tried at three different times and has failed. My difficulties have been these:—(1) Want of master. The master's health will not now enable him to open an evening school, over and above his ordinary school labour. He has been once paralysed and needs rest. There is no one else in the parish who can do the work of police or instruction, nor anyone but myself to find the funds; (2), want of means; (3), indifference of employers; (4), lack of encouragement at home. I tried the experiment myself."—*Rev. J. W. Miller, Birdham.*

72. "Certainly not. There are no difficulties beyond the disinclination of some to avail themselves of the privilege."—*Rev. W. Burnett, Rural Dean, Boxgrove.*

73. "Our difficulty is in getting attendance."—*Rev. H. Cogan, East Dean.*

74. "We have no night school. I have tried it, but the parish is too small (population 180) to enable a sufficient number to be got together to make the thing cohesive."—*Rev. E. Stansfield, Donnington.*

75. "The clergyman must teach it himself or it will come to nothing."—*Rev. M. Parrington, New Fishbourne.*

76. "I see no deficiencies in the day school, with the exception that, as far as education is concerned, they leave school at too early an age. This is in great measure counteracted by the night school. I find no difficulty in maintaining it."—*Rev. E. Legge, East Lavant.* [The night school here is conducted by the mistress of the day school on her own account.]

77. "We have no evening school. The master of the day school is worn out by the day work. Ladies and gentlemen soon tire of leaving home for the schoolroom. The pupils cease to attend regularly after the novelty is past, being fatigued with their day's work, or careless of the advantages offered. In country places, the being out after dark does harm, great harm, to morality."—*Rev. A. P. Birrell, Oving.*

78. "We have generally had an evening school, but not this year. Most certainly it does not adequately supply the deficiencies of the day school. Our difficulties have been the want of teacher—the master being employed all day finds the evening school too great a tax—and the expense of lighting and firing."—*Rev. F. A. Bowles, Singleton.*

79. "There is no evening school. The principal difficulty is that an evening school is too great an addition to the labours of the master in the day school, and the want of any one able and willing to superintend and conduct it."—*Rev. T. S. L. Vogan, Walberton.*

80. "We have no evening school. The difficulties are (1) a want of teachers, where there is no schoolmaster; and (2) a disinclination on the part of the lads to place themselves under instruction without some substantial inducement, such as a supper or two during the season."—*Rev. William J. Underwood, West Wittering.*

COUNTY OF GLOUCESTER.

Union of Cirencester.

81. "We have no evening school this winter. It was during the last two winters very indifferently attended. I do not consider it adequately to supply the deficiencies of the day school. The difficulties in maintaining it arise partly from the undervaluing its advantages by parents and scholars; partly from the young people being tired after their day's work."—*Rev. E. J. Brewster, Amney Crucis.*

82. "Not fully, but the older boys would know nothing without it. The chief difficulty in its way is the impossibility of maintaining it throughout the year."—*Messrs. Charles Turk and George Radway, Churchwardens, Barnsley.*

83. "Not altogether. Our chief difficulty is want of funds."—*Rev. George F. Master, Baunton.*

84. "We have no night school. The principal difficulty would be to find a proper master and funds to pay him."—*Mr. R. W. Winning, Churchwarden, Brimpsfield.*

85. "We had a night school, but it has been given up. The difficulties were, want of interest, the distance many of the scholars had to travel to the school, youths of 18 not liking to mix with children of 12. Sometimes it will happen that a father and one or two boys come home wet, and have to dry their clothes, ready for the morning, by a slow fire, and so the boys cannot attend the night school."—*Mr. Charles Newman, Churchwarden, North Cerney.*

86. "It is at best a very inadequate supplement, but it is of undoubted advantage educationally and morally. By far the greatest hindrance is the want of interest and kindly persuasion on the part of the farmers, by many of whom the boys and lads are kept so late at work that they do not get home in time enough to come. Added to this hindrance there is often the apathy, or want of authority, of the parents."—*Rev. W. W. Liddell, South Cerney.*

87. "We have no night school this year. The schoolmaster is preparing for examination, and consequently wants his evenings. The difficulties are: (1), many do not like exposing their ignorance; (2), the schoolmaster complains of being tired after his day's work; (3), want of voluntary lay support. The night school does not adequately supply the deficiency of the day school."—*Rev. T. C. Gibbs, Coates.*

88. "Being willing to give the required time (twice a week) myself, and having the assistance of the mistress of the day school, I find no difficulty in maintaining an efficient evening school."—*Rev. Thomas Atkinson, Colesbourne.*

89. "This is a straggling village, and boys don't like to come to school and go home without companions."—*Rev. Richard Taylor, Kemble.*

90. "I cannot say it does fully. Its hindrances are, a want of appreciation of the benefits of education in the lads themselves, and their difficulty in resisting the temptation to a little play and fun after a day's work."—*Rev. B. Mallam, Poole Keynes.*

91. "We have no night school, owing to the want of sufficient pupils."—*Rev. C. Fawcett, Somerford Keynes.*

92. "The difficulties in the way of maintaining an efficient night school are, the expenses inevitable in providing fire, light, cleaning, &c., and above all in paying and securing a suitable teacher. When I was appointed to this parish there was no school. I have opened a Sunday school, and all the children under 18 attend, as well as some from an adjacent hamlet. I am preparing apparatus for a day and evening school, and, so far as I can see at present, I shall be obliged to teach both myself. It would promote education very much, in parishes like this, if assistance from Government could be secured without employing a certificated teacher. Almost all the young persons in my parish can read more or less; but I do not think there is one who can write so as to be understood."—*Rev. Thomas Wolstencroft, Syde.*

93. "We have no night school. The principal difficulty is want of sympathy and want of means, in the whole range of parish duties, where funds are needed."—*Rev. F. W. Hohler, Winstone.*

Union of Thornbury.

94. "The night school is an inadequate supplement to the day school. Its difficulties are, distance; night-weariness and sleepiness after an honest day's field labour; difficulty and false shame of learning after manhood. Our night school has been held five days a week for the last two years, by the scholars' own request."—*Rev. T. Murray Browne, Almondsbury.*

95. "Our night school was discontinued on account of the bad attendance, caused chiefly by the distance the young men had to come."—*Rev. Richard W. Vigors, Aust and Redwick.*

96. "Not entirely, but it helps a great deal. In this parish there would be no one competent to manage the night school but the clergyman, and he must do so with considerable self-sacrifice. The difficulty is how to combine a degree of easy freedom with real instruction. Our lads would not come here to be schooled stiffly; they would stay at home."—*Rev. W. J. Copleston, Cromhall.*

97. "Our night school is open twice a week for six months, from October 1st to April 1st. I consider that it adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school. The difficulties are, want of teachers and of funds, as the school is wholly dependent on the clergyman and one or two members of his family, not only for instruction and personal supervision, but for books, slates, and all other articles required. This state of matters is very precarious, and cannot last long. If the night school could be efficiently maintained, I believe none in the labouring class would willingly be devoid of such an amount of education as is practicable or possible, consistently with the circumstances of an agricultural district."—*Rev. A. R. Ludlow, Littleton-on-Severn.*

98. "There is an evening school with 18 scholars, varying in age from 14 to 26, taught in two classes by the curate of the parish and a friend. The school is held in a cottage, and the scholars attend regularly. It does not, however, adequately supply the deficiencies of the day school. The difficulties are (1), irregularity of attendance, in some cases unavoidable, but not so in most; (2), indisposition of younger boys to profit by the opportunity of learning, when they attend, being tired after their day's work."—*Rev. Robert Hiles, Olveston.*

Gloucester.

Rev. J. Frase a.

99. "We have an evening school, attended by 18 scholars. It does not adequately supply the deficiencies of the day school. The clergy take no interest in it, and no effort is made to induce attendance. We had at one time an evening school of 90 young people."—*Mr. J. Y. Sturge, Churchwarden, Thornbury.*

Union of Newent.

100. "We have an evening school; but I should not say that it adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school. The difficulty is, the stumbling block of life—the sinews of war—money."—*Rev. H. L. Whatley, Aston Ingham.*

101. "We have no evening school. When there was one I did not find that it adequately supplied the deficiencies of the day school. The difficulties were, distance, fatigue, the late hours at which several pupils were kept at work. Most of our boys are employed in the farm stables, which are not closed till between 7 and 8 o'clock."—*Rev. R. Hill, Bromsberrow.*

102. "We have a night school, open for about 10 weeks in winter. It keeps up the little the young men have hitherto learnt. The difficulties are, want of funds and teachers."—*Rev. E. H. Niblett, Redmarley.*

OPINIONS expressed and facts stated in the ANSWERS to the QUESTIONS contained in the COMMISSIONERS' CIRCULAR.

C. *On the subject of Cottage Accommodation.*

(1.) As regards its effect on morality, education, and health;

(2.) As regards its sufficiency (*a*) in proportion to the area of the land; (*b*) in proportion to the population;

(3). As regards the condition of the cottages themselves, in respect of (*c*) construction; (*d*) accommodation; (*e*) ownership; (*f*) rent.

COUNTY OF NORFOLK.

Norfolk.

Union of St. Faith.

1. "I have been continually making representations to the chief landowner of the parish that there should be better cottage accommodation; and, to a certain extent, he has listened to my requests, and I think he is anxious to do as much as he can by degrees. I cannot, however, trace in my parish any immediate effect on the morals or general health of the poor, assignable especially to bad cottage accommodation.

"There is only one cottage to the 100 acres. They are conveniently placed in relation to the farms. Three new cottages lately built in Attlebridge are almost models; they contain two sitting and three bedrooms, well ventilated and drained; they have convenient outhouses, but are badly off for water. The others are *detestable*, and must sooner or later be pulled down; some of them, with large families, have but one sleeping room. The rent is paid to the landlord's agent, and is not unreasonable. The whole of the cottages are in the hands of the landlord, and nothing can be done without his wishes being consulted."—*Rev. C. Wodehouse, Alderford-cum-Attlebridge.*

2. "Our cottage accommodation has been fully attended to. We have more than three cottages to the 100 acres. No cottage is more than a mile from the farms. They are built of brick, well ventilated and drained; generally have four rooms, garden, and outhouse. Most belong to the landowner; a few are owned by tradesmen, but there is no obligation to deal. The rent varies from 50*s.* to 5*l.*"—*Francis Parmeter, Esq., Booton.*

3. "Our cottage accommodation is very good. The cottages belong to the landowner. The rent ranges from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* 10*s.*"—*Mr. H. Howlett Crostwick.*

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

a.

4. "In several instances since I have been rector of this parish, I have had to complain of overcrowding, but at present there is only one instance, but that of the grossest kind, inasmuch as the wages are abundant to supply good accommodation. Drayton is an open parish, and a large number of the cottages have been built by small owners, who have looked simply to the question of profit; and hence questions of ventilation and draining never enter into their calculations. The size of rooms varies to an extent impossible to mention without filling a sheet; but, as a rule, the rooms are fairly large enough. The sleeping accommodation is the great want—many having only one room, *and none three*. Wells, in common for a lot of cottages belonging to one person, is the rule of water supply, but you will frequently find the muck-hole close to it. Tenants are not obliged to deal with owner. Rent from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*"—*Rev. Hinds Howell, Vice-Chairman of Board of Guardians, Drayton.*

5. "Cottage accommodation is very good throughout this parish. The majority of rooms are about 14 feet square; window ventilation. Most of the cottages are built with four rooms. The supply of water from wells is good. There are gardens to nearly all, and in a few instances outhouses, such as sheds for fuel. They are owned chiefly by small landowners, at rents from 2*l.* to 4*l.* per annum."—*Major James J. Bouchier, Felthorpe.*

6. "We are pretty well off in cottage accommodation; but over-crowding is most demoralizing. We have 40 cottages to 1,580 acres. All have two bedrooms, some three; but the larger families do not always occupy the larger cottages, the rent being higher. Lodgers are not permitted. All have a sitting-room and back kitchen, sitting-room varying in size, but the average about 12 feet square; ventilation good, as far as windows; drainage, none whatever; a porous, sandy soil, and a dead flat. All but 280 acres belong to Lord Suffield. Rent from 3*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* Many have half an acre of land; all have gardens. At present the tenant-farmers on Lord Suffield's estate have nothing to do with the cottages."—*Rev. Jas. Shirley, Frettenham.*

7. "All the cottages are very good in every respect; and all of them belong to Edward Fellowes, Esq., M.P."—*Mr. Charles R. Cocks, Haverland.*—[There are, however, only 21 cottages in this parish to 2,050 acres.]

8. "The cottages are not generally crowded, are sufficient in number, and conveniently situated. Most are built of brick and tiled. Some, not many, are thatched; rooms generally 12 feet square; ventilation and drainage fair. The accommodation generally is sufficient, with supply of water, and small garden. Ownership various, some by landowners, many by builders; I know of none by tradesmen with whom tenants are obliged to deal. Rent from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.*"—*Rev. W. A. W. Keppel, Haynford.*

9. "In Hellesdon there are 32 cottages with one bedroom, 31 with two, only 3 with three. The older cottages are, to a certain extent, in bad condition. A great drawback to many cottages in Upper Hellesdon is want of sufficient garden ground. The cottages at Lower Hellesdon, and ten at Upper Hellesdon, belong to the various farms; rent 1*s.* and 1*s.* 6*d.* weekly. The cottages at Upper Hellesdon are owned (partly) by persons about or a little above the rank of agricultural labourers. These are generally in rows, and bear the name of the owner. Rent 2*s.* and 2*s.* 6*d.* weekly. On the whole, the water supply is good, but I do not consider the number of privies, or apologies for such, sufficient. I do not think any labourer would object to pay a slightly higher rent for better bedroom accommodation; viz., three bedrooms. Many of the cottages in Upper Hellesdon are occupied by market-gardeners; these are not included in the enumeration."—*Rev. W. E. Best, Hellesdon.*

10. "The cottages are in good order, with ample means for the separation of the sexes. About five cottages for 200 acres is a proper proportion; we require about one-fourth more than we have. The whole of the land and cottages is in the hands of Lady Bayning. The cottages have every necessary convenience, outhouses, water supply, &c., with good sized gardens. Rents are very reasonable, none exceeding 3*l.* 10*s.*"—*Rev. T. L. Fellowes, Honingham.*

11. "The number of cottages with only one bedroom is great; and where there are families, this is a great evil, injurious to health, and still more so to morality. There are 65 cottages with only *one* bedroom, and 69 with two bedrooms. Some of those with one bedroom are occupied, in one case by the parents and nine children; in another by parents and eight children; in another, by parents and seven children; in another, by parents and two grown up daughters and one grown up son, and an infant, &c., &c. There are also six cottages with only one room for all purposes, at present occupied by single persons. There is no special arrangement for drainage; the water supply is good; most cottages have gardens; some outhouses (closets) have been lately put up where there were none. Eight new good cottages have been recently built with two bedrooms, and are all occupied; some of the old cottages are empty. The cottagers do not like to turn out of the crowded cottages, even where the landlord advises them. What seems to be most needed here is a prohibition to landlords to allow *families* to occupy a cottage with only one bedroom."—*Rev. J. D. Ballance, Vicar, Horsford.*

12. "With few exceptions, the cottage accommodation is good. They are built of brick, tiled, with rooms from 10 to 12 feet square. The water supply, in many cases, is defective. The cottages are mostly supplied with gardens and outhouses. They are owned mostly by landowner. Rent from 3*l.* to 5*l.* per annum."—*Rev. J. G. Tipper, Incumbent, Horsham and Newton St. Faith's.*

13. "In this parish we have always been well off for cottages. They are brick and tile; some few thatched; rooms about 12 feet square. Ventilation and drainage very fair; soil light. Water supply good, better than in most places. Gardens almost general. Ownership partly by landowners, partly by tradesmen and others. No tenants restricted in their dealings."—*Mr. J. Minns, Churchwarden, Horstead.*

14. "Well constructed; rooms average 14 feet square; well ventilated and drained. Good gardens and accommodation. All the cottages belong to one resident landowner. Rents are high, from 3*l.* to 5*l.* each."—*Rev. N. Manley, Rector, and Mr. Thomas W. Gaze, Guardian, Morton.*

15. "A decent orderly home is, in respect of health, education and morality, of more importance than anything whatever else. We have about 2½ cottages to the 100 acres. Plenty have two bedrooms, but not one has three; two or three of the latter would be an advantage, as, though there is not generally overcrowding, there are two or three houses which are too full. There are 20 cottages built within the last 30 years, all on the same model. They consist of four rooms each; two above and two below. The front room is 13 feet by 11, the back room 13 feet by 7. They mostly stand by twos, under the same roof, and in clusters of two or three double dwellings at crossways, from three-quarters of a mile to a mile apart. There is no village or village street. They are placed so as to suit the farms, but inconveniently in regard to the school. These are all brick and tile. The rest are of different forms; mostly brick and tile, but a few are thatched. The accommodation on the whole is good. The cases alluded to above, as too full, are such as where an aged father, and an unmarried brother, are added to a tolerably numerous, but young, family. The gardens are excellent, and average about one-third of an acre. There is a well for each clump of houses, four or six as the case may be. The landowner owns the whole parish except a few acres. Rent of the best cottages is 3*l.* 18*s.*; of the worst, 2*l.* The parish is evidently preferred by the poor to some of the neigh-

bouring ones, and we have a sufficient supply of labour."—*Rev. Thomas Harrison, Rector, Rackheath.*

16. "We have plenty of cottage accommodation. Some are very good, and some not so good. A good water supply; most of them have gardens. Rents 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*"—*Mr. James Howes, Churchwarden, Ringland.*

17. "There can be no question that defective cottage accommodation has the most pernicious effect on morals. I saw it in the case of my late parish in West Norfolk, clearly. Here (to 1,200 acres) we have only three cottages, one occupied by a blacksmith. The subject of increasing our accommodation is under consideration; but at present no progress is being made."—*Rev. Henry Howes, Rector, Spixworth.*

18. "Cottage room being very insufficient, has a pernicious effect both on morals and health of labourers. We have not cottages enough in proportion to land. The rooms are about 12 ft. square; ventilation generally good; drainage bad. Accommodation insufficient; water supply very bad; gardens and outhouses generally good. The cottages belong to the landowners. Rent about 4*l.* per annum."—*Rev. H. Banfather, Sprowston,*

19. "Our cottage accommodation is fair, and much has lately been done and is doing. Overcrowding is one main cause of immorality. Our water supply is good. Nearly all the cottages have gardens and necessary conveniences. Rent from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* 5*s.*" —*Hastings Parker, Esq., Magistrate, Swannington.*

20. "We have more cottages than are required for our own farms. There are a few instances of overcrowding, owing to people seeming to prefer the smaller to the larger cottages. The construction is very various; some have thatched roofs; some tiled; but generally they are tolerably good, and roomy enough. Several, being built in a kind of street, have no gardens attached to them; the tenants, therefore, generally have a garden allotment. They are generally well supplied with water, and with outhouses, but some have not sufficient bedroom. The different chief landlords own a portion of the cottages; but some have been bought or built by others than landowners, as an investment. One baker owns several cottages, but I do not think he forces his tenants to buy their bread of him. Rents are rather high, some being 5*l.*" —*Rev. William Howard, Chairman of Board of Guardians, Great Witchingham.*

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21. "I can only make the trite observations that improvement of cottages ought to be a great point and matter of conscience with landowners, as influencing the morality, prosperity, health, and comfort of the poor; and that a piece of ground attached is invaluable; and that a good water supply is too often overlooked. We have one or perhaps two cases of overcrowding with large families. The construction and accommodation of the cottages is generally good. The chief owners are the landowners; none are owned by tradesmen. Rent, 3*l.* a year."—*Rev. P. R. de Jersey, Aslacton.*

22. "We have 83 cottages to 2,436 acres. They are very scattered. There is only one case of overcrowding with lodgers. The water supply is in some parts defective, chiefly depending on ponds. 25 cottages belong to landowners; the remainder to small proprietors, non-residents. The rents vary from 3*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.*, the small Tenement Act being in force. Many have gardens, and most of those who have not, have allotments. Where the cottages are not the property of the landowners, but belong to persons who regard them as an investment, I do not see how good accommodation for large families can be provided at such a rent as the labourer can afford to pay."—*Archdeacon Bouverie, Denton.*

23. "The cottages are fairly constructed, but in some cases ventilation and drainage are defective. There is overcrowding in a few cases. The cottages generally have a sufficient number of rooms and a good garden, in a few cases the outhouses and water supply are defective. Owners various. Rent generally from 3*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.*"—*Rev. G. Stevenson, Messrs. J. Mickleburgh and F. Dix, Dickleburgh.*

24. "One of the worst hot-beds of demoralization is found in the crowded state of too many of our cottages and the consequent intermixture of the sexes. Very many of our cottages have only one room below, and one above. In some instances, where the families are large, they are crowded, and generally the drainage and ventilation are very imperfect, and a hole for slops and refuse of all kinds is the prevailing rule; often near the door. Accommodation, generally, wretched; ditto, water-supply; and often no privy. A large number are owned by persons of slender means, and consequently they are often in a poor state of repair. The rent is from 4*l.* to 5*l.*, often with no garden. I have no doubt that if the cottages were replaced with well-constructed new ones, affording sufficient accommodation, the people would soon become more decent in their habits, and ultimately more moral. They must now grow up without any sense of morality, modesty, or shame. It is very difficult to make the cottagers see the benefit of ventilation. I have often found that they would not suffer a window to remain open where the stench was intolerable, and when the necessity of plenty of air was enjoined by the medical man. Our population is nearly 200 less than it was 10 years ago; consequently, we have plenty of cottages, such as they are."—*Rev. G. T. Hall, Hempnall.*

25. "There are plenty of cottages in this parish for the population, six at least being at the present time empty. They are not overcrowded, and are generally commodious. Rent from 3*l.* to 5*l.*"—*Rev. J. H. Mules, Moulton.*

26. "Insufficient bedroom accommodation is the chief source of immorality. Most of the cottages are built of clay, with two lower and two upper rooms; few have gardens; the water supply is from pools. They are held under various owners."—*Rev. L. R. Henslow, Pulham Magdalene.*

27. "Great demoralization takes place from the want of sufficient bedrooms to the cottages where large families reside. Two instances in this parish are now most marked, three girls in one family, and two in another having illegitimate children:—*only one bedroom in each cottage.* The cottages are variously constructed, of brick, lath and plaster, and clay. Size of rooms and ventilation, indifferent; drainage tolerable; very few pumps; some have wells, but they are chiefly supplied by parish pump, and wells and pools. Some cottages have good gardens and allotments. Ownership mixed. Average rent 3*l.* 10*s.*—*Rev. Richard Bond, Rector, Pulham St. Mary Virgin.*

28. "Except on one property, the labourers live where they can, an easy matter, unfortunately, as to choice, as this parish was *open, i.e.*, covered with inferior cottages. The cottages are over-filled, and there is not a sufficient number with two and three bedrooms for the larger families. The evil is slowly abating; partly from material, partly from benevolent, reasons."—*Archdeacon Ormerod, Redenhall.*

29. "The cottage accommodation is lamentably deficient, more especially as young persons of both sexes are encouraged to remain at home; affecting alike their morals, and the comfort of the family. This evil has greatly increased of late years."—*Rev. Charles Gape, Vicar, Rushall.*

30. "Great complaints are made of the thinness of the cottage walls, which admits of bad language in one house being heard by the children in the next, so that one family contaminates the two adjoining households. We have 3½ cottages to 100 acres. They are for the most part built of 'clay lump;' or framed houses filled in with plaster; a few brick. Ventilation very bad; windows very low in up-stair rooms, and great accumulation of foul air between window and roof. Drains, nothing but open ditches, or holes cleaned out occasionally for the sake of the deposit. Water very impure from ponds and ditches. General

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accommodation, a sitting-room and a 'back-house' with two bedrooms. Owners, poor people living at a distance, who live upon the rents of these cottages. Rent, with garden, 4*l.* to 6*l.*; without, 2*l.* to 3*l.*"—*Rev. J. W. Millard, Rector, Shimpling.*

31. "I firmly believe that the supply of proper and adequate cottages in proportion to the land is the most vital element and question in the subject-matter of this inquiry. Where you have a well-built cottage with proper accommodation, so as to be in its true sense a *home* to the labourer, there, as a rule, you find a christian household, attached to the land, attached to the spot, respecting the duties and decencies of a family; where you have not this you will find simply a human managerie. Our cottages are very unevenly distributed; but only in two cases are they overcrowded with members of the family; in no case with lodgers. The number of cottages in the parish is 75 (acreage 2,168, population 481), of which 9 are now untenanted; 31 of these have been either built or entirely renewed within the last 15 years; 18 have insufficient accommodation, and of this number five are very bad. The majority of the cottages, however, are very good, and are built of brick or clay lump, and are (1) well ventilated, fairly-drained, and have a keeping-room averaging 12 by 14 ft., and (2) have not less than two bedrooms, in many cases three, with garden, water, and shed. In the case of the other cottages, bad ones, alluded to, there are small or no gardens at all, no water, one sleeping chamber, sometimes bi-sected, and the drainage uncared for. The late Sanitary Act has been useless here. The Board of Guardians, instead of themselves taking the initiative, as they ought to do, have left it to the parishioners to prefer complaints, which they will not do. Action on the part of the Board ought to be made peremptory. The best cottages are owned principally by Mr. T. L. Taylor, the chief landowner, and by myself; the worst by petty owners, not residents, who enforce a high rent and do little repair. The rent averages 4*l.* for a cottage and small garden, rising to 6*l.* with a much larger quantity of land. A cottage, built so as to be durable, cannot *per se* be self-supporting, *i.e.*, yield a rent equal to a good interest for the cost of the building, *plus* the expense of continuous repair. But this is not the aspect in which in my judgment the building of cottages ought to be viewed. They ought to be considered as a necessary part of landed property, the adjunct of a farm leased to a tenant for occupation. Viewed in this light, the building of cottages, if built by the landlord, will return a fair interest for his money. The tenant will gladly pay five per cent. on the outlay for the command of the cottages, and the advantage of having his labourers near to his homestead; deducting one per cent. for repairs there will remain 4 per cent for the landlord, a sufficient remuneration." — *Archdeacon Hopper, Rector and Magistrate, Starston.*

32. "Cottage accommodation has a great effect on morality and on the health of the poor. Most of our cottages are constructed of stud (frame) work, others of clay lump. They are pretty well ventilated and drained. The accommodation is fair; they generally have water supply, gardens, and outhouses. They mostly belong to the landowners. The rent is from 3*l.* to 5*l.*"—*Rev. F. W. H. Jerrard, Rector, Long Stratton.*

33. "We have not many cottages with three bedrooms, but, generally speaking, there is no cause for complaint in any respect. They are principally owned by the landlords." — *Rev. William Biggs, Vicar, Tharston.*

34. "We are of opinion that the want of proper accommodation in cottages has had a very injurious effect upon the morals of the rural population. There are some very old cottages in this parish; also some built within the last few years, and six are now being erected. The old cottages are badly constructed, but the present owner intends either to remodel or rebuild them, some having only one bedroom. Those lately built have two bedrooms and are comfortable cottages; and those now in course of erection are of a superior class, each having three bedrooms, and fitted up with every convenience. Nearly all have good gardens attached. The supply of water is deficient, but a pump is about to be put down in the village for the use of the parishioners by Mr. Kay, the late purchaser of many of the cottages. Most of the cottages belong to the landowners. Rent from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.*"—*Rev. W. Wallace, Rector, and Mr. John L. King, Churchwarden and Chairman of the Board of Guardians, Thorpe Abbotts.*

35. "So far as education goes, I think, in this parish we need no further governmental assistance than we receive by our annual grant. I should be thankful, however, if some legislation could improve cottage accommodation. I am not aware that there is any cottage in my parish with three bedrooms; almost all have two, but these are made by a flimsy partition. The rooms communicate with each other, and one of the two is generally miserably small. Privies are frequently built in such close proximity to the dwellings as to be very unwholesome. The water supply has lately been improved. Gardens generally, often very good. Ventilation in most instances very bad; drainage needs improvement. Ownership various; when landowner, cottages go with the farm, and are let by the tenant to his labourers. Rent from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.*"—*Rev. Thomas W. Thompson, Vicar, Tibenham.*

36. "I am of opinion that the want of proper cottage accommodation is most injurious to the poor, both as regards the welfare of their souls and bodies. I fear many of us, from long habit, pass it by unnoticed, but I am convinced, until better cottage accommodation is provided, the instruction given either in church or school will be comparatively useless in forming habits of decency and morality. We have very few cottages with three bedrooms. They are generally built of wooden stud-work, filled in with clay. They have, for the most part, one sitting-room of fair size, with brick floor; two bedrooms, very often with a doorway, but no door, between them, and a pantry. Many get their water from wells, some from pits from which clay has been dug. The outdoor accommodation has been much improved in the last year by our having a sanitary committee in each village, both as regards drainage and in other respects. The cottages are nearly all the property of landowners; the tenants are under no coercion as to the persons they deal with; we have only had one cottage built for many years; it has three bedrooms." —*Rev. Charles Grain, Rector, Wacton.*

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37. "There is a general improvement going on here. The cottages are well built; rooms generally 10 ft. square, some are 12 ft., and lofty, with windows made to open, and back doors and windows. Good drainage, and we are very free from fevers and general diseases. There are to be 30 new cottages, and 15 rebuilt, within three years, all to have three bedrooms. There is a good and ample supply of water from at least 12 wells, which a few years ago were cleansed and deepened. A good garden of a quarter of an acre of land to each cottage. Good outhouses. All the cottages, except two, belong to the Marquis Cholmondeley. Rent is from 1*l.* 6*s.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* It seems to me that the better the accommodation, the better can each tenant afford to pay a higher rent, by having his grown-up children under his own roof until they marry or remove to another parish." — *Rev. J. B. Winckworth, Great Bircham.*

38. "The insufficient accommodation for large families in many of the cottages cannot but have an injurious effect upon morality. Our cottages are of a fair description, but many of them are too small for the number of the family. Some belong to the landowners, some to the cottagers themselves, and some to small farmers or tradesmen, with whom, however, the tenants are not obliged to deal. The rent varies

from 50*s.* to 4*l.*, and occasionally to 4*l.* 10*s.*"—*Rev. O. Sadler, Brancaster.*

39. "This parish is very unfortunate in its cottage accommodation. The cottages principally—almost exclusively—belong to petty owners, many of them non-resident. I consider that our generally imperfect cottage accommodation and its overcrowding is the prime source of evil in our country villages, and, as matters now stand, is irremediable. This parish, in a healthful locality, has been lately much afflicted with low fever, clearly traceable to overcrowding. We have four or five model cottages (three bedrooms with separate entrance into each) built by the late Lord Orford, but the great majority are small and badly built—some wretchedly—badly ventilated and in indifferent repair; none with more than two small bedrooms, and most with only one. During our visitation, lately, of low fever, the board of guardians had many of the cottages inspected by their medical officer and reported on (I inclose the Report.*) There are several neighbouring villages with not much better cottage accommodation. Our water supply is excellent. Many of the cottages have gardens, and every one of them a good allotment, conveniently situated. Rent from 3*l.* to 5*l.* I am persuaded that the most efficient means of providing good cottage accommodation in our rural districts would be found in local societies for the *improvement, not building*, of cottage dwellings. The system should be to buy up as opportunities offered, cheap, *i. e.* indifferent or bad, cottage property, and to do this with a view to such repairs and alterations as would make bad good, taking care that the price should be such as would leave, after all works were done, a sufficient margin to secure at least five per cent. on the capital (in shares) subscribed."—*Rev. E. B. Everard, Burnham Thorpe.*

40. "Here lies the root of all the immorality and much of the ill-health in this parish, that our general cottage accommodation is most insufficient and comfortless in every way. The housing of the labouring class wants more attention than the conditions of their employment. This being an open parish, supplies labourers for a large area. We have about 300 cottages. Many of these are good, but these are chiefly belonging to the landowners. The greater part belong to tradesmen and small proprietors who have not the means or the space to improve them or their conveniences. There are very few gardens and no water supply to be depended on. The rent of the tradesmen's cottages is very high, 4*l.* or 4*l.* 10*s.*, and for a good cottage with two bedrooms, 5*l.* here and there. As a specimen of an overcrowded dwelling, I would instance one house where there are now living, with only one bedroom, a father, mother, three grown daughters, one of whom has a baby, a younger daughter, and two sons of 18 and 19 years of age. The landowners are building some cottages contiguous to the outlying farm premises."—*Rev. H. J. Hare, Docking.*

41. "Our cottages are too often overcrowded. There are about 180 in the parish. Very many are well-built, with good accommodation; there are also many with only one bedroom, and very cold; and many have no gardens. The smallest families are often found in the occupation of the best cottages. About 30 cottages belong to the landowners, some to a large occupier in the parish, others to smaller proprietors, very few to tradesmen. Rent from 1*l.* to 5*l.* per annum. The only plan for providing better cottages on self-supporting terms would be through a co-operating society."—*Rev. E. Oakley, Heacham.*

42. "Rooms may average 16 feet square. There are gardens to most of the cottages. Water is at hand. Landowners generally own the cottages. Rent about 4*l.* There are some cases of overcrowding."—*Rev. N. Raven, Holme-by-the-Sea.*

43. "I have been accustomed to agricultural parishes for 25 years, and I have not a doubt that morality and decency are all but impossible in the present state of most of our cottages. No cottage with a family ought to have less than three fair-sized bedrooms, and these ought to be divided with partitions that will shut out sound as well as sight. As the children grow up and leave home, the parents ought to be obliged to move into smaller houses to make room for younger families coming on. This would get rid of the expense of having more large cottages than are really needed. Old couples cannot need more than two rooms; widows, living alone, might do with one. There are 59 cottages of all sizes in this parish, which, with the exception of six, are the property of the landowner. Four of them are quite new; two built within 30 years; and these six belong to persons who demand an excessive rent. The remaining 53, belonging to the landowner, vary, as to rent, from 10*s.* to 4*l.*, the average being about 3*l.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* They are none of them new. The accommodation varies, but nearly all are fairly commodious. The water is supplied by wells, one to so many cottages; gardens good; outhouses fair; ventilation ditto. I think a few more cottages with three bedrooms are wanted, but some are capable of being divided, and I make no doubt that it will soon be done."—*Rev. W. M. H. Church, Hunstanton.*

44. "The deficiency of proper cottage accommodation is one of the most prolific sources of immorality among the labouring class; the fearful overcrowding in bedrooms is most prejudicial to health, and is the cause of much epidemic disease. Some legal enactment is absolutely necessary to remove this great cause of moral and physical evil. In this parish there are six cottages with three bedrooms, 27 with two, and 17 with only one bedroom. Some of them, and those with only one bedroom, are much crowded. In this parish there are three classes of cottages; those built by resident landowners, those built by small landed proprietors, and those built, as a matter of speculation, by persons in an inferior position of life, living at a distance. The first and second classes, numbering 14 cottages, have been built within the last few years by the rector, the lord of the manor, the resident squire, and a large farmer holding property of his own. Of these, six have three bedrooms; two of these belong to the rector, two to the lord of the manor, and two to the squire. The remaining eight have only two bedrooms. These cottages are all well-built, with good sanitary arrangements, and are let at from 3*l.* to 4*l.* per annum. Of the third class, 15 have two bedrooms; of these 11 are badly built, with very small rooms, and deficient sanitary arrangements, and certainly are not suitable for large families. The other four are very good. The rent of these cottages is from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 6*l.* per annum. The remaining 17, containing only one room, belonging to speculators, are excessively bad in every respect, and require better sanitary arrangements; they let at from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* per annum. The rent of cottages built on speculation is invariably higher than that of those built by landowners. Almost all the cottages in this parish have good gardens. The ventilation, drainage, and water supply of many of the cottages is bad, and in consequence of this and the neglect of sanitary measures, epidemic diseases have broken out in the parish, and in one instance with very fatal results. It is very difficult to induce the parochial officers or the union medical officer to interfere with regard to sanitary measures through the fear of increasing the poor-rate and displeasing the board of guardians, which in this union is composed almost exclusively of farmers. The size of rooms in the cottages seldom exceeds 10 feet square, and in some instances is not more than seven feet. As good cottage property cannot be built to pay a fair interest for the money expended, good cottages must be built either from motives of charity and kindness or because a law may be passed to compel such cottages. No cottage containing a sitting-room, kitchen or scullery, larder, and three bedrooms, can be built at so low a cost as to prove remunerative and to pay

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a fair interest for the money laid out, if the rent is to be suited to the labourer's means. One cottage, such as ought to be provided for a labourer, could not be built for less than 100*l.* or 120*l.* in this neighbourhood; two or more cottages might be built for 100*l.* apiece; and the cottagers cannot afford to pay more than 3*l.* per annum rent, which would be but small interest for the money, taking into consideration the cost of the land, taxes paid by the landlord, and the cost of repairs from time to time. The only way it appears to me to look at this question is to acknowledge that property has its duties, and that the landowner should regard cottages in the same light as barns, stables, and other buildings, as absolutely necessary for carrying on the work of the farm."—*Rev. W. T. Beckett, Rector and Diocesan School Inspector, Ingoldisthorpe.*

45. "The cottage accommodation of this parish is generally very bad, greatly promoting immorality as well as discomfort and uncleanliness, and, as a consequence, carelessness on the part of parents in the education of their children. Our cottages are generally small, badly drained, without the accommodation necessary for cleanliness, health, or decency. Very few have three, some have two, but the majority have only one chamber. Many are crowded with large families of all ages and both sexes. It is not uncommon for seven, eight, or nine persons to occupy one sleeping room. Some have 10, and there are even cases of 11 all sleeping together in one room. They are the property of small owners; with one exception, the large landowners have hardly any. One estate, over 2,000 acres, has no cottage upon it; another, over a 1,000, has about 30; another, over 500, has no cottage; another, over 100, has one; another, of 50 acres, has two or three. The rents are 3*l.*, 3*l.* 10*s.*, and 3*l.* 15*s.* Gardens are good and water supply plentiful. I do not believe that cottages fit for the decent accommodation of labourers with families can be built in this neighbourhood at such a cost as to be self-supporting, so long as wages are at the rate at which they have hitherto been. And even if wages were raised, I doubt if many labourers would be willing to pay such a rent as could make cottage property a fair investment of capital."—*Rev. J. A. Ogle, Rural Dean, Sedgeford.*

46. "As a general rule there is a want of bedrooms, and some are crowded with members of the family. Most of the cottages have ground attached to them. Some belong to Lord Cholmondeley; some to Mr. Kerslake; but many belong to small proprietors; not any to the tradespeople. Where the cottages belong to the landowners the rent is very low; but in the case of the small proprietors they are unreasonably high, in many instances double the rent of equally good, if not better, cottages."—*Rev. Thomas Carpenter, Sydestone.*

47. "From considerable experience of rural parishes I am confident that the baneful effects of insufficient chamber accommodation for the poor are so great that any legislation on field labour will be almost useless unless some measures are also adopted respecting sleeping accommodation. About half the cottages here have, downstairs, two rooms about 12 ft. by 12 ft. and 9 ft. by 9ft., and two bedrooms equal in dimensions to those below. The remainder have but too frequently only one kitchen, 13 ft. by 13 ft., with a very small back kitchen, and one bedroom the size of the kitchen below. Large families sometimes live in the latter class of houses. The water supply is sufficient. There are not many gardens, but good allotments; outhouses are in bad condition in many cases. About three-fourths of the houses belong to the estate; the others to small tradesmen. The average rent is 4*l.* 5*s.*"—*Mr. Thomas Harrison, Certificated Schoolmaster, Thornham.*

48. "I am persuaded that unless cottage accommodation be vastly improved any effort we may make in other directions will fail to ameliorate the condition of the labouring poor. In this parish the cottages, 30 in all (1,500 acres), are mostly old, ill-built, low, damp, and dilapidated. Six of them are built in pairs, with one staircase common to two cottages. The rooms—except in the case of an old farmhouse converted into cottages for three families, with a common stair—are small, ranging from 7 ft. by 9ft. and 12 ft. by 9ft. to 12 ft. by 13 ft. The floors of many of them are below the level of the ground outside, and several are not high enough for a tall man to walk upright in. Sixteen have but one sleeping room; in several others the second sleeping room is little more than a closet. Almost all have a small parcel of garden ground, and they are fairly supplied with water, most blocks or groups of cottages having a common well. The outhouse accommodation generally is very scanty. The principal landowner and lord of the manor—Magdalen College, Oxford—has not a cottage in the parish; their lessee, who is also a freeholder in the parish, owns three; five belong to Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge; eight to four several small freeholders. The remaining 14 belong to a farmer occupying his own land, who is also lessee of the Caius College property which includes five cottages, so that he is virtually landlord of 19 out of the 30. The rent ranges from 2*l.* 12*s.* to, in a few instances, 4*l.* 10*s.*, the greater number being let at from three to four guineas. No progress whatever is being made towards increasing the deficient accommodation."—*Rev. Edward S. Stocker, Rector, Titchwell.*

49. "There are two cottages in Waterden (population 40, acreage 763). The accommodation is sufficient for the inhabitants. Lord Leicester is the landlord. The rent is 2*l.* 10*s.* per annum."—*Rev. C. Stephenson, Waterden.*

Union of Swaffham.

50. "The cottage accommodation is in many instances bad, affecting without doubt the morality and comfort, though not apparently the health, of the inhabitants. It has no adverse effect upon their education. As to construction, while many cottages have one living room with back kitchen and two rooms over, many also have only one living room with one bedroom over, and a lean-to back building. In some of the best of the above cases the rooms are small; and in all ventilation and drainage are little attended to. The supply of water is defective in many instances. The gardens are small and the outhouses scanty. They are almost wholly in the hands of landowners; such as are in the hands of tradesmen do not entail on the tenants any obligation to deal with the owner. Some slight progress has been made in late years."—*Rev. B. Edwards, Rector, Ashill.*

51. "The cottages at Bodney are excellent. The proportion is 1½ to 100 acres. Each block of building consists of two cottages, each containing two living rooms and three chambers, each about 14 feet square, well ventilated, drained, provided with water, oven, garden, outhouse, &c. They are all the property of, and have been built by, Lord Ashburton."—*Rev. E. Tearle, Bodney.*

52. "Every cottage ought to have three chambers. In this parish the cottages chiefly consist of two upper and two lower rooms; front rooms 11 ft. or 12 ft. square, back rooms 12 ft. by 8 ft. or 9 ft. Some are in the hands of the tenant farmers; some of the tradespeople and small holders of land. Rent from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* 10*s.*"—*Rev. George R. Winter, East Bradenham.*

53. "The cottage sleeping accommodation is not what it should be. The separation of the sexes ought to be provided for by every owner of cottage property. Most of our cottages are owned by small tradesmen, not resident in the parish. Average rent, 4*l.*"—*Rev. L. Morgan, West Bradenham.*

54. "We have more cottages in the village than are required by labourers employed in this parish. The cottages generally are very bad, the rooms small, with members of the family of all ages and both sexes in one bedroom. Wells for water are pretty general. Some of the cottages belong to landowners, and some to tradesmen, but I am not aware that the tenants of

the latter are obliged to deal with the landlords."—*Rev. Charles Taylor, Rector, Great Cressingham.*

55. "The closeness of the cottages together has as much to do with morality as the smallness and paucity of the rooms. In this parish no lodgers are allowed. The cottages are brick, stone, and clay built; tiled; rooms about 14 feet square; ventilation and drainage good. Accommodation: living room, washhouse, and pantry, two bedrooms to most. Water good. Garden from 20 to 30 rods; outhouse and shed, pigstye and privy. All belong to the landowner. Rent from 2*l.* to 4*l.* It is impossible to build cottages on self-supporting terms. No labourer can pay sufficient rent on the outlay with present wages."—*J. Trueman Mills, Esq., Landowner, Little Cressingham.*

56. "There cannot be a doubt that in this parish the bad cottage accommodation has an injurious effect on the morality, education, health, and comfort of the labouring poor. It is not the quantity but the quality of the cottages in this parish that is bad. There are enough, or more than enough of them, but they are generally badly constructed, with small rooms, and the ventilation and drainage not good. The water supply is very bad in some, in others pretty good. Most of them have gardens and outhouses. Some belong to the landowners, some to farmers, some to tradesmen, and some to other persons. Rent from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* Some of the cottages are being improved."—*Rev. C. W. H. H. Sidney, Gooderstone.*

57. "The very worst possible effect on each of the particulars specified. The cottages in this parish are sufficient in number, and there is no great cause of complaint on the score of ventilation or drainage. But the accommodation of the greater proportion of our people is quite inadequate to their numbers; the bedrooms overcrowded, with no proper separation of the sexes. As to gardens, outhouses, and water supply, there exists no lack. Ownership is exclusively by the landholder, in whom the whole of the property in the parish is vested. Rents vary from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*"—*Rev. Charles Hardy, Rector, Hillborough.*

58. "There cannot be a doubt that the great immorality that prevails among the labouring class, and the sickly condition of many, are caused to a great extent by the sad want of decent and wholesome cottage accommodation. There are about 60 cottages in this parish (2,600 acres). Some are overcrowded with large families. There are scarcely any cottages of proper size, or with a sufficient number of rooms for sleeping, or properly ventilated. Water supply for the most part is good; gardens moderate. There is land which is allotted to the poor. The parish is an open one, the cottages almost all belonging to small owners. Rent about 3*l.*"—*Rev. H. Milne, Holme Hale.*

59. "No family with sons and daughters should have less than three bedrooms. We have not nearly sufficient cottages, though the number is increasing. Some of them are very much crowded. The rooms are often too small. There are seldom any special provisions for ventilation or drainage. There are rarely more than two bedrooms; sometimes only one for a largish young family. Many have only a very small garden, but there are allotments, which generally make up for this deficiency. They all belong to the landowner (Sir Henry Bedingfield, Bart.) except three belonging to a charity. They are let very cheap."—*Rev. Alexander Thurtell, late one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, Oxburgh.*

60. "The want of proper accommodation, so prevalent here, is greatly injurious to the morality, health, and comfort of the labouring poor. Many of our cottages are not conveniently situated in respect to the farms. Several are crowded with members of the family, though not often with lodgers. In respect of construction, ventilation, and drainage, there is a general defect. Also of accomodation, gardens excepted, which are generally good. Ownership is very various; principally not in landowner; in many cases persons of small means are owners. The rent is usually high, about 4*l.* per annum. Considerable progress is being made towards increasing the accommodation by some meritorious landowners."—*Rev. W. H. Parker, Rector, Saham Toney.*

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61. "There are 23 empty cottages in this parish. Few of our cottages have two bedrooms, and scarcely any have three bedrooms. They are crowded both with members of the family and with lodgers. Cottages which are the property of owners and occupiers of land, or sublet by occupiers to their labourers, are in every instance far more commodious and in better repair than those which are the property of tradesmen or persons not interested in agriculture."—*Mr. Charles Palmer, Vice-Chairman of Board of Guardians, Sporle.*

62. "Good cottages with not less than three bedrooms, for large and adult families, are beneficial morally and physically; but these are appreciated only by the intelligent and prudent; others use them as a means of gain in taking lodgers, and very great watchfulness is required to prevent their doing it. In this parish construction varies: some have no up-stairs rooms, which is objectionable, if the floors are not of wood; one sitting-room (about 12 ft. square by 7 ft. or 8 ft. high) and pantry, with two or three bedrooms; about one-third have three bedrooms, and none less than two. The present cottage accommodation provides a cottage of not less than three rooms for an average of 6½ persons, and for the most part the larger families have the larger cottages. The water supply and outhouses are in some cases a little defective; the gardens are very good. The ownership is in the landowner. One cottage is let at 4*l.*; I have heard of one, though I doubt it, as being let at 5*l.*; the remainder, I think, are not more than 3*l.*, which includes also quarter of an acre or more of garden and potato land."—*Archdeacon Wise, Stanford.*

63. "Bad cottage accommodation is the cause of much evil every way. The proportion of cottages in this parish is 1¼ to 100 acres. They are good, and one-third of them have three bedrooms. There is only one case of crowding. Some are built of bricks, others of clay lump. They belong to the landowners. Gardens are from 20 to 40 rods, the former appears sufficient. Rent about 4*l.* Several new cottages have been lately built."—*Thos. Barton, Esq., Landowner, Threxton.*

County of Essex.

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Union of Halstead.

64. "There is no doubt that the insufficiency of cottage accommodation is injurious to the morality and comfort of the labouring poor. We have not a sufficient number of cottages with three bedrooms. There are generally two and a sitting-room. Some are crowded, but not most of them. In several there are lodgers. The keeping-room is 12 feet by 11; a back kitchen much smaller. A bedroom over each. Ventilation abundant downstairs; upstairs, deficient; no fireplace. Drainage tolerable. No proportion observed between the number of rooms and the number of persons in the family. Water supply sufficient. A piece of garden ground attached to most of the cottages, except in the street. Outhouses sufficient generally. About 58 of the cottages belong to the principal landowners; 11 to a builder; the rest to a variety of persons. The highest rent is 6*l.* 10*s.*; the lowest, 2*l.* 12*s.*; the commonest, 4*l.*"—*Rev. Samuel Blackall, Vicar, Earl's Colne.*

65. "Cottages with large families are crowded. They are constructed of timber and thatch, and timber and tile. Some few, new, brick and tile, or brick and slate. The bedrooms in many old cottages are badly ventilated. The drainage has been lately improved under inspection. The cottages belonging to the farms are generally good in the matters referred to. Many cottages belong to small owners; some of these are bad. Almost all have gardens. I know of no compulsion with respect to trading. Rent from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*"—*Rev. Wm. Webster, Rector, Colne Engaine.*

66. "To have large families in cottages with only

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two bedrooms is detrimental to modesty and to health too. We have a full proportion of cottages to our acreage (four to the 100 acres). About one-half are built of timber, the rest of brick. In the oldest cottages the rooms are rather large, 12 feet × 10, and there is no want of ventilation. The drainage is not bad, except in two or three instances. The rooms in the newer cottages are smaller, 10 feet square. Water supply in most cases is good. There is no cottage in the parish with more than two bedrooms. Gardens are good. The largest landowner has no cottages; the next only three. The rest belong to small owners of land, except five, which belong to a draper in a neighbouring parish. The rents vary from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* Four new cottages are on the point of being built."—*Rev. Geo. J. Taylor, Vicar, White Colne.*

67. "This parish is better provided than most with cottage accommodation. Yet even here, those best acquainted with the parish, consider that in many cases serious evil arises from defective size and arrangements in the houses. Speaking generally of the district, it is impossible to exaggerate the evil effects on the morality of the poor, resulting from the overcrowding necessitated by the limited accommodation in the cottages. It is the crying evil of the country; and till it is remedied, any attempts to improve the condition of the poor, whether by education or otherwise, are utterly vain and hopeless. We have not a sufficient supply of cottages for our labouring population. Most of them have two bedrooms; some have only one, into which are crowded brothers and sisters, the father and mother. I should say about three-fourths have two small bedrooms. The drainage is defective, and only the healthiness of the situation, in the opinion of medical men conversant with the locality, prevents serious consequences to health. Some slight improvement has been effected of late years, especially in providing decent privies. Most of the cottages have small gardens, and there are allotments in the parish, though not sufficient. It is a peculiarity of the parish that most of the cottages are in the hands of small owners, living at a distance; and these looking on their cottages simply as an investment, are not wealthy enough to make substantial enlargements or improvements. Rents vary from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* and 4*l.* 10*s.*"—*Rev. E. S. Corrie, Great Maplestead.*

68. "We have not nearly enough cottages with two and three bedrooms; the older cottages are crowded. These latter are built of clay daub; the more recently erected, of brick or lath and plaster, are good cottages and well provided in every way. The owners of the cottages are chiefly three of the smaller landowners, owning about 100 acres each. The rents vary from 3*l.* to 5*l.* New cottages have recently been built, but yet the old ones are but little improved, and the number of new cottages is small."—*Rev. Francis T. Hurst, Vicar, Ridgewell.*

69. "Here the cottages frequently want a third sleeping-room; sometimes even a second. They are old, and ill-ventilated, and ill-drained generally. Water supply chiefly from ponds; gardens often very small, or none. There are outhouses, recently provided with covered pits. I let out about six or seven acres to those who have no gardens. Rent from 3*l.* to 4*l.* Three new cottages have been built, since the new Poor Law made it practicable. I am trustee for two very old parish cottages (under a will, in time of James I). I built new sleeping-rooms to each, as lean-tos; but should be glad of any further improvement. The proceeds go in calico to the poor at Christmas."—*Rev. John Forster, Stambourne.*

70. "In my opinion, the small size of the rooms in some of the cottages must be prejudicial to health and morality; I know of no particular instance. We have enough cottages; but more third bedrooms would be a benefit; some are crowded with members of the family, not with lodgers. They are built of lath and plaster, or clay daub; mostly thatched; few slated; a few, brick and tile. These are the most recently erected, but in the most unhealthy situation, and have the smallest rooms. The ground floors contain a room and a buttery, varying in size from 11 ft. × 11 room with 6 ft. × 9ft. buttery, to 9 ft. × 8 ft. room and 6 ft. × 5 ft. buttery. The upper floors contain the same total space, minus space for stairs, divided into two rooms. The rooms are about 6½ ft. high. Ventilation is fair; drainage good to about half the cottages. Gardens to a few cottages, but nearly all cottages have either a garden or a field allotment; many have both. There is usually a privy and a bakehouse to every three or four cottages. Out of 55, including two off-hand farmhouses used as cottages, 12 belong to three landowners; four to a landowner who is lord of the manor; the remaining 39 to small owners; some to the inhabitants (labourers); all to owners more or less needy. Rents vary from 2*l.* 3*s.* to 4*l.*; the latter have small gardens attached. Nearly all the cottages in Tilbury being copyhold, and the property of small owners, I see no chance of improvement until a person of good means and intentions shall purchase and enfranchise them.

"If anything could be done to facilitate the enfranchisement of cottages, I think it would tend very much to encourage improvement, where copyhold tenure exists. In Tilbury, 49 out of 55 cottages are copyhold. Of these I own 10, which I bought of three different owners. They have been erected by persons of little or no means upon narrow strips of waste ground, a stagnant ditch close behind, and only a narrow road and a few feet of waste between them and another ditch in front. The Inspector of Nuisances has been active, but he cannot make space, and all filth and refuse must in the first instance be deposited no further from a cottage than one ditch or the other. The frequent stirrings for removal of foul collections create worse results than the collections do when left at rest. The usual history of the owners is as follows:—After 'taking up,' *i.e.*, paying fines and fees and lawyer's bills, the owner lives in his cottage often hampered by a debt incurred to pay the above charges, and often, too proud to do or accept what a man of no property would, is worse off than the latter. He dies. His son has not means to pay the "taking up." He borrows; is all his life in the lawyer's hands; or (as I know to be the case in two instances now living), is called upon in his life-time to sell and pay off his debt, and is (I may say) utterly destitute. Last year, a female proprietor was imprisoned for debt arising from reluctance to surrender some cottages upon which there is a mortgage. She has consulted, and run up bills with four lawyers; thus, so increasing the debt that it is far beyond the value of the property. Another cottage is tumbling down because the owner and late occupier can neither repair nor 'take it up.' In fact, it would not now be worth the amount of fine and fees. Another was lately put up to auction by a lawyer, but owing to claims upon it, he cannot (I am told) hand it over to the purchaser, and the owner and occupier will not go out so long as he can stick in. I give these cases to show (as it appears to me) that copyhold cottages are much more to the advantage in the long run of lords of manors, stewards, and lawyers, than of the poor owners, who usually in the end are ruined, always impoverished, and become soured and bad members of society.

"I would suggest, therefore, that—

"(1.) Cottages built in situations such as I have described, after satisfaction to persons authorized to inspect, be legally made freehold to the next purchaser, and for ever, after he has paid the customary single fine or fee.

"(2.) That no cottage be in future built, or, if built, allowed to remain, upon any copyhold land or waste belonging to a manor, without the approval of authorized inspectors with regard to healthiness of position, arrangement, and space.

"(3.) That no lord of a manor, or steward of a manor, or any person in any way beholden to or connected with such, be appointed as inspector.

"(4.) That where the owner of such cottages be

willing to enfranchise, he shall be subject to only one-half of the expense.

"From my little experience as a purchaser and enfranchiser of copyholds, it appears to me that the valuation of cottages for the purpose of enfranchisement is made upon the basis of rent and rating, and most unfairly. Two cottages may be equally rated, yet the one is firewood, the other valuable timber. The one may be of equal size with the other, yet be built of what is termed "round wood," *i.e.*, saplings with the bark on, even of elm or ash, while the other is built of heart of oak. The one past repair; the other next to everlasting. Yet both may be let at the same rent, and both equally rated. The valuer claims his (I think) 3*l.* I mean the steward's valuer, and in his hands is the poor owner, unless he employs a valuer on his side, and so increases his expenses.

"I have bought, paid fines and fees and valuation, to my loss, and said nothing, but agreed rather than fight; bought cottages, not as investments, but simply because they are close to my house; and, being *now* a loser (for I get a very poor per-centage for my money), what encouragement have I to enfranchise by paying five years' rental or thereabouts, and fees and law expenses? and without enfranchising first, is there not every reason *not* to improve the cottages, save for conscience' sake, seeing that every improvement increases value, and consequently fines and fees? And how much more does this argument apply to the comparatively poor owner?

"My suggestions may appear hard upon lords of manors, stewards, and lawyers; but I think such appearance vanishes on the consideration that the cottages in question were allowed to be built on sites never fit for cottages. Many of them have been built and stand upon sites the half of which belonged to the road, as being within 15 feet of the centre of the road, and yet has been measured into the copyhold as belonging to the lord of the manor. (I write this subject to correction). Thus the lords have for generations received fines for which they have no claim.

"Again, be it remembered that the pieces of waste land belonging to the manors were utterly valueless to the lords till used by the poor copyholders, and they have for generations made them of such value to such lords, their stewards, &c.

"I am no lawyer, and my suggestions may be utterly impracticable; but should they lead to suggestions from others that would bring about a scheme for putting copyholders (I mean the owners of copyhold cottages) on a better footing, whereby the dwellings and morals of the poor in this neighbourhood might be much benefited, I shall not regret having made them."—*Lewis J. Way, Esq., J.P., Tilbury.*

71. "The bedroom accommodation is deficient. Cottages, mostly lath and plaster. Rooms 12 ft. by 12 ft. Water supply bad. There is a garden to every cottage. Some of the cottages are let with the farms; others are owned by persons in the neighbourhood. The rent varies from 3*l.* to 5*l.*"—*Rev. John Gaselee, Rural Dean, Little Yeldham.*

Union of Witham.

72. "The accommodation admits of improvement; but our cottages are not overcrowded. They are lath and plaster, and brick built; tiled, slated, and thatched. Some are good; others under-sized. Some belong to the owners, and others to the occupiers of the land. None are tenanted on the truck system. Rent from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.*"—*Rev. B. L. Clarke, Little Braxted.*

73. "Though the cottage accommodation in this parish is not satisfactory in many respects, there is less to complain of than in many places. There is a fair proportion of cottages to the acreage, but not enough with three bedrooms. There are several very good cottages in the parish with ample gardens; none very bad. There is a deficiency of outhouses. Water, in many instances, is obtained from a distance, but from good springs. The owners are chiefly landowners; and I am not aware that there is any obligation to deal with the only owner who is a tradesman."—*Rev. R. Marsh White, Rector, Fairsted.*

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74. "All cottages should have three bedrooms, and, excepting where there is no family, no sub-letting to lodgers should be allowed, and the division of the children by sex should be carried out. There is an extreme deficiency of cottages in this parish (pop. 143; acreage 1,150). The few which exist are near the farms. Some of them have three bedrooms, and others two. The old cottages are in very moderate condition; two new ones are better arranged. Water supply bad; gardens good. They are solely owned by the landowner. The rent is not high. I should be glad to borrow money to build one or two cottages on my glebe, if I had no personal loss."—*Rev. F. Spurrell, Rector, Faulkbourne.*

75. "We have 99 cottages to 3,300 acres. There are not enough with three bedrooms. The rooms average about 13 ft. square by 9 ft. high. Ventilation and drainage good. Our only want is a few cottages with three bedrooms. Most have a small garden, but this is supplemented by allotment ground. Water supply good, pumps having been placed at great expense in different parts of the parish. Cottages are owned principally by the vicar and by the farmers in the parish. Rent averages 4*l.* a year, payable once a year at harvest time."—*Rev. Alfred Snell, Vicar, Feering.*

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Union of Horsham.

76. "We have about 150 cottages to 6,000 acres of cultivated, and 4,000 acres of wood and waste land. They are rather unequally distributed. Ten or a dozen are mere huts; a very few have only one bedroom and a sitting-room. One half at least have two bedrooms, sitting-room and washhouse; and the remainder three bedrooms and ample accommodation otherwise. The size of the cottages as well as the materials of which they are built, varies very much. Some are entirely timber, others brick; some stone. Water rather plentiful and good, and generally a large garden, varying from 20 to 40 rods. The cottages are nearly all in the hands of the landlords and tenant farmers. Rent 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* per week. A great deal has been done in the way of improvement of late years."—*Rev. J. H. Masters, Lower Beeding.*

77. "The majority of our cottages have two bedrooms; three would be the exception. The houses are brick-built; rooms 11 ft. by 10 ft.; ventilation indifferent; draining on no system. Most have wells and garden and small outhouse. The majority are owned by small tradesmen, but the tenants are under no compulsion to deal with the landlord. Rent averages about 2*s.* 3*d.* per week. A large increase is going on.—*Rev. R. Blaker, Ifield.*

78. "Our cottage accommodation is, generally, fairly good. I don't think there is much overcrowding. The water supply is generally bad."—*Rev. J. H. Milne, Rector, Itchingfield.*

79. "Clean and tidy cottages with windows that open are what are chiefly required, with two or three bedrooms, according to the size of the family, and a good garden; and the selection of the tenants for honesty and industry is better than any restriction by legal enactments."—*E. J. Bunny, Esq., Magistrate and Landowner, Slinfold.*

80. "On the whole, our cottages are too few in number, old, and out of repair. They are generally held by small farmers, who let them to their labourers. They are responsible for repairs, but frequently are unable to keep the houses in order, or spend any money on them. I have only about 100 houses in all (on 3,000 acres) for farmers, railway servants, and all inhabitants. There are about 54 cottages which might be available, but several are inhabited by widows and aged men. They are conveniently placed for general work; but the men go long distances for barking and hoop-shaving. Considering the absence of the girls, and that the lads live in the farmhouses,

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I should say we have enough with two or three bedrooms. They are not generally crowded; but there is sometimes an influx of 'navvies.' The cottages are frequently old farmhouses divided into two. The rooms are of fair size, but very cold, badly closed and badly drained. There are large open chimneys down which the rain comes. In one case, I have known the family obliged to go to bed on a Sunday afternoon in winter, because they could not keep the fire alight. They are in bad condition as to roof, walls, and windows. The people have to go, in many cases, a long distance for water, which is very indifferent when obtained. There are generally good gardens. The cottages belong mostly to the landowners, but are held by the cottagers from the farmers. Rent varies from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. I very much wish for more cottages, and have urged it. There remains a dread of increasing the poor rate."—*Rev. A. H. S. Barwell, Southwater.*

Union of Hailsham.

81. "The cottages in this parish are not inferior to those of other parishes; but, as a rule the cottage accommodation in country districts is very defective. Those in this parish are principally two-storied, a kitchen and front room on the ground floor, and from two to three bedrooms in the upper story. Ventilation varies according to the age and construction of the houses; but in most cottages, where the occupants are respectable people, they pay considerable attention in this district to the proper ventilation of their dwellings. The drainage in most cases is very bad and neglected; but commissioners appointed for the purpose are paying attention to the subject. The water supply is not good in this immediate neighbourhood, but fresh wells are being dug, and in due course we shall be better supplied. These matters rest chiefly with the landlords and owners. Rent is from 4*l.* up to 6*l.* per annum."—*Rev. W. A. Dearsley, Bodle St. Green.*

82. "With regard to cottage accommodation, the great diversity makes it difficult to give a correct idea. There are old cottages and new. The new cottages built on the farms are the best; they have three sleeping-rooms usually. Other new cottages have two, and sometimes an attic in the sloping roof; but I think the fault of the new cottages is that they are small, the rooms scarcely over 10 ft. square. Rent varies from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a week; in some favourable exceptions, as on Earl Delaware's estate, 1*s.* per week. The relieving officer does not report the existence of any nuisance, and ventilation is generally good."—*Rev. James S. Vidal, Chiddingly.*

83. "Our parish is short of accommodation (pop., 1,604; acreage, 6,000), and many of the old cottages are in a very bad state. The old ones are thatched, weather-tiled, large rooms; drainage tolerably good. Two bedrooms generally; three in a few. Water supply generally good; nearly each cottage has a garden. They generally belong to the landowners, but a considerable number are owned by the small tradesmen of the parish. Rent 1*s.* 9*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* the week. A little increase is in progress by the tradesmen of the parish."—*Rev. H. Geldart and Mr. Akers, Hellingly.*

84. "If cottages were good, I believe it would have a very good effect on morality. The generality of ours are tolerably good; certainly much improved in the last 10 years. We have about 150 cottages in the parish; (population, 1,287; acreage, 4,926), fairly distributed, not crowded. Most are well constructed; a few are old boarded buildings. Drainage good; well supplied with water, and most of them have a garden. Generally belong to landowners; a few to tradesmen. Rent 2*s.* and 2*s.* 6*d.* a week."—*Thomas Arkcoll, Esq., Magistrate and Landowner, Herstmonceux.*

85. "The cottage accommodation in this parish is satisfactory. We have about two to the 100 acres. They are generally brick-built, and of sufficient size, with good ventilation and drainage. The greater number have six rooms, with good gardens, and in most instances a good supply of water. The landproprietors are owners of the greater part of the cottages. The rent in most cases is 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* per week."—*Mr. Wm. Mannington, Guardian and Occupier, Laughton.*

86. "There are about 80 cottages in the parish for labourers, and it is considered that there is a sufficient quantity. There are some very good cottages; some indifferent, and some bad. They have all, or nearly so, some garden ground attached. The rooms are generally of a suitable size. The drainage has been improved. They are owned by the landlords, by the tradesmen, and by a few other persons."—*Rev. G. Rainier, Ninfield.*

87. "We have a fair proportion of ordinary country cottages; some wood, others partly brick and partly plaster. All have gardens. Owned by landowners Rent from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.*"—*Rev. E. C. Graham, Vicar, and Mr. Wm. Tickener, Churchwarden, Wartling.*

88. "Large rooms, well ventilated in most of the cottages; weather-tiled or boarded; some brick walls. Most have three bedrooms besides the sitting room. Most have a garden, water supply near, and outhouses. The best cottages are in the hands of the landlords and farmers. Some built 40 years ago, and inferior to the others, are in the hands of small proprietors, not tradesmen of the parish. There is some progress being made towards increasing our cottage accommodation."—*Rev. G. E. Haviland, Rector, Warbleton.*

Union of West Hampnett.

89. "We have 11 cottages to 885 acres. Four of the landowners' houses are first-rate tenements; three or more rooms each; size, about 14 ft. by 16 ft.; three landowners' cottages, exclusive of the 11, are much out of repair, and are at present empty. The rest of the houses belong to small proprietors and bear a higher rent. The rent of those spoken of is 1*s.* a week."—*Rev. R. A. L. Nunns, Appledram.*

90. "With the exception of one or two cottages, the accommodation is good in Barnham. The old cottages are, generally speaking, good, and with sufficient accommodation for the people. There is good water supply, ventilation, and drainage, and a garden to each. Most of these belong to the landowners. Rent 1*s.* and 2*s.* a week, according to size. The new cottages have very little garden, and very small rooms. Rent, 2*s.* 6*d.* a week; these belong to other owners."—*Rev. A. P. Cornwall, Vicar, Barnham.*

91. "We have one cottage to the 60 acres. In a few cases there is crowding. There is not a sufficient number with two and three bedrooms. As a rule they are well built and in good repair; size and ventilation good; cesspools. A very few have three bedrooms; most two; and one or two only one bedroom. Water supply good; gardens large; outhouses convenient. They belong to landowners. Rent 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a week. A new cottage is being built this year."—*Rev. H. C. Bones, Binsted.*

92. "The enlargement of cottages would be useless without the exclusion of lodgers. And then you must supervise the public-houses and such-like harbours for the single men "unattached," who would congregate there instead of at private houses. This would be the difficulty. I think, however, it would be worth trial, since, by clearing home of strangers you would benefit two generations at once. Reckoning three men to every 100 acres, and five out of six married men, there should be 45 cottages. There are from 45 to 50, besides a few vacant farmhouses, occupied by labourers; and the acreage is 1808. The older cottages are of the low-pitched and thatched type, with more area than head-room. Many have but one bedroom; more two; very few three, and these not strictly cottages, at least not in their first intention. Families of six and seven have often only two bedrooms, and some of these will still take lodgers. I think this should be prohibited. Out-of-

doors space ample; gardens large; drainage fair; ownership, attached to farms; water supply good. Rent from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a week."—*Rev. J. W. Miller, Rector, Birdham.*

93. "I consider good cottage accommodation most essential to the morality and general well-being of the labouring poor. The cottages in this parish are for the most part the property of the Duke of Richmond, who takes a great interest in their construction, and is re-building a certain number annually upon his estate, his object being that they should in all respects be suitable to the accommodation of the labouring poor. Rent from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, with gardens, &c. The cottages belonging to other proprietors, to tradesmen and private individuals, are very inferior both in size and condition. Rent from 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* per week. There is no obligation upon the tenants to deal with the tradesmen who are owners."—*Rev. W. Burnett, Rector and Rural Dean, Boxgrove.*

94. "The cottages here are all good, with good well water, and good gardens attached, occupied under the landlord at a rental of about 3*l.* a year."—*Rev. H. Cogan, Vicar, East Dean.*

95. "This is an exceptional parish in the way of cottage accommodation, so that neither the morals nor the health of the labourers' families need suffer from the want of it. There are 25 labourers' cottages to 1,030 acres. It would be an advantage to have two or three more. Most of them have three bedrooms; the rest two. The present landowner (Mr. C. Crosbie), who is Lord of the manor, and in possession of all but a very small part of the parish, has built eight cottages, the sitting-rooms of which are on an average 15 ft. by 12 ft. Each cottage has a washhouse, pantry, and woodhouse attached. The front bedroom is of the size of the sitting-room; the other bedroom or bedrooms are of course smaller. Each cottage has a good-sized garden. The cottages belonging to Mr. Crosbie, which he did not build, are still more commodious; and they are all let at one rent, 1*s.* per week, garden included They have a good supply of water."—*Rev. E. Stansfield, Curate, Donnington.*

96. "Several cottages have been recently built, with good accommodation in every respect; having water supply, excellent gardens, and outhouses. They belong to the landowner. Some few old cottages remain in the parish; but they have all good gardens attached. All the cottages are conveniently situated for the labourers."—*Rev. J. P. Roberts, Eastergate.*

97. Our cottages are too numerous for the acreage of the parish, and a large portion of the occupiers have to seek work in other parishes, at distances varying from half a mile to two miles; with one or two exceptions they are not crowded, and are many of them very good; but they are principally in the hands of small owners, who won't spend money on sanitary provisions. Most have small gardens; some of them very good ones. Rent from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 8*l.* per year."—*Rev. M. Parrington, New Fishbourn,* (*pop.* 331, *acreage* 610).

98. "We have a sufficient proportion of cottages, at the rate of two to the 100 acres. Very few have three bedrooms at present; but four are now building in Mid Lavant. In some instances they are crowded. Size of rooms is in general sufficient, where the families are not so large as to require several beds in one room. Cottages in general are indifferent as to ventilation, or opening windows. Cesspools too near. Water good and sufficient. Gardens sufficiently large, but not always made the most of. Nearly all the cottages are the property of one landowner. No conditions required from tenants renting from others. Much is being done in repairing and adding to indifferent cottages, the bad being gradually rebuilt in a superior style."—*Rev. H. Legge, and Rev. J. S. Pater, East and Mid Lavant.*

99. "The cottage accommodation is generally good. The rooms are mostly about 12 ft. square; ventilation, drainage, and water supply, good. Gardens from 15 to 30 perches. Ownership in the hands of landlords and other persons. Rent generally from 1*s.* to 2*s.* a week."—*Rev. C. D. Holland, Vicar, North Mundham.*

100. "Undoubtedly, the more bedrooms and the larger they are, as well as the sitting-room, the better for morals, education, health, and comfort; *i.e.* up to a certain size of room, and number of rooms. But, unfortunately, if there are too many rooms and very large, the tenants are sure then to take in lodgers. Our cottages are generally very good, and large enough; have wells, good gardens and offices. Owners various; none with whom tenants are obliged to deal. Rent 1*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* a week. I cannot suggest any mode by which good cottage accommodation can be provided on self-supporting terms, for cottagers cannot afford to pay for superior accommodation, and therefore persons will not build to lose money. Generally, landowners build cottages to meet the requirements of their tenant-farmers. If you add to a cottage garden enough to pay the rent by the sale of the produce it would exhaust so much of the cottager's labour or strength that his remaining labour, however long he might be on the land, would be of little value to his master. Let cottagers keep from the public-house, the curse of England. Saturday evenings and Sundays, as to public houses, are fatal to rent, comfort, and peace."—*Rev. A. P. Birrell, Vicar, Oving.*

101. "The morals of the poor are seriously affected by a want of proper accommodation in the cottages. All cottages ought to have three bedrooms. At the rate of three cottages to 100 acres we have not a sufficient number. In some cases they are crowded. The cottages belonging to the Duke of Richmond and Lord Leconfield (who are both building) are well built, well ventilated, and cheaply rented. Those belonging to small owners are quite the reverse, and the rent in some cases is exorbitant."—*Rev. F. A. Bowles, Rector, Singleton.*

102. "I should be glad *on all accounts* to have the bad cottages turned into good ones. A bad cottage usually brings into a parish a bad tenant, because no decent couple of the present generation here will inhabit them. But in these same cottages, consisting absolutely of only two rooms one of which is the common dormitory for all ages and both sexes, I have known excellent people of the last generation live and prosper, and bring up well conducted families. We have 42 cottages to 800 acres; more than adequate to the agricultural demand. In some cases they are crowded, not with lodgers, but with members of the family. They are deficient not in number, but in quality, and no attempt is being made to remedy this. Of the 42 cottages, 27 are good in various degrees of goodness; 15 are bad. The good are (1) in construction, brick and flint walls with two, three, or four bedrooms, ventilation good, tiled or slated roof, rooms about 14 × 12 ft., drainage generally bad; (2) accommodation adequate, water abundant, garden and outhouses; (3) ownership, of all kinds, but the best cottages are occupied by the owners; (4) rent from 2*s.* to 3*s.* per week. The bad are (1) in construction—brick and flint walls, many timber built and thatched, rooms large enough, 14 × 14 ft., sometimes only one, at most two bedrooms, ventilation sufficient, drainage bad; (2) accommodation not adequate for a family; (3) ownership, of all kinds, but the worst are generally owned by small proprietors or farmers; (4) rent, 1*s.* to 2*s.*, according to size of garden attached. Some of the worst cottages are roomy, but old and badly built, scarce weatherproof. In a few cases they are cottages converted from small farmhouses or yeomen's houses, and such are the most uninhabitable of any." *Rev. George Gaisford, Rector, Tangmere.*

103. "There are several cottages with only one bedroom. One or more cases could be pointed out where large families have been reared in such cottages. The effects on morality and health must be bad. There is a complaint that cottages are scarce in the parish. Some are very crowded. Generally speaking our cottages are good and have good gardens, but in several the water supply is bad. There are, however, several exceptions, where there is only one bedroom

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and that very small, with one small room besides. The rent varies from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* and 5*l.* There is no progress towards increasing our accommodation."—*Rev. John Cooke, East Wittering.*

104. "No cottage should possess lower accommodation than three bedrooms. I do not see how the poor with fewer can preserve any degree of decency or instil those habits of modesty which christian morality demands. Our cottages are of fair size; rooms vary, but perhaps something like 9 ft. square; ventilation, so far as door and window admit; drainage good. Accommodation generally insufficient, *i. e.* on the supposition of three bedrooms to a house. Some cottages have but one bedroom for a family of from seven to nine of all ages. One set of Admiralty Buildings for coastguardmen have but one bedroom to each house, and a very small living room. Plenty of water, good gardens and outhouses. They belong to various owners; some to the landowners, others to small proprietors. The rent is from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 6*l.* 10*s.* per annum."—*Rev. W J. Underwood, West Wittering.*

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105. "No doubt the better the cottage accommodation the less the temptation to immorality, and the more healthy and comfortable for the labouring poor. Our cottages in most instances are tolerably conveniently situated; the farmer likes the cottages near; the labourer not too near. Our cottages generally have one miserable sitting-room and two equally miserable bedrooms; small garden; fair water supply. Rent from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 3*d.* a week. The lady of the manor is the chief owner, but being a constant absentee, as little as possible is done for the benefit of the labourers, their families, children's education, or cottages. The latter are in a very dilapidated condition, with wretched and insufficient bedroom accommodation. The landlord should be compelled to erect a minimum number and quality of cottages proportioned to the size of each farm, in sufficiently convenient situations, and so to maintain them. The cost would indirectly fall upon the tenant."—*Rev. Edward J. Brewster, Amney Crucis.*

106. "The cottages are generally good, and, at the rate of one to 100 acres, sufficient. There is good water supply, garden, and outhouse. The proprietor is Rev. Sir W. A. Musgrave, Bart. Rent 50*s.* per annum. There is progress being made towards increasing the accommodation."—*Messrs. Charles Turk and George Radway, Churchwardens, Barnsley.*

107. "There are 22 cottages. I have no knowledge that the morals of the parish are affected in any way by the want of better accommodation. They are built of stone and tiled. The rooms average in size about 10 ft. square; they are properly ventilated and drained; a good supply of water; garden to each, about 30 perches. Each cottage is supplied with a proper outhouse. Col. Master is owner of all the cottages. The rent paid is 1*s.* a week."—*Rev. G. F. Master, Baunton.*

108. "It is very desirable that every cottage should have at least two bedrooms. We have nearly cottages enough, and they are not generally crowded They mostly belong to the landowners; none belong to tradesmen with whom the tenants are obliged to deal. The average rent may be put at 3*l.*"—*Mr. R. W. Winning, Churchwarden, Brimpsfield.*

109. "A proper supply of cottages would be 10 to 600 acres; we have that proportion. In a few cases our cottages are crowded with members of the family. The bedrooms often are not properly divided. The cottages are low, built of stone and slated; standing on 20 ft. by 14 ft. Ventilation bad; drainage good. Very few with more than two bedrooms; water supply fair; garden about 16 perches; only a few have outhouses. The principal owners are Earl Bathurst and Sir F. H. Goldsmid, Bart.; those belonging to Earl Bathurst are generally bad, being let out on leases for life; those belonging to Sir F. Goldsmid are being rebuilt or repaired, with an addition of new ones. Rent from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.*"—*Mr. James Newman, Churchwarden, North Cerney.*

110. "Wherever the cottages are sufficient and good, and let under proper regulations, the social and moral condition of the labourer, and there can be no doubt his physical condition also, are sure to be raised. Many of our cottages are crowded with members of the family. They are built of stone and covered with stone slates; stone floors; bedrooms unceiled for the most part. Size of rooms from 10 ft. × 12 ft. to 12 ft. × 12 ft. Little provision for drainage or ventilation. The accommodation is very insufficient; no labourer's cottage having three bedrooms, and many only one. Water supply good. Most of the cottages have a small garden, and an outhouse, such as it is. Scarcely any of the bedrooms have a fireplace. Ownership is in the hands of a number of petty householders, but not of tradesmen with whom the tenants are obliged to deal. Rent from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* I can see no other way of securing good cottage accommodation than by attaching the cottages to, and letting them with, the farms. And there would be in many cases probably a difficulty about this where many of the farms are so small as they are in this parish, and the tenants men of little capital."—*Rev. W. W. Liddell, South Cerney.*

111. "Our cottage accommodation is very fair; in some few cases there has been overcrowding, and then both morality and education suffer. We have nearly three cottages to the 100 acres. One-third have three bedrooms, two-thirds have two bedrooms; none have fewer than two. Water supply is indifferent; gardens generally good. Ownership is in the landowners. Rent moderate; average 60*s.*"— *Rev. T. C. Gibbs, Rector, Coates.*

112. "The cottage accommodation in this parish is in every respect in a satisfactory condition."—*Rev. Thomas Atkinson, Coiesbourne.*

113. "I think every cottage should have at least two bedrooms. Our cottages have not a sufficient supply of bedrooms, and are crowded. They are conveniently situated."—*Rev. Thomas Hayes, Rector Duntisbourne Abbotts.*

114. "We have hardly any cottages with three bedrooms. They generally consist of a kitchen with small room at side, or an outhouse (sometimes both), and two bedrooms over; the kitchen being often 14 ft. 6 in. by 11 ft. 9 in., but sometimes smaller. Ventilation chiefly by chimney. Kemble being on a hill and the soil gravelly, drainage is good. The accommodation is not according to the size of the families. Water supply is from the drainage of the land; the few springs are said to be injuriously affected by the pumping engine at the source of the Thames. Gardens of a fair size. Ownership by landowner, who has been non-resident until the last year or two. Rent very low; from 1*l.* a year to 2*l.* 10*s.* If all the cottages were appropriated to labourers we should have enough, but the Great Western Railway competes for labour. If a labourer gets a cottage he looks upon it almost as his freehold and residence for life, and is hardly ever shifted. But if, when a man's family have left him, he could be moved into a smaller cottage, and the young married couple with their young family be placed in the larger tenement, much advantage would accrue. One large room well ventilated, with an outhouse for washing, would be comfortable for single persons."—*Rev. Richard Taylor, Vicar, Kemble.*

115. "I often wonder that the morality of our country populations is as good as it is. We have many old cottages wanting reconstruction. Good water, gardens, and allotments. Chiefly owned by landowner. Rent from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* per week. There has been some little increase in our number—five in 10 years." —*Rev. J. Wilson, Rector, Meysey Hampton.*

116. "The cottages are stone built and thatched; the roof not plastered inside; no fireplace up-stairs; no means of ventilation; and the drainage not good. In some the rooms are very small. Generally there is

only one bedroom ; water supply is bad, gardens good, outhouses not good. They are owned by the lady of the manor. Rent varies from 30*s.* to 60*s.* per annum. I believe that the landowner has the intention of gradually improving the dwellings of the poor."—*Rev. B. Mallam, Rector, Poole Keynes.*

117. " The cottages in this parish are constructed upon the plan of providing one sitting-room and one living-room, three bedrooms, and other conveniences. The ventilation is perfect and the drainage good. The accommodation is ample ; the water supply excellent; outhouses and gardens very spacious. Rent does not exceed 4*l.* per annum. No lodgers are allowed. The farms have no cottages at all, and there is only one boy employed on the farms belonging to the parish."—*Rev. Joseph Pitt, Rector, Rendcomb* (population 241, acreage 2,500).

118. " There cannot be a doubt that the deficient accommodation in the cottages where both sexes are huddled together in one, or at the most two, bedrooms, must have a very injurious effect on the morals of the young people. There is a great deficiency of cottages with sufficient sleeping accommodation ; only two in the parish have three bedrooms. They are built of stone, some thatched, some tiled. The rooms are almost universally low, consequently the ventilation is defective. The accommodation is also very bad, as to a sufficient number of rooms in proportion to the family. Being on the gravel they are dry, and the water supply is good ; most of them have gardens attached, and the labourers have allotments as well. The greater number of the cottages belong to the landowners ; none belong to tradesmen with whom the tenants are obliged to deal. The rent is generally moderate ; indeed I may say low. There is no progress towards increasing the accommodation."—*Rev. C. Fawcett, Rector, Somerford Keynes.*

119. " The cottages are built of stone and tiled. The rooms average in size about 10 feet square. They are properly ventilated and drained, with a good supply of water, and a garden to each of about 20 perches. Colonel Master is the owner of a number of these cottages, but there are a great many occupied and owned by small shopkeepers and tradesmen. On Colonel Master's estate lodgers are not allowed."—*Rev. George F. Master, Rector, Stratton.*

120. " The character of the cottages in this parish and neighbourhood for the most part is a disgrace to a Christian community, and undoubtedly has a pernicious effect on the health, comfort, morality, and education of the labouring poor. We have nine cottages for 600 acres. In some instances there are large families and only one small bedroom. There are two good cottages of modern construction with house 12 ft. by 13 ft., kitchen, and two good bedrooms. There is an old cottage with house, pantry, kitchen, and three bedrooms. The others have only one bedroom each, and in one instance there is a man and his wife and four children, with only one room below about 10 feet square, and one bedroom over it in which you cannot stand upright. The water supply is from springs in the neighbourhood and is very good. Every cottage has a good garden, and a sort of outhouse for wood, &c. The cottages belong to the landowner, and the rent is 1*s.* per week ; in some instances less. Something has been done towards increasing the accommodation and I hope more will be done ere long. It would not pay to build *good* cottages for the present rental, and labourers are not able to pay more from the miserable pittance which they now earn. There is no way except the landowners will take the matter into their own hands."—*Rev. Thomas Wolstencroft, Rector, Syde.*

121. " If you want the labouring poor to respect themselves you must give them good cottages. Some of the cottages here are very bad, some very good ; but as the principal landowner promises survey and repairs we may hope for the best. There is only one instance of a shopkeeper who owns three cottage, with whom his tenants deal—compulsorily or not I am not prepared to say. The rent will in most cases rise to 3*l.* per annum. There are now five vacant cottages."—*Rev. F. W. Hohler, Winstone.*

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122. " It is most desirable that every cottage inhabited by a family having children of both sexes should have three separate bedrooms. As things are, a cottage with three bedrooms is a rare good. Some of the farms are very inconveniently situated for labourers. The cottages are for the most part the property of some landowner in the parish. The worst in condition, every way, are freehold, copyhold, or lifehold, or those put up by speculating builders on bits of land. Rent varies from 3*l.* to 5*l.*, in proportion to accommodation and extent of garden mainly. Cottages are hard to get for occupation, and small builders here and there, now and then, build on speculation ; but it is too often a nefarious scheme to tempt the cottager to debt for part of the purchase money, and if health fails he is ruined, and the cottage reverts by debt to the builder again."—*Rev. T. Murray Browne, Almondsbury.*

123. " The miserable accommodation which many of the cottages in this neighbourhood afford is attended with much evil. Many have but one bedroom. A restriction with regard to taking lodgers, where there is a second bedroom, would be desirable. Very few, if any, of our cottages have more than two bedrooms. Many are overcrowded. All those built by the principal landowners are new, good, and well provided with accommodation ; but at Aust about a third of the cottages are very old and ill provided, many of them having but one bedroom. Some have good gardens, some small, some little or none. The worst cottages are owned by small tradesmen. The rent varies from 4*l.* to 6*l.* 10*s.*, according to the amount of garden ground attached to each cottage. No increase is in prospect at Aust, but at Redwick and New Passage new cottages of a better description are being built, chiefly on account of the railway."—*Rev. R. W. Vigors, Aust and Redwick.*

124. " Still too many of our cottages are without the third bedroom, and otherwise below the proper standard of a dwelling house. There is very little of lodger letting, but certainly the cottages are not sufficiently provided with bedchambers for the large families. Out of about 103 cottages some 30 or 35 have three bedrooms; ventilation tolerably free ; drainage indifferent ; water supply fairly good ; gardens to the greater part of from 30 to 40 perches ; pigstyes too commonly close against the walls of the dwelling house. Ownership much divided. Rent from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* There is some increase in progress."—*Rev. W. J. Copleston, Rector, Cromhall.*

125. " We have not a sufficient number with bedroom accommodation suitable to large families, and some of our cottages are crowded. The cottages generally are of a good size ; well ventilated and drained. Several of them are badly supplied with water ; they have good gardens. Ownership is in the landowner. Rent from 4*l.* to 6*l.* There is a great want of cottage accommodation in this parish for labourers, owing, in a great measure, to the occupiers of the present cottages renting from two to four acres of land, upon which they employ themselves ; and consequently the farmers are obliged to obtain their labourers in great measure from adjoining parishes." —*Rev. W. Charlton, Elberton.*

126. " The cottages here are all comparatively good, and are continually being improved. There are 29 cottages now inhabited, and 2 new ones ready for occupants. In this pastoral district one to 100 acres would be sufficient. The cottages are all built of brick or stone, tiled or slated, except two, which are thatched ; they have two sitting-rooms, average 13 feet square ; some one or two of the old ones, which have been farmhouses, more. Ventilation generally good, and drainage also, so far as this low land will permit. Of the 31 cottages 19 have two bedrooms each, 10 have three, and 2 have only one ; but in each of these last-mentioned are an aged man and

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wife, and no one else. Most of the cottages have a well on the premises or near. All have small gardens attached, and also allotment-land near. Most of them have wash-houses, pigstyes, &c. They all belong to the squire of the parish, except six; of these two belong to Lord Fitzhardinge; two to Mr. Thomas Hewett, a freeholder here; and two to me. The inhabitants of all these cottages are, to the best of my belief, free to deal where they please. The rents vary from 2*l.* 12*s.* to 4*l.* per annum, including any garden ground. The allotment ground is rented out at 4*d.* per perch."—*Rev. Sir E. H. V. Colt, Bart., Vicar, Hill.*

127. "Our cottages are square-built. Rooms about 10 feet by 6 (?); well drained; water supply deficient. Owners, landed proprietors. There is a sufficient supply."—*Rev. A. R. Ludlow, Littleton-on-Severn.*

128. "Every year's additional experience confirms the impression that nothing tends more to foster immorality among the labouring classes than want of sufficient accommodation for young persons and children at home. It is a great impediment to all moral and religious training where there is such want. The generality of labourers' cottages in this parish consist of keeping-room with back room (for baking and other purposes), and two bedrooms (occasionally three, in a few cases only one), mostly well drained and ventilated. The cottages are owned chiefly by the large landowners. There are many lifeholds, which will eventually fall to the lord of the manor. In no cases are tenants unfairly treated by landlords. Rents are from 5*l.*, with small gardens. Few are under 5*l.*, even where there is no garden. The single bedroom cottages were mostly built originally by labourers on the waste land. During the last 10 years the large landowners and others have improved cottage accommodation, not so much by building new cottages as by substituting really good ones in the place of incommodious ones; but several new ones have been built. There is still room for improvement."—*Rev. Robert Hiles, Olveston.*

129. "We have a sufficient supply of cottages, considering that many small farms do not require a cottage, the farmers doing the work themselves. The cottages are generally built of stone, with one room downstairs and two up, though many have but one bed-room, and a few cottages are only one story high, with two rooms; these are very small. The water supply varies according to the rainfall. There are gardens."—*Rev. W. U. Coates, Rockhampton.*

130. "Every cottage ought to have two sleeping-rooms. The landowners should build new cottages and attach them to farms. The farmer should receive the rent weekly, which ought not to be more than 1*s.* 6*d.* where there is no garden. The majority of the cottages here have only one bedroom; several are crowded with members of the family. Six of them have been built on the waste, and are of very poor construction, being made of laths and mud, with only one room, a part of which is partitioned for a bedroom. A garden is generally attached. The water supply is bad. The cottages owned by Lord Fitzhardinge and by tradesmen are in better condition. The rents for agricultural labourers are from 2*l.* 12*s.* to 6*l.* 6*s.* a year."—*Rev. Charles Cripps, Stone.*

131. "The cottages in this parish are generally pretty good, and I do not think a deficiency of accommodation has any effect on morality or education. There are generally four rooms, kitchen, wash-house, and two bed-rooms, averaging 10 feet square each. In the town, where many of the labourers reside, they are larger and more roomy. No other ventilation than by windows; no other drainage than cesspools. Many belong to the occupiers or to poor people of that class, of course mortgaged; some few belong to shopkeepers."—*Mr. J. Y. Sturge, Thornbury.*

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132. "We have an ample proportion of cottages to our acreage, at the rate of four to 100 acres. There are not sufficient with two or three bedrooms. Most of the single tenements have two rooms, up and down, of fair size, airy and drained; plenty of water within easy distance, save in a very dry time; a shorter supply this autumn than I ever remember, but still plenty to be had within a quarter or half a mile. For the most part, good gardens and an outhouse. No tradesmen interfere in any way; very few have cottages. Rent not high, but tells heavily on the poor man. Cottages are being improved."—*Rev. H. L. Whatley, Rector and Magistrate, Aston Ingham.*

133. "The supply of labour for Bromsberrow is exceptional, there being a large colony just outside the parish which supplies it with labour. With three exceptions no labourer has a mile to go to his work. Some of our cottages are crowded, but we are tolerably free from the great evil of lodgers. The cottages have mostly brick or stone walls, with slated or tiled roofs. Ventilation good; drainage bad; often none. Few have more than two bedrooms. Water supply, often none; some wells are injured by soakage; pumps rare. Garden always ample; outhouse generally sufficient. Most belong to the landowner; none are owned by tradesmen; many are the property of the inhabitants, having been built by them on the waste land. Rent, 2*l.* to 7*l.*; this great difference is caused by some cottages having land and good cyder or perry orchards attached to them. Such cottages are within the reach of labourers, as the ground pays its own rent, and orchards want but little attention. Comparing artizans' and agricultural labourers' wages I do not think it possible to build cottages in scattered parishes that will remunerate the landlord in point of rent, but I believe that farmers owning cottages will be indirectly remunerated for improved accommodation by a corresponding improvement in the men's physique and morale."—*Rev. R. P. Hill, Bromsberrow.*

134. "The cottage accommodation is very indifferent; very few cottages have more than two bedrooms; some have only one. They are very scattered, except at a Chartist settlement, where there are about 50 contiguous cottages. Some of them, particularly in this settlement, are crowded. Construction generally bad, both as to size, ventilation and drainage. Accommodation bad; water scarce; gardens small. The ownership in some instances is in tenant farmers, who are indifferent about the state of the cottages. Rent, with a small garden, ranges from 3*l.* to 5*l.*"—*Rev. Edward H. Niblett, Rector, Redmarley.*

135. "The cottage accommodation in this parish is unexceptionably good. There is one cottage to every 20 acres. They are conveniently situated, and there is no crowding."—*Rev. W. R. Jolley, Vicar, Corse.* (pop. 700, acreage 2,100).

136. "The cottages are reckoned sufficient for the requirements of the parish, but I have heard it said that one or two more might be desirable. The size is generally sufficient; ventilation seldom good. Not more than half of the cottages have three bedrooms; frequently when they have, a lodger will be taken in. Three bedrooms are of course essential to the forming habits of morality, wherever there are children of both sexes. Most of the new cottages have three bedrooms. They all have gardens. They belong to the landowners. The rent is generally 4*l.*; a few let at 5*l.* from being larger."—*Rev. W. G. S. Addison, Vicar, Hartpury.*

137. "It is desirable that every cottage should have three sleeping apartments. At the rate of two cottages to 100 acres, we have only half our proper proportion. They mostly have two bedrooms; garden half an acre; and a fair outhouse. They are owned by the landowner, and let at from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* There is no progress towards increased accommodation."—*Rev. Alfred Newton, Rector, Preston.*

138. "I consider the bad cottage accommodation one of the chief causes of immorality. Our cottages are much crowded, but not with lodgers. In size, ventilation and drainage they are generally bad. The water supply is generally good; garden sufficient. Cottages chiefly belong to the landowners, except in

the 'hill' portion of the parish, where there exists a population of very peculiar character. Rent generally about 4*l.* Very little is being done to improve the cottages."—*Rev. C. H. Crawley, Rector, Taynton.*

MISCELLANEOUS EVIDENCE.

1. *The Earl of Leicester* would prohibit the employment of boys in field-labour under the age of 10. His bailiff, who began life as a working man, thinks no boy ought to go out to work before that age, and that except in the case of very large young families, parents at the present rate of wages, ought to be able to maintain them. At 10, boys ought to go to work; and he would not interfere restrictively with their labour, when they have once commenced work. He has a private gang of boys, ten or a dozen in number, under the superintendence of a steady labourer, who are employed all the summer 'stubbing' thistles in the park. Some of them are under 10, and earn only 4*d.* a day, which he is sure can't pay the parents for the extra wear and tear of clothes and shoes, and consumption of victuals, while the boys themselves suffer educationally and physically. He would rather not employ them, and would be glad to be relieved from the solicitation of the parents by a prohibition on their employment. He would prohibit the employment of girls under 20 in field labour. But female labour on the land cannot be altogether dispensed with in this neighbourhood. He employs about 20 women himself on work that men either could not or would not like to do; picking twitch, &c. He never puts a woman to draw turnips or mangolds when carting; thinks such work in every way unsuitable to them.

Considers that private gangs ought to be under the same regulation as public gangs, as regards limits of age and separation of the sexes; but no licence needs to be required for the superintendent. Feels sure that the women in a private gang would themselves refuse to do any work that hurt them or that they thought unsuitable. Apart from the direct influences of education, has no hesitation in saying that the agricultural labourer has vastly improved morally. Farmers also are beginning to exercise more supervision over the characters and conduct of their men. Observes a remarkable decrease in drunkenness. When he came to the estate 20 years ago there was nothing but drinking and swearing from the bailiff down to the lowest labourer. Now, there is nothing of the kind. Some of the best labourers don't drink beer at all; do their work on coffee or cocoa. Traces the change partly to farmers having altered their pay-day in most cases from Saturday to Friday. Under the old plan, the Sunday, a rest-day, coming just when the men had money in their pocket, tempted them to drink not only far on into Saturday night, but a good part of Sunday too. If farmers would give their men a money allowance instead of the beer which is distributed in harvest and at other times, drunkenness would probably be still more diminished. Never gives his men beer even in harvest; allows them 10*s.*, the value of a bushel of malt, instead. Believes this practice is extending itself. Has even abandoned the harvest frolic, and gives the men 5*s.* in the place of it.

An educated labourer is certainly more valuable for his education. Even if he forgets all he learnt at school, he is the better man by virtue of the discipline and mental exercise that he has undergone. Makes a point of requiring all the work on his farm to be done—the stacks to be built, and the work generally to be lanned—in the best and most economical way. Yout hus produce a skilled labourer; the man is made to think. Put such a man upon a steam-engine and he is not lost. He could bring any one of his 30 labourers into his garden. The thing is to get a labourer to take a pride in his work. Slovenly work is false economy; there is no real loss even of money, but rather a gain, in having your farm work thoroughly well done. Has a man and his three sons at work for him now; they are all steady labourers; but the father is pig-headed, the sons have exercised their brains, and they are worth 1*s.* a day more than the father.

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

The change in the law of settlement is the best step in legislation that has ever been taken in favour of the labourer.

Has long studied the question of cottage accommodation; thinks that he has at last nearly reached the perfection of arrangement. Prefers cottages built in a block of four, with the entrances at the back, the two end ones with three bedrooms each, the middle ones with two. A block of this kind built at Weasenham in 1865, of brick, with tiled roof, outside walls 14 inches thick, division walls 9 inches, cost 393*l.*, the bricks costing 25*s.* per thousand at the kiln, and his tenant doing the carting. A similar block of four cottages, where stone found on the spot was used with bricks, cost 357*l.* Builds all his cottages by contract. Estimates the cost of a double cottage at 230*l*; of a good single cottage, 130*l.*

His farms are let on 21 years' leases; his cottages on weekly tenure, under written agreement, at rents varying according to the accommodation; the best are 1*s.* 6*d.* a week; the lowest 1*s.* Does not approve of allotments; prefers a good garden attached to the cottage; 20 rods are as much as a man can properly cultivate in his own time. Thinks the cottages should be held direct from the landlord, and not be sub-let by the occupier of the farm; gives, however, to his tenants the power of nominating to the cottages, subject to his agent's approval.

When a good cottage is built and proper accommodation provided, it must still be kept under proper supervision. Directs his agent to exercise such supervision constantly. Otherwse he should find the family 'doubling up,' whenever a son or daughter marries. Has known even three generations of families occupying one house. His agent has orders never to allow more inmates in a cottage than it will decently accommodate. Thinks, however, that this will never be fully and generally accomplished, though a most necessary thing, till cottages are placed under some independent inspection.

[Subjoined are the "terms and stipulations upon which the cottages on the Holkham estate are let," and also the form of agreement used in this behalf.]

I. Stipulations.

"The tenant to keep, and at the determination of his hire leave, all the windows, oven and grates, locks, keys, bars, gates and fences, in good repair, order and condition.

"To permit landlord and his agents, servants, and workmen to inspect the state of the cottage and to repair and alter the same at all seasonable times.

"To contribute, in equal proportion with the other cottages having the use thereof, to the keeping of the going gears of the common pump and well, and the common oven in good repair, and for cleaning out the well when required.

"To lay all ashes, manure, and filth of every kind in the dirt-bin built for that purpose, and not elsewhere.

"To stack and place all faggots, wood, and other fuel in the place appointed for that purpose, and not elsewhere.

"Not to erect any shed, pigstye, or other building whatsoever, nor alter any of the present buildings, nor fences, without the consent of landlord or his agent.

"Not to take in any lodger, nor permit any married member of his family to reside in the cottage, nor keep poultry nor rabbits, without the consent in writing of the landlord or his agent first obtained."

II. Agreement.

Memorandum.—"That on the day of 18 , I, the undersigned, as agent for the Right Honourable Thomas William Earl of Leicester of Holkham, let and of in the County of Norfolk, hired all that cottage or tenement, with the outbuildings, yard and

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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garden, now occupied therewith, situate in aforesaid, together with the use of the pump, and oven near thereto, in common with the occupiers for the time being, of the cottages or tenements now using the same, for one week, to be computed from the day of and thenceforth from week to week, until either party shall give to the other one week's notice in writing of his intention to determine such tenancy, at and under the weekly rent of sterling, payable at the end of every week. And also, under and subject to the terms and stipulations set out in page 1 of this book, as those upon which the cottages on the Holkham estate are let, and of which terms and stipulations I at the same time delivered to him a printed copy."

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2. *Rev. W. Bates, D.D.*, Rector of Burnham Westgate, Norfolk (Docking Union), mentioned to me the case as one requiring remedial treatment, of the boys who are employed in that part of the country to keep the birds off the wheat and other corn-ricks, from the time that they are stacked to the time that they are thrashed out, possibly all through the winter. They are employed on Sundays as well as week days; are subject to great exposure to weather; never get to church or school during the period of their employment; and besides this, each wants a brother or sister to carry to him his dinner, which is generally a sufficient reason for these latter to stay away from school too. Doctor Bates calculated that in his parish (pop. 1,100) there were about 60 children, whose absence from school might thus be accounted for in the winter; 30 engaged in watching the rick, and 30 more required to take to the watchers their food. Mr. Sudbury, farmer, of Thornham, to whom I repeated this statement, admitted its correctness, and said that half the stack would be carried away by the birds if it were not watched. It struck me that the Norfolk farmer, admirably as in most cases he handles his land, is much less careful to prevent the depredation of rats than of rooks; and yet I should have thought that the quadruped both was the more destructive, and could be the more easily guarded against, of the two. Rats, as I can testify from ocular observation, abound in Norfolk quite to as great an extent as elsewhere; yet the ricks are for the most part built in the fields, or the bare ground, without the protection of "staddles"; and if allowed to stand long before being thrashed out, must suffer, I am sure, heavily in consequence.

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3. *Mr. Cobb*, farmer, of Sprowston, near Norwich, says that children under 8 are of no real use; do more mischief than good; but the parents press the farmers to find them a job, and would consider it a hardship if strangers were employed. Thinks it would be desirable to limit the employment of children to those above 10, or even 11; but then, the difficulty is how to deal with the case of large families.

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4. *T. Lombe Taylor, Esq.*, of Starston, Depwade Union, county of Norfolk, landowner, proprietor also of a brewery in the town of Diss, occupies 350 acres of his own land, which he farms highly under a bailiff. Thinks rents generally are too high to allow the farmer to pay adequate wages. Mentions as an illustration of the rise in rents, that his father remembered, 60 years ago, rents in the parish of Diss being 10*s.* an acre, and the tithe 2*s.* 6*d.*; they now average 30*s.*, and the tithe is 6*s.* Finds an increasing tendency in the most promising and best educated boys to get away from farm work to other employments. Believes that the surest mode of attaching the labourer to the land is to provide him with a good cottage. Not only do you attach the man to your service, but you improve him. He built some superior cottages for the men employed at his brewery at Diss, and his manager tells him that the men are much improved in their habits, and better behaved in every way. Since he has improved his cottages in Diss and Starston, in the course of nearly 20 years, he has never once had to give a tenant notice to quit for misbehaviour. Most prefer gardens adjacent to the cottages, to allotments. Notices a marked decrease in drunkenness; finds a great improvement in Diss in this respect, compared with what it was when he was a boy, 50 years since. Finds the common agricultural labourer quickly gets into the way of handling implements and machinery. His steam-engine at the brewery at Diss is managed by a man who was a mere farm labourer, and who had no other instruction beyond watching its erection. Considers the agricultural labourer, though often deficient in mental culture, is not deficient in intelligence. They are quick and attentive observers. They appreciate a competent overlooker, and would detect and despise a fool. He once had a bailiff, whose incompetence his men were the first to discover and tell him of.

A girl under 16 is of very little use except to pick stones; and he thinks the stones had often better be left on the land, except the large ones which would be in the way of the reaper. As to twitch, no good farmer ought to grow it. He cleans his land mainly by forking it out by men after harvest.

He occupies 350 acres. His human labour-power is as follows:—1, A bailiff, at 15*l.* a quarter, and house rent free. 2, A team man, at 12*s.* a week, house free and harvest. 3, A second team man at 11*s.*, and house free. 4, A third team man at 10*s.* with 1*s.* 6*d.* a week for lodging. 5, A lad of 18 at 9*s.* a week. 6, a man at 11*s.* 6*d.* The above do the stable and farm-work of 13 horses. Labourers, 7 and 8, two men at 12*s.* a week, who pay 4*l.* a year rent for their cottage. 9 and 10, two more at the same wages. 11 and 12, two men, less able-bodied, at 11*s.* 13 and 14, two men at 11*s.*, one of whom acts as shepherd in the winter (no breeding flock is kept), when he has 1*s.* 6*d.* a week extra. 15, A yardman (to look after the stock) at 12*s.* 6*d.* 16 and 17, two old men employed on easy, odd jobs, at 8*s.* one of them a single man, the other married, but with no family. 18, A boy of 12, at 3*s.* 6*d.*, who works a pair of horses. 19. A boy of 12, delicate in health, at 2*s.* 20 and 21, A man and his wife who looks after the cows and dairy, the man at 12*s.* a week, the woman at 10*l.* a year, with house free. The weeding and other similar jobs are done by women and boys at different times, and cost on the average about 12*s.* a week throughout the year. On an average of years, he has found that the produce of his wheat crop has about paid his labour. The farm, however, is rather over-found in labour. Being owner as well as occupier, he does many things that a tenant would not do. Perhaps he spends 100*l.* a year more.

He finds his cottage-tenants very regular in paying their rent; has never known a man fail. They would be quite uncomfortable if they hadn't their money ready when rent-day came. They are all yearly tenants, on six months' notice, without written agreement.

Boys are less exposed in some of their work than they used to be, owing to the improved management of the turnip crop. Formerly, the turnips were left in the field during the winter as they grew, and they had to be pulled, often when snow was on the ground. Now they are generally pulled as soon as they have ceased to grow, and thrown into heaps or ridges like mangolds. He has a moveable shed on wheels, without a floor, which is drawn by a horse over the heaps or ridges, and under cover of which the turnips can be prepared for the sheep by the boys or women without exposure.

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5. Extracts from a letter from *Thos. Barton, Esq.*, of Threxton (Norfolk. Swaffham Union), landowner and occupier, to the Ven. Archdeacon Hankinson. After rejecting the half-day and alternate whole-day systems as impracticable in agriculture, the writer says, "Let us take a certain part of the year altogether, and perhaps something may be done in

"this direction. As to the age at which children are to be taken from school, 8, 9, and 10, have been named. Perhaps I may quote the opinion of the Committee of the Wayland Agricultural Society, who, in rewarding boys for long servitude in the same situation, passed a resolution that no period of service shall reckon *till after* 10 *years of age*. That will tell you what has been thought to be the age at which children ought to go to work.

"The ground work of a better standard of morals is *better lodging*. While people are herded together like so many pigs, improvement cannot be expected. Nothing short of a Building Act will accomplish the end in view, though public opinion has done and is doing much. Such an Act should require every person erecting six cottages to build them according to class, at least two of them to be in class A. Class A. to have not less than three sleeping-rooms; B. not less than two; C. not less than one. That would be a fair proportion, and no hardship. The gang-system is the *dearest* labour you can employ; for after costing much money, the work is badly done. I am most determined against the employment of females in agricultural work."

[In this latter determination Mr. Barton has the support of such large occupiers of land as Mr. Freeman of Dersingham (one of the Prince of Wales' principal tenants), and Mr. Lewis of Heacham. The former told me, at my meeting at Hunstanton, that he employed very few women, and would employ none if he could help it, but was obliged to do so in consequence of the drain of male labour to the extensive operations going on at Sandringham; while Mr. Lewis cultivates 1,000 acres without employing a single woman, even in harvest; and told me, when I noticed it as a remarkable case, that if his occupation were twice the size, he could still dispense with them.]

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6. *Mr. James Freezer*, working farm-bailiff to the Earl of Leicester at Holkham. Manages between 900 and 1,000 acres of land. Requires about 16 women all through the year to cultivate this quantity of land properly. The farm can be worked much cheaper with women than without them. The labour per acre ought to cost about 30*s*. per annum. For weeding, a woman can do the work not only cheaper, but better than a man. A boy under 10 years of age is of no value. Went himself to work at nine, and knows he was of no use for a year after. No boy ought to get less than 6*d*. a day, and he is not worth that till he is 10 years old. Would rather have his labourers able to read and write; them dunces you don't know what to put them to; the educated man is more tractable. Thinks education the finest thing out for all classes. Only had a year's schooling himself in his life; the school was so far off; had 2½ miles to walk to and fro. Got most of his learning after he left school, at an evening school. Wishes he had more; has done what he could to improve himself, but couldn't have done that, unless he had had the start given him at school. Finds the men who have got a little learning in them much quicker at picking up any new thing they have to do. Women won't do work that's unsuitable for them. Some farmers treat the women much better than others do, and won't put them to improper work. If you send women where they don't like to go, they'll soon let you know their feelings. Does not like the "one-journey" system; it's hard upon the horses; but is obliged to use it in short days, where the distance to the work is great. The men, however, are said to like it, as their day is over by 3 o'clock.

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7. *Edmund Oldfield Esq.*, Chairman of the Board of Guardians in Swaffham Union, at the meeting of the board which I attended, spoke strongly of the deficiency of cottages in many parishes in the union. There are some close parishes, in which nearly all the cottages are occupied by the dependents,—gardeners, gamekeepers, and other servants—of the squire. The farmers in consequence get refuse labour and exhausted labour. Before the change in the law of settlement, it was nearly as much the interest, from the selfish point of view, of the tenant as of the landlord, to have no cottages, because he thereby saved his pocket in rates. Now the first question that a prudent farmer would ask, before he took a farm, would be, not, What is the amount of the poor-rate? because he knows that will be equal over the whole area of the union but, What will be my command of labour? of how many cottages shall I have the disposal? The tenant should have the command of the cottages that he requires to work his farm; and if new ones are needed, most tenants would be willing to pay a considerable percentage on the outlay. His own practice with his cottages at Foulden is to let them on yearly tenure, with yearly notice. He has improved the habits of his men by putting them into good cottages. Has found no difficulty in getting his rents. Finds that he is only able to reward superior skill in an agricultural labourer by private gratuities; it would cause great dissatisfaction if he were to attempt to pay a discriminating rate of wages.*

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8. The following paper was put in and read at my meeting at Narborough (October 3, 1867), on behalf of the *Rev. John Fountaine*, Rector of Southacre, who was unable to attend personally:—

"Before making any remarks upon the gang question I wish to correct some statements which were made upon the subject a few months since at a large meeting of clergy and churchwardens at Swaffham. Mr. Oldfield of Foulden, a large farmer and owner of considerable property in that parish, stated that one of the principal causes of the immorality of the gang system, as carried on from the parish of Castleacre, was the want of cottages in the neighbouring parishes, specifying particularly the parish of Southacre. He stated (1), that in consequence of the people and children having to work at Southacre from Castleacre they had to walk four or five miles to their work; secondly, that in spite of the large acreage of the parish, there were only 10 cottages upon it; thirdly, that when the cottages got out of repair they were pulled down, and the people obliged to seek homes in other parishes. As these statements were made from a written document, statistically drawn up, it is only right that they should be correct, if they are to form a portion of any basis upon which future legislation is to be framed. I will therefore proceed to answer them categorically before making any remarks upon the

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* Mr. Matthews, occupying land at Stanford, stated at my meeting at Ickburgh that he paid his men according to their capacity, telling them to "put the money in their pocket and "hold their tongue." But the other farmers at the meeting shook their heads, and said that, at day wages, the thing could not be done.

The following figures were given me by Mr. Oldfield, to illustrate the rise in the poor-rate in close parishes, which has followed the change in the law of settlement:—

Parish.	Population.	Acreage.	Cottages.	Poor Rate for the Year.		
				1853.	1862.	1867.
				£	£	£
Newton	84	1,062	11	57	77	140
Southacre -	92	2,292	11	61	90	228
Threxton -	80	1,059	12	24	20	88

Mr. Oldfield has the more right to be heard upon this question of cottages, not only from his position as chairman of the board of guardians of a union in which the evils of close parishes and defective cottage accommodation are seriously felt, but as an owner of property who practises what he preaches. In the parish of Foulden, where he resides and his property is situated, I find from the detailed return of the relieving officer, with which I have been furnished, that he is the proprietor of 22 cottages, of which one has four bedrooms, 16 have three bedrooms, and five have two.

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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gang system generally. First, the parishes, or rather I should say villages of Castleacre and Southacre, are distant from each other only about half a mile. Supposing, therefore, that the labourers had this distance to walk extra, the statement exceeds the fact by eight or nine times the real amount; but such is not really the case, for it so happens that the two large farmhouses from which the parish of Southacre is farmed are both on the edge of the parish, about half a mile from Castleacre village; whereas the large farms in Castleacre itself are at a considerably greater distance from that village, one, I imagine, not less than two miles from it. Secondly, in spite of the large acreage, there were only 10 cottages. Now there are 13 regularly inhabited cottages in the parish; few enough, I admit, but that is the greater reason why nearly a quarter of the number should not be cut off. Thirdly, that when the cottages got out of repair they were pulled down and the people obliged to seek homes in other parishes. As the parish belongs to my brother I have known it all my life, and am able to state that two cottages were built many years ago, and one cottage pulled down *at my request* about 15 years since, as it was exceedingly old and not worth repairing, but it ought not to have been forgotten in the statistics that even this solitary cottage was not pulled down before a new one had been built to take its place, so that I can state positively that no one has been turned out of the parish on account of cottages being pulled down during the last 50 years. As to the gang system, there is no doubt that it has arisen out of the great size of the farms combined with the improvement of agriculture generally. That these gangs have grown into a great social evil is undeniable, but they contributed most materially to the carrying on these very large farms profitably. Herein lies the gist of the whole matter. The fact is that the employers, however well inclined (and I have no doubt but that there many who are so), feel themselves wholly unable to grapple with the question of morals, and so they have been allowed to go by default; but it is not likely under present circumstances that they would be able to do so to any great extent, that question must in some measure be settled before the young people come to the fields—at their own homes.* Were a better condition of morals established there as a basis to work upon, there might be some hope that large bodies of young people might work together under a *very much improved supervision* without contaminating all that joined them; at present there is none! It is comparatively easy to point out the evil, but how to find a remedy is not so easy. I regret being unable to attend this meeting as I should no doubt have heard suggestions far better than my own. But I venture to think that a limit should be placed upon the age of children employed in these gangs, and also upon the number of hours they have to work; that every farm should have its own private gang, the sexes being kept separate; the people would then have only one master to serve and earn money for instead of two, each gang would be much smaller, and the employer would be answerable (morally at least), for their good conduct. Instead of a labourer who was good for nothing else being employed as supervisor, a man of known good character and able to instruct the ignorant should be employed, and paid *higher* instead of *lower* wages on *account of the greatness of his charge.* This would create a degree of emulation in the right direction, and that system which has hitherto been a great evil might be made an instrument of good. However Utopian my views may appear to some, I feel convinced that those who really have the well being of the people at heart might produce great results by turning their attention seriously to the subject, not only (as heretofore) as a means of making money, but as a means of *improving* instead of ruining the moral tone of the people. Any great agriculturist who could thus succeed in turning the current in the right direction, and cleansing it of its great corruption, would prove himself a benefactor to his country of the very highest class.

JOHN FOUNTAINE.

[NOTE.—I submit, however, that the above statement is no justification of the extrusion of the Southacre labourers into the adjoining parish, whether near or distant, for their homes, unless those homes are found for them by the owner of the land that is cultivated by their labour. Whatever correction Mr. Oldfield's figures may require, the fact seems to remain, that Southacre is a close parish, and has been used as one.]

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9. *Thomas Wigg*, book-hawker for the south-western district of Norfolk, embracing about 200 villages. Has been engaged in the work nearly 12 years. In many parishes notices a decidedly greater amount of intelligence and a deeper craving for knowledge; other parishes are stationary; does not know any that are retrograding. The presence of a good school and of an active clergyman taking interest in education seems to him to be the chief cause of this improvement. Can only remember one case of a parish with an efficient school, irrespective of the interest taken in it by the clergyman. Sells most books to female servants in farmhouses and gentlemen's service. In the cottages his chief purchasers are young men. Sells mostly good books, church services, bibles, Oxenden's works (which are very popular,) &c. Frequently sells a dictionary. Carries maps, but has no demand for them. Finds little demand for anything that can be called information; the people seem to desire to be interested or improved rather than to be informed. Finds a great many men between 30 and 40 who can't read, but not nearly so many between 18 and 35. Books to be acceptable to the labouring classes should be printed in bold clear type, and written in plain language; it is this that creates the demand for Mr. Oxenden's books. Sells more books to those who can read in neglected parishes than in those that are well looked after. In the latter the people generally say they get all they want from the lending library. In some parishes he will sell four times as many books as in others of the same size. Sells a great many in Starston for instance. They seem to be a better class of labourers there and and to have more respect for themselves. In the two parishes of Starston and Gissing, in the same Union, and with exactly the same population (481), he sold at his last visit, in Gissing, books to the value of 2*s.* 9*d.* (at previous visit, 7*s.*); in Starston, to the value of 1*l.* 12*s.* (at previous visit, 1*l.* 17*s.* 7*d.*); in Tivetshall (pop. 737), at first visit 4*s.* 6*d.*, at second 0; in Denton (pop. 518), at first visit 22*s.* 6*d.*, at second 23*s.* 6*d.* Finds a great difference in the value different people seem to set on the education of their children. Observes an improvement in the homes and in the habits and manners of the people. In many places there are some very intelligent labourers. Thinks the introduction of machinery has quickened their wits, and the prizes offered by agricultural societies have improved the cottages. The purchasers of books are generally found where there are only small families. Farmers often buy books of him either to give or lend to their labourers. Knows that many farmers take great interest in the condition of their people and try to improve them. Finds a large circulation in the cottages of penny serials, both religious and other; they hurt his sales a good deal. Has to put up at publichouses in his journeys. Is positive that there is not so much drinking as there used to be. The young men seem to prefer spending money on their clothing. They dress better than they used to do; in many country places you would not know them from mechanics. The whole amount of his sales last year was 142*l.*; the most he ever took in a year was 200*l.*, and then his district was not above half its present

* Mr. Fountaine has not made his meaning very clear, but I print the sentence as it is written. I take the meaning to be that the "question of morals" is one, not for employers, but for parents.

size; but the thing was new then, and the chief reason of the difference was the number of copies of bibles, prayer books, and church services which he sold.

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10. EXTRACTS from an ADDRESS delivered by *Clare Sewell Read, Esq.*, M.P. for East Norfolk, at North Walsham, to the Tunstead and Happing Agricultural Association, taken from the Norfolk News, Nov. 9, 1867.

Norfolk.

Rev. J. Fraser.

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"I propose to enlarge upon two subjects of very great importance, that may at first appear quite different and entirely distinct, but which are in reality strongly connected now, and will be more so hereafter—I mean *education* and *wages*. You are aware that education is now permissive—that a man may or may not educate his children—but it may be compulsory before very long. All other industries have been interfered with, and we are told our turn is to come next. There are the Factory Acts, which have just been extended to other trades. By these Acts no child can be employed under 8; and from 8 to 13 the child must spend a portion of its time at school if employed at any work. But the heat, dust, and smell of a factory, and the close confinement render most of these employments somewhat unhealthy, particularly for children. This cannot be said of farm work, for there the child has plenty of pure air, with exercise that is not often laborious; so that the restrictions which are likely to be imposed will be directed rather to improving education than limiting the amount or the hours of labour. Any restriction upon juvenile labour will fall heavily upon the man with five or six children under 12 years of age; but as the chief restriction will doubtless refer to the badly educated children, I hope the fear of it will act as an additional inducement to send your children to school early and regularly, so that they may read by 8 or 9 years old. I contend that the present system of education is generally ample, if made the most of; our schools are increasing everywhere (thanks especially to the clergy), and there is now hardly a large district in which there is not a good school within reach of the agricultural labourer—a school at which his children can be educated at the cost of one penny a week, though the cost to those who provide it is often as much as ninepence and is seldom under sixpence for each scholar. There is a complaint, and there is good ground for it, that children are not sent regularly to school, and that they leave it too young. There is little excuse for removing a girl from school till she is 11 or 12 years old; she is seldom wanted for home domestic duties before that age, and is hardly of any use upon a farm when she is so young. With the boys it is different; they must bend their backs to labour and develop their muscles while they are of tender years; they must become accustomed to horses and stock, and know what farm-work really is. A boy that can handle a spud well will more easily learn the proper use of the spade and the draining tool; if he is handy with a hoe, that prepares him afterwards for the scythe and pitchfork; while, if he is skilful with the turnip-knife, he will the more readily learn how to handle the axe and the billhook, and even if he can ride the fore-horse, will more easily learn to drive horses in the waggon or at plough. I contend if a boy can read at the age of 9, that is the age at which he should go to field labour, and by attending Sunday school and night schools, he can retain and, if he will try, improve his education. A great many stupid things have been said against night schools—that the hard-worked boys fall asleep over their books, that they are too tired, too wet, or too dirty to attend in the evening or make any progress with their studies. The total change from the labour of the field to the work of the schoolroom for an hour or two twice a week during the winter months—when the hours of farm work are short and the labour light—cannot be otherwise than advantageous, and ought to be pleasant. I believe that night schools, when properly managed, have done and will do much good. I have in my young days taught in them myself, and as to the over fatigue of the lads, why, in the summer, when boys work hard for 10 hours or more on the farm, you see them in the evening playing cricket or some other game most heartily, and the men are busily employed in their allotments or gardens. So much for general education; to my mind it is on the whole satisfactory, but I wish it could be more practical and special. Any education no doubt tends to make a better man, but not necessarily a better labourer. We must on no account undervalue education. You should always remember that without it it is almost impossible to sensibly better your condition in life; but we must not expect too much from it. The childhood of the labourer is too short and the struggle to earn his bread is too keen for him to hope to develop a good general education. If anything more than reading, writing, and doing a sum are attempted in our village schools, I should like the biggest boys, instead of learning history and geography, to be taught the first principles of mechanics; not the construction of machines, but the proper, and consequently the easiest, way to use farm tools and implements. Something of this sort might do good, for we have few means of instructing boys in the skilled work of the field. Take, for instance, ploughing. In days of yore, the boys lived in the farm-house, and were often taught to plough; but now I fear that we seldom attend to the training of our plough-boys, though we do perhaps encourage a willing lad to handle a plough in turning over our stubbles and turnip land under the superintendence of the team man. It may be that a smart boy will soon master the art of ploughing, and excellent societies like these step in and offer rewards for such juvenile energy and skill. An ignorant plodding lad may by perseverance also overcome the difficulties of cutting a straight furrow, but surely a little thought and knowledge to assist his eye and hand will make him master it all the sooner. It is, however, more than probable, without the thought and observation, that lad may for years only muddle his work, shoving and crowding the plough about and doing half the work of the horses, while the other fellow who uses his head will lay a first-rate furrow though he seems hardly to touch his plough, and walks behind it as upright as a drill-sergeant. Again, we see a "bramble" hand cutting off a fence, slaving and chopping away, using a hook as if it were a mattock, while another man will do the work much better with half the expenditure of strength. Once more, you have some wooden fellow cutting an under drain as crooked as a dog's hind leg, and heaving out double the quantity of soil that is needed, while the skilled workman cuts the clay as if it were butter, does not trouble himself to remove a single ounce more soil than is required, and cuts the drain evenly and straight. Now, you will say all this requires great skill, and can only be learned by long experience, and can never be accomplished without a strong and steady arm and a keen sharp eye. Granted; but if a boy learns something at school that he can carry into the field, any lesson that will induce him to think over his work, to make his mind help and save his hands, that is the sort of education that is more likely to interest him, and is sure to expand his mind, increase his natural intelligence, and will help to make him a skilled laborer. As to the actual wages now paid to the agricultural laborer, it is certainly increased considerably during the past fifteen or twenty years. As a boy I can remember that the range of weekly wages never exceeded *one-third of a coomb of wheat*, so that three years ago, instead of having 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week, you would have been receiving 7*s.* or 8*s.*; and now, instead of being 12*s.* and 13*s.*, wages would not, in these short days, have exceeded 11*s.* And not only are wages raised, but the men are all employed, winter and summer too; there is no difference now between the wages of the single and married men, and you certainly work less hours in the day than you did, and I am equally sure that much of

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your labour is not so severe as formerly. But the rise in the rate of weekly wages is much less than the increase in the pay of piece-work. I can remember when mowing hay was 1*s.* 6*d.* and 2*s.* an acre, and now it is 2*s.* 6*d.* 3*s.*, and even 4*s.* Draining, ditching, and hoeing are fully 30 per cent. dearer, and harvest wages, which seldom were above 5*l.*, are now rarely under 6*l.* And you must remember that task work is the only test of cheap labor. In some counties we hear the pay of the farm labourer is 1*s.* 6*d.* and in others 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, and yet we find that the price of piece-work is about the same. Rely upon it that where wages are so very cheap, that besides less work being done, there are some privileges—beer, cider, house-rent, garden-ground, firing, constant employment, &c. &c.; while, on the other hand, high wages are universally coupled with dear house-rent, increased cost of living, more work, and longer hours. You know how many of your neighbors who have migrated to London, and earn, perhaps, double your wages, at the end of the year are no richer than you are while numbers of them are now returning to their native county, which makes labourers just at the present time unusually abundant. On the stoppage of the Millwall and other shipbuilding yards last year, a large number of shipwrights and skilled artisans were thrown suddenly out of work, and though they had been earning one and two pounds a week, we are told that at the end of a fortnight the great majority of them had nothing to live upon. A year or two ago, when labourers were so scarce in the north and wages were so high, some gentlemen came round to Wymondham and took away 12 families that were very badly employed as weavers there, paid all their railway expenses, and found them with plenty of suitable work, and yet at at the end of 12 months, five out of those families returned, the men preferring 12*s.* a week in Norfolk to the 20*s.* they had earned in the north of England. And I once brought a young fellow from this county into Oxfordshire, where he received much better pay, but he soon returned to Norfolk, assigning as a reason for his departure, "that he did not like baker's bread "and could get no light dumplings!" Pray don't misunderstand me: I rejoice in your higher wages, and trust they will increase more rapidly than they have hitherto done; not that I wish all should be paid more for doing as little as a man can in a day, but that the best hands should earn more, especially at task work. I believe that the daily wages that are current in Norfolk are about the average of the agricultural wages in England. If you take the weekly wages at 12*s.*, they amount, with extra earnings at piece work, to at least 14*s.* a week, or 36*l.* a year; for the additional pay of harvest alone will be 1*s.* 6*d.* a week if spread over the 12 months. Now, the average income of all working classes, including artisans and mechanics, is 17*s.* per week per family, or 44*l.* a year. Mind, not 17*s.* a week for the man, but his wife's and children's earnings as well, and there are very few of you, I apprehend, whose family does not bring you in 3*s.* a week, and so raise your income to the average wages of the working classes generally. No doubt a certain amount of day work must be done on all farms. It is easiest for both master and man; it requires less thought and judgment, and there is no bother about measurement, but it has precisely the same effect as trades' unions with the artizan classes, for instead of allowing the best or most skilled labourers to earn 2*s.* 6*d.* or 3*s.* a day, it brings him down to an average hand, and at the same time elevates some stupid lout, whom the farmer employs through charity or necessity, to his level. We farmers are told that the chief difficulty we shall have to contend with in future years is the labour question, that you labourers don't know your own strength, and when you combine like trades' unionists, you will dictate your own terms so your employers. Suppose you do, which I don't believe, for you are like us farmers, and, from being scattered over the country, have not the means to congregate yourselves and form associations; but if you did form unions for the protection of the agricultural labourer, I believe you would find that for common ordinary labour, I mean strength without skill, you are paid as much as labourers of a similar class. Compare your wages with those of the labourers in Her Majesty's dockyard, with the labourers about the quays, wharfs, and docks of our great ports, the bricklayers' labourers all over the kingdom, the hand-loom weaver, even the ordinary factory hand, and the common shoemaker of Norwich, when you consider the uncertainty of employment, you will find (and some of you, no doubt, can confirm what I say) that for the same amount of the same kind of work, you are paid as well by the farmers as you would be by some other employers of labour. You must look for increased earnings to more skill and dexterity in your calling, and earn more wages by the care and interest you take in what is confided to your working and keeping. I have often heard it remarked, "What has an agricultural labourer "to look forward to when he is sixty? Nothing but "the workhouse!" This I deny. A man's arms may not be so strong and active at 60 as they were at 30, but by perfecting himself in the knowledge of all farm work (especially in the value of piece-work), by noticing the wants and habits of stock, by knowing how to manage machinery and implements, by being able to instruct young hands and direct them at work, to say nothing of what trustworthiness and general good conduct are sure to secure for him, I say a man of 60 can in many ways be worth more to a farmer than the strongest, most active, and most willing of his younger labourers. You cannot be too thankful that the labourer is free. A week's wages will carry a young man to any part of England, and a few pounds to America and most of our colonies. But, remember, the parish is free, and the farmer also. There is now no necessity for the farmer to employ a man because he has a large family, or because he is a stupid worthless fellow that the parish must support if he is out of work, and, consequently, there is the greater necessity for the labourer to be a smart active hand; for if you can find another master when you please, so is the farmer justified in finding a better labourer where he can. It is a matter of congratulation that the aversion to machinery, which has been so common, and which at one time produced riot and bloodshed in this county, has considerably diminished, and will, I believe, in a few years, entirely die out. Be sure of this, that farm machinery has done the hardest work, and will always ease the labourer's excessive toil. What was such hard work as threshing by the flail, and how could the corn now be threshed if we had no steam engines? England would have been half-starved this harvest if the farmers had to depend on manual labour to supply the market with his new wheat. And what takes more out of a man than mowing grass or corn? So you ought to look upon the reaping and mowing machines as your best friends. For instance, you are now paid as much for hoeing turnips after the horse hoe has done the chief part of the work, as you formerly received for doing it all by hand. There is not a sufficient supply of labour to do all the work, and as machinery becomes more general, manual labour will become lighter, though what is left for you will require more skill and more judgment to perform it. There are many things in agriculture that machinery never has and never will do well, and "willing hands and lissom fingers" will always be needed so long as seedtime and harvest follow each other. And you should remember that with all the machinery employed on the farm, there is no diminution of manual labour on arable land. On the contrary, I can remember when the farmer who expended 20*s.* to 25*s.* an acre in labour was considered a good employer; but now, 30*s.*, 35*s.*, and even more, is the common expenditure by good farmers. There must be a limit to the increase of this expenditure. In some districts, the cost of labour and the low price of wheat which has ranged

for some years have made the farmers keep their land in grass; and with us, although we grow good corn and poor pasturage, if the expenses of working arable land exceed the value of the crops produced, we shall cease to grow corn, and it will be imported from abroad. I don't say this is at all likely. I hope not; but it is no idle threat, for already the high priced labour is being seriously felt in other trades, notwithstanding our great capital, cheap coals, and other advantages. Engines and other iron goods come in from Belgium; while doors, window frames, and all the woodwork of our houses, come ready made from Sweden and Norway. I beg pardon for having dwelt so long and exclusively upon the men, as if this society did not recognize or try to reward female industry. I will for the present pass by the education of the girls, for girls are kept longer at school than boys, and so have an opportunity of becoming better scholars. I am not one of those who think that education has spoilt our domestic servants. A girl who can read well and write to her mother, and to her sweetheart too, ought to make a better servant than one who can't. But schools have innocently lent a helping hand to the deterioration of our domestic servants. Too many mothers send their children to school simply to get rid of them, and then think they have done all that is required, and imagine that the schoolmistress and the parson do what is needed for the discipline and management of their children. Nay, more, very many foolish mothers consider the restraint of school so irksome and tiresome, that it is positively necessary for the health and well being of the child that it should run wild all the rest of the day. This lack of parental authority, of course, produces disobedient and undutiful children. With the boys, the discipline, such as it was, when they lived in the house of the farmer, is done away with; and if an employer chastises the most obstinate and wilful of boys, the silly parents reward him by summoning him before the magistrates. As so many parents neither correct their children, nor allow others to keep them in some sort of order, we can't wonder at the uppishness, the insolence, and lawlessness of some of the young men in our agricultural villages. Nor should it create surprise that girls, when they go to service, cannot bear the restraint of a well-ordered household, and prefer the small wage and freedom of field labour to the better pay and more suitable employment of domestic service. In my station of life, I know that children are brought a great deal too forward, and if they were not made so much of, they would be happier in themselves and less of a nuisance to those around them; but I maintain that the restraint and discipline—keeping them from evil company and from going just where they please and doing what they like—is much more severe and exacting with us than it is with the lower order. What father, for instance, in the middle class of life, would think of allowing his girls of 14 and 15 to run about the village street at all hours of the night, or allow his boys of the same age to stay as long as they liked at the alehouse? Rely upon it, no great improvement will result from better cottages and better education, unless the parents will take some more decided steps "in keeping their children from wickedness." I have been somewhat misunderstood as to what I have said on other occasions about the employment of young girls, in agriculture. If I were a farm labourer, nothing would give me greater pain than being compelled to send my girls to field labour.

But still, if the labouring man has a girl that is not fit for or could not obtain domestic service or other indoor work, I would rather have her employed in the field than kept doing nothing, or worse than nothing, at home. I well remember an orphan boy who was taken into our house with the idea of training him for an indoor servant. On being well lectured for his stupidity and dulness, and being told that he would never be fit for anything but a labourer, the boy replied, "he 'sposed there must be such people." No doubt there are many "such people," girls as well as boys, who have no ability and no desire to be anything beyond field-labourers; and when we consider the miserable pittance paid to milliners, dressmakers, and sewing virgins generally, the difficulty there is in obtaining suitable indoor work for very wooden females, I am not surprised that some of them prefer farm-work, especially when they contrast the eight hours in the field with the sixteen that is the usual length of the day with our domestic servants. I repeat as there are so very many women and girls who are fit for nothing better than the plain and sturdy labour of the field, it is far preferable that they should work on the farm than have silly notions put into their heads that field labour is not fitted for females; still less that they should be kept in idleness or vice at home. By all means reduce the number of these females, improve them, enlighten them, educate them, make them better members of society, and then you will have no reason to restrict juvenile female labour in the fields, for the best of all reasons that young girls won't go out to such work if they can find better and more suitable employment. In the meantime—till that improvement has taken place—it is foolish to say that the employment engenders immorality or bad habits, simply because all sorts of women and girls, who can find nothing better to do, earn an honest livelihood at such work. But to return to the education of the girls; even as to them I could wish that their instruction was more useful and more practicable.

We hardly know how much of the happiness of a poor man depends on the preparation of his food. His capacity for labour, his health, and consequently his comfort and good temper, are mainly dependant upon it. Generally speaking, the economy of the farm kitchin in cooking is much greater than that of the cottage. Therefore, all things being equal, if I were a young labourer, I should always make love, not to black eyes or blue, but to a good plain cook—though it might suit all the better if the plain cook was a nice-looking girl. I shall be told that there is plenty of materials in a farm kitchen to make a good dinner; but it generally happens that the knowledge of how to make the most of an abundance, will also furnish the best and readiest means to make the best use of a little. Knowledge of even the first principles of cooking is often entirely absent in a cottage, and plain fare, that might be made palatable and digestible by good management, is too often rendered distasteful and indigestible, and consequently the hard-earned wages of the husband are well-nigh wasted. You will laugh at my offering you a cooking receipt, but I happened many years since to give a few peas away in a severe winter for making soup. On going into one cottage I tasted some that was decidedly nice, and in a neighbour's, the same sort of soup, that was essentially nasty. Now, the only difference, I was assured, was that one was made from snow and the other from hard water. No doubt the virtues of soft water in making soup are well known to all cooks, but they may not be to every labourer's wife, and I would remark that I think we have strong prejudices against soups and broths, in which the Scotch so much excel, which may possibly arise from our inferior method of preparing them. But it may be some consolation for you to know that other countries are still more behindhand in the mysteries of cottage cookery. I believe that the table of a poor man in Norfolk is much better supplied, and at a less cost, than in many parts of England. I look upon our despised Norfolk dumplings as a great and glorious institution. Surely a snow-white dumpling, so light that it almosts knocks the lid off the boiler, if not a "dish to set before a king," is enough, with a little dripping and a few vegetables, to furnish a hungry man with a jolly good meal, and is certainly preferable to the never ending dinner of bread and cheese that one sees in the midland counties. Then in those parts you find a poor woman buying a pound of dry bacon; she cuts it into slices, and frizzles it before the fire till the chief part of the goodness is gone

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while a Norfolk woman would buy the fresh bacon, chop it up, and put it into a good thick crust (if of meal, so much the better), and instead of having a little mouthful of meat, produces a thumping big dumpling enough for her husband, self, and children. I am glad that the custom which is general elsewhere, viz., buying baker's bread, is not common in Norfolk. This may be very well in towns, but if it finds favour in the country, where firing is to be had and ovens are common, it is really owing to the desire of housewives to get rid of every household trouble and all the hard work they can. It is not because girls go to work in the field that when they become wives they know nothing about cooking; in some cottages all the cooking consists in making a cup of tea and boiling a potatoe, and that is generally spoiled because it isn't boiled with its jacket on. And this desire to be rid of trouble is by no means confined to the cottages of the labourer, for there are many farmhouses where the washing, baking bread, and brewing are not done at home. It may be that tradesmen with large establishments can brew and bake better that cottager's wives. The bread may be whiter and the beer may be clearer, but how about the profit and the nourishment? I hope to live to see the day when malt will be almost as cheap as barley, when every cottager will brew, not only as he does now, at haysel and harvest, but all the year round, and drink his mug of beer with his wife and family; and not go to the public for every drop of beer he needs, where the stuff he buys, instead of refreshing and strengthening him, makes him thirsty and makes him stupid. Just one word as to the price of flour—it has not been so dear for many years, and there seems no prospect of its being cheaper, at least during the winter. Flour, good sound households, such as you buy, is now, I suppose, 2*s.* 9*d.* per stone, while wheat is hardly 2*s.* per stone. If you buy two bushels of wheat from your master for, say, 17*s.* 6*d.*, and take it to the miller, he will, for the coarse pollard, grind it for you, and you will have your meal at a little over 2*s.* 2*d.* per stone. I can assure you that meal contains as much, and perhaps more, nourishment than the finest flour; and though you may not like it so well, or find it so palatable, as there is now such need of the greatest economy, I would strongly advise your trying it, at least on a small scale.

In two letters which I have further had the honour of receiving from Mr. Read, he makes the following additional remarks:—

"I quite feel with you the great importance that every child should *read* before he goes to work. I think that writing and arithmetic are not so *essential.* A boy in after years can soon master either of these if he have the inclination; and if he have not, he will soon lose what may have been drummed into his head before he was 10 years old.

"I am glad you think with us" (the Norfolk Chamber of Agriculture) "that *better homes* must be the first improvement in the condition of the agricultural population. You evidently think that restricting the employment of children so as indirectly to enforce a better education is the next great step in the advancement of our labouring poor. You may be right; but I would add that unless this is supplemented by improved parental training and home discipline, and a thorough reform in the present mode of retailing beer, I believe that much less improvement will result than you naturally hope for and have a right to expect.

"I shall be pleased if you think any part of my address at North Walsham worthy of a place in your report."

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11. Communication from *J. O. Howard Taylor, Esq.*, Solicitor, Norwich.

SIR, Norwich, 23rd October 1867.

I AM deeply indebted for your request that I should send in a statement in writing regarding the subject of your inquiry.

Much study and thought has impressed me with the deepest conviction of its importance, not merely to the farmer and labourer, land and the culture of land, but also as respects our national future from the social point of view as well as the economic.

The Commissioners divide the general question into 11 main points, to which replies are sought.

Adopting the same order I would submit the following answers to their queries.

1. Legislation is imperatively required for prohibiting the labour of boys under a certain age.
2. With deference to high agricultural authority I should without hesitation fix the age of ten as the limit—as not simply a proper age, but as the only age not improper.
3. Legislation is most desirable for fixing an exclusive period as regards girls.
4. This should I think extend to the age of 18.
5. 6. 7. 8. Subject to any limitation imposed directly or indirectly for educational objects, I do not consider that statutory restriction of the hours of labour is necessary or even desirable in the case of boys and girls not working in public gangs.
9. There appears no need for secured meal-times.
10. A limitation distance in proportion to age *may* be desirable if the legislature decline to fix an age below which labour would be illegal.

    Assuming this to be fixed as respects boys and girls, a limitation of distance would most likely become unnecessary, and possibly might be mischievous.
11. With an exclusive period reaching to 18 there would be little or no necessity for further protection for females. Without such a period or with such materially shortened, protection from such certain employments acknowledged unhealthy or unsuitable or both, would in my judgment be desirable and requisite.

Before arriving at the above conclusions the following considerations among many others had presented themselves to me.

The use of premature juvenile and female work is an evil increasing and prolific of worse evil.

It sunders parents and children, introducing selfishness here and insubordination there.

The competition, by unduly depressing wages, places the parent disposed to bear the burden of his children's education at a triple disadvantage in comparison with less scrupulous neighbours, for (1) he loses his children's earnings, (2) his wife's earnings, and (3) the value of his own labour is depreciated.

The system offers a premium to selfishness; it raises a barrier against virtue—this too when a mutual restraint would be a common boon.

To the child it is a wrong in body, mind and soul.

To the parent the gain, if any, is unnatural and unhallowed.

To the farmer it is false economy and future destruction.

The work *seems* cheap but *is* bad.

An ignorant and mentally and physically incapable class rise around, who can never supply the place of their predecessors, far less fulfil modern requirements, while the cream of agricultural youth betakes itself to better-paying employment.

It is incredible how strangely the less intelligent farmers are misled by this false saving.

A labourer living in a parish with which I am connected lost two different masters from his industry! He is a man of remarkable strength and energy, and working with the flail by the job he threshed out so much corn that his master discharged him; he would not have on his place a man who earned so much money.

The serious evils arising from the employment of girls are only too well known.

The wild liberty of the field unfits them for domestic duties.

Can chastity dwell where modesty is an unknown quantity?

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In Norfolk one child out of every ten is illegitimate.

According to the last census among every 20 spinsters and widows between the marriageable ages of 20 and 40 there was annually one bastard, while, in round numbers, there was but one legitimate child born annually among three married women of the same age.

What a painful conclusion is forced upon us!

The proportion of *illegitimate* births to spinsters and widows between the above ages was *higher* than in any other county, while the proportion of *legitimate* births to married women between 15 and 55 years of age was *lower* than in any county save one.

The free use of opiates and a high rate of infanticide will in general be found in districts where the system of employing girls and young women in the fields obtains.

That the evil is increasing is beyond doubt.

By its nature it tends to increase, and statistics prove it to have done so.

Recommended to the farmers by its seeming economical advantages, and to the parent by its augmentation of the household earnings, the example and the and effect on wages being also combined, fresh families, once reluctant, are naturally drawn in.

Introduced as an imperfect substitute for adult male labour it ends by in a measure supplanting it. The rising generation of males, finding its services command less from the stocking of the labour market with an available but inferior supply, migrates.

Women and boys get through work formerly done by men at a wage lower than any man can or will work for.

A comparison of the following figures will illustrate the above position.

According to the census of 1861 the numbers of *males* employed in Norfolk as agricultural labourers was 49,533 against 47,693 at the census of 1851; but the number of *females* was 3,258 against 2,157.

An examination of the comparative ages of the labourers, male and female, is not less significant.

		5 to 10	10 to 15	15 to 20	20 to 25
Males	1851	418	4,571	6,886	5,850
	1861	478	5,490	6,951	5,322
Females	1851	14	247	505	336
	1861	40	473	702	422

In recommending 10 years of age as the end of the exclusive period in the case of boys, I have felt that the following elements must be harmonized.

The time must be long enough for the boy to gain the "keys to knowledge," it must be short enough to avoid injury to the farmer; long enough to give the boy a taste for knowledge, not so long as to create a distaste for rural hardships.

All these conditions unite at that age.

The crow-keeping can be done by old men in aid of the rates, and boys will be removed from this apprenticeship to evil, with its long idly-occupied hours, facilities for mischief, and neglect of religion.

In suggesting 18 as the age for females there is more difficulty.

The employment of females in agriculture may be an unsatisfactory sign, nevertheless it would be impracticable under the existing dearth of good labour (and might be ruinous in the event of the subtraction by legislative prohibition of much labour now available though inferior) to dispense with all female labour in this county.

The employment of widows and women without families at home is not open to exception, and to females who have fallen the land sometimes is the only resource for an honest livelihood. If the age of 18 be fixed these will not be excluded, while girls will be protected from physical and moral risk during the formation of their characters and constitutions, and will be induced to acquire those domestic habits which are the measure often of their own comforts and always of their worth to society.

In regard to the other portion of the inquiry which the Commissions justly call "the most difficult portion," there is no need to trouble you at such length.

Some observations may, perhaps, be permitted.

And first,—if the legislature requires a certain proportion of school attendance the enactment must be flexible in its details.

The half-day, alternate day, and periodic systems are inapplicable to agriculture. What is wanted is a horary system, viz., a certain number of hours' schooling distributed according to the exigencies of the time, weather, season, and work in the winter and summer months respectively, and referring to the demands of "haysell" and harvest.

Your plan for indirect compulsion would, in my humble opinion, be an admirable spur. But is rural opinion ripe for it? I fear not.

Legislative prohibition of juvenile labour at first must press heavily on parents. Let us not demand bricks without straw, or knowledge while the means are insufficient and not readily accessible in many parts.

We might discourage parents by imposing two burdens at once, and so the poor would nauseate their good.

Compulsion is offensive to the farmers, and to the labourers it would be grievous if imposed simultaneously with other restrictions.

It will be a most important point in any law to avoid the sudden contemporaneous incidence of the weight of its provisions.

Education hitherto has not been of that pecuniary advantage to the farmer by some anticipated.

The educated sons of the labourer, more conscious of their value, have displayed an exaggerated independence, and are prone to desert their father's calling for more remunerative occupations brought within their reach by early instruction.

Hitherto field labour has demanded little intelligence. It will not be so hereafter. The relations of employer and employed are undergoing organic change. Machinery is ousting manual work. The labourer of the future, as regards himself, his master and his work, will be a different man. Skilled labour will then be needed.

The desideratum is to attach the labourer to the soil: for this superior cottage accommodation must be provided.

In parts of Norfolk cottage crowding results in horrors too awful to relate. The amendments of the Poor Law have done much good; great landlords are alive to their duty; nevertheless readier legal facilities might be given for building cottages and improving them and charging the cost, and sanitary inspection by an *independent* public officer is most essential.

Care would however be requisite to avoid checking cottage building by stringent sanitary laws subjecting the owner to compulsory structural alterations.

The charge against the landlords has been unfairly pressed.

Many cottages are built by speculators, many are erected or purchased as investments for "little men," many are erected on appropriated strips of waste, many estates are fringed with dwellings or embossed with little villages in entirely independent hands and of the many cottages held by small owners probably a majority are mortgaged.

The reason why cottages are not built is simply this—they don't pay. The reason why they don't pay is that the labourer cannot afford a rent equivalent to a fair interest on the expenditure: when he can cottages will rise like magic.

The cottage want will adjust itself by economical principles, it cannot be regulated by force, and the advance of wages is the most hopeful sign of improvement.

Perhaps there never was a more propitious opportunity for legislation on the subject of inquiry than exists now.

Wages are rising, the farmers are prosperous. We shall prepare the labourer for coming power. We shall gracefully confer that education it would be

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dangerous to neglect and fatal to deny, and indirectly but materially promote the spread of Christian truth among our rural poor, at a time when religion has more than ever become a political, social, and national necessity.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
The Rev. J. Fraser, J. O. Howard Taylor.
Assistant Commissioner.

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12. Communication from *Rev. W. T. Beckett*, Rector of Ingoldisthorpe, Docking Union, County of Norfolk, and Diocesan Inspector of Schools in the Deanery of Heacham.

It appears to me, that if the education of the sons of cottagers in agricultural districts is to be maintained, the Government must interfere with some law enforcing the attendance of such children at school for a certain fixed period; the length of that period admits of further question. On looking over the educational statistics of the Union of Docking for the last eight years from 1860 to 1867 inclusive, I find that there has been a progressive decrease in the number of boys attending the schools; for in 1860 the number amounted to 523; in 1861 to 488; in 1862 to 576; in 1863 to 570; in 1864 to 530; in 1865 to 510; in 1866 to 512; in 1867 to 498; so that the difference between the number of the highest year 1862 (576) and that of the present year (498) amounts to 78, or nearly $\frac{1}{7}$ of the higher number. But to obtain a fair statement of the real decrease of education amongst the boys, the enquiry must be extended to the fact, whether there is a decrease in the number of boys above six years of age, or whether there is an increase in the number of those under six years of age attending school, and also whether the average length of attendance is now less than it was in 1862, and whether the average age at which the boys quit school is lower. This information I shall attempt to furnish in an appendix. The inducements to boys not attending school at all, or quitting school at an early age are so great and are so likely to increase, that I think legislation is required for fixing the age below which boys should not be allowed to be employed.

Reasons for boys leaving school early. — Employers.—The great reason undoubtedly is the importance to farmers of boy labour in an economical point of view. If a farmer can get the same amount of weekly work done by two boys at 3*s.* 6*d.* or 4*s.* a week each, or by one lad at 6*s.* or 7*s.* a week, as by a man at weekly wages ranging from 10*s.* to 12*s.* or 14*s.* per week, it is decidedly to his advantage to employ the boy or lad labour in preference to the man labour. Now that such is the case is clearly proved by the fact that boy and lad labour is rapidly superseding man labour, and that on some farms the work will be almost wholly done by boys and lads under 20 years of age. On my own knowledge and observation I am able to say that lads of 14 and 15 years of age sometimes even younger, at weekly wages of 6*s.* or 7*s.*, are employed as shepherds or in ploughing or other agricultural labour, which was formerly entrusted to men at wages varying from 9*s.* and 10*s.* to 12*s.* per week. Thus man labour is displaced, and obliged to seek employment in other occupations, or depend on union support.

Parents.—The parents, especially where the husband, for the reason above mentioned, is not constantly employed, are glad to increase their weekly income by the earnings of one or more of the boys or lads of their family. This is especially found to be the case in those families where sickness has prevailed; for, as under the present poor law system, medical and parochial relief is not afforded by the Union in cases where the father is employed in work, a debt is quickly incurred for medical attendance, which hangs as an incubus upon families for years, and to free themselves from which parents will even do that which they know to be injurious to the physical, moral, and religious welfare of their children. Where the father himself is ill, the union assistance afforded being less than his weekly earnings, the difficulty and distress of the family is consequently proportionately increased. The pressure of debt grinds so heavily upon them, that they are willing to be relieved in any degree or any way which they can meet with. Another and I fear even more common cause of parents sending their children to labour at an early age is the dissolute and dissipated life of the father. When the father spends two, three, or four shillings of his weekly earnings in drink, the mother is but too willing to supply this deficiency in the weekly income by sending her boy of six, seven, eight, or nine years of age to labour in the field for two or three shillings per week. The husband of course consents, as he is thus enabled to spend more on his vicious indulgence. A proof of this is to be found in the fact that in the more respectable cottagers' families, where the husband is sober, industrious, hardworking and careful, the boy will be kept at school till 12 or 14 years of age, whereas in those families where the husband is of a different character, or the wife is improvident, careless, slatternly and thoughtless, the children, both girls and boys, are sent to work at an early age. The attendance of children at the day school furnishes to a certain extent a test of the moral character of the parents. Of course exceptions could be found in the case of some families with a great number of young children, where the employment of the younger children of six, seven, or eight, appears to the parents to be absolutely essential to the maintenance of the family. Whether in such cases union assistance might not be profitably given and economically justified, deserves consideration.

Children themselves.—As it is natural for children to dislike the discipline and restraint and exercise of the mind, which is inseparable from a school, they are always desirous to free themselves from it. They much prefer to pass their time in their own way, and in amusement, as they do, whilst employed in tending sheep or cattle, or scaring birds. Two or more boys employed in neighbouring fields will generally find the means of coming together and amusing themselves with games at marbles, or even gambling in a small way. Boys are therefore always ready to accept work when offered by employers, or pressed to do so by their parents.

I stated in my evidence before the commissioner on the gang system that boys were employed as early as five or six years in certain kinds of field work, and that the greater number would leave school before 10 or 12 years of age. I am prepared to say that for the benefit of society at large legislative interference is required to secure a certain amount of education for boys of cottagers' families, as the early employment of boys is physically, morally, and religiously injurious, and is politico-economically false.

Morally.—Early employment in the fields renders the boys rough, unpolished, reckless of authority, and disobedient. Left to themselves without any correcting influence exerted over them, they soon ape the faults and vices of their elders, or encourage each other in acts of immorality. They frequently learn to swear and drink and use improper conversation, and in some cases a habit of gambling is also acquired. The difference between a boy brought up in the fields, and a boy trained in a school is, as a general rule, great indeed, and in villages where there is no school, or one badly conducted or poorly attended, the behaviour of the boys and lads is very different from that of a village, where a school is established and well cared for. I believe that all schoolmasters and managers will testify to the fact that let a boy be taken from a school at a very early age, say eight or nine, and be employed for some months in field work, and then let him return to the school, his character will be much altered for the worse, and he will not only prove troublesome and disobedient himself, but he will be the centre of disobedience and lawlessness for the other children.

Physically.—I am convinced, having now attended upon the poor inhabitants of my parish for some years, that the employment of boys at an early age in field work is physically injurious. Diseases are often contracted, which though not immediately apparent, show themselves at a later period, become constitutionally engrained, and either shorten life, or throw the sufferer at an early age upon the union as a confirmed invalid. The seeds of phthisis, rheumatism, heart disease, are often thus early sown.

Religiously.—The evil effect of employment of boys in field labour is shown in the fact, that at the triennial periods of confirmation clergymen are constantly obliged to refuse candidates, because they are unable to repeat even the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments, and are unacquainted with the simplest facts of Scripture or religious knowledge. Many will not present themselves because they are conscious of their ignorance, and utter inability to answer the simplest question put to them. Boys of this class fancy themselves men even whilst they are children, and think it lowering to themselves to attend the Sunday school or receive any religious instruction.

Mentally.—The minds of boys thus left to themselves become by degrees blunted, so that they lose the powers of observation. Their curiosity can only be startled by the most astonishing incidents, and they make no inquiries as to the things which surround them. They view them all as matters of fact not worthy observation nor inquiry; hence they know little or nothing about the country or neighbourhood in which they live, nor the necessaries of life they daily use, or even the work in which they are employed. They have no mental life nor interest.

As this question has now engaged for some time the attention of the employers and the clergy, I would briefly state the reasons given by the farmers for the early employment of boys, and the time at which they think they should be brought into the fields.

Many of the employers of labour maintain that to keep a boy at school beyond eight or nine years of age at the latest is to render him practically useless for the purposes of agricultural labour; that he must be trained from an early age to the management of implements. I think that any knowledge of agricultural pursuits will give an answer to this at once. The general employment of boys up to 12 or 14 years of age is not of such a character as to require this training. The tending or feeding of sheep, hoeing, weed picking, turnip topping and tailing, leading horses, are not occupations which require such training; whereas ploughing, horse-hoeing, and drilling, would not be entrusted to boys under 12 or 14. But experience shows us that this statement, so broadly made, is not borne out by fact, and that boys who have remained at school till 12 or 14 are not only not, as stated, useless, but that they learn quicker the work they have to do, and are quite equal to and generally better than those who have not been educated. They understand the reason of directions better, they perceive more readily the quickest and readiest and most profitable way of carrying out their instructions, and they certainly learn more quickly the uses of the different parts of machinery, and are better able to put it to rights when out of order or employ it in the best manner. So too they learn to be more careful about the feeding of cattle. A reason which I once heard given for an early employment of boy labour is one which I scarcely like to repeat; but as I believe it was an individual opinion, I may mention it,—that in the case of vicious, restive, and untractable horses boys managed them better because they had less fear of them, either from not knowing the danger or being more regardless of it. Such an opinion, which I do not believe to be general, condemns itself. Several employers of labour have expressed their opinion to me that educated boys are more useful on the farms, and that the only objection they have to their continuance long at school is that their services as farm labourers are generally lost to them, as they aim at a higher position either as domestic servants or in other occupations. If then there is no advantage, as far as the acquiring of skill in agricultural pursuits is concerned, in boys being employed at so early an age, it seems but fair that they should have the advantage of mental training and education, and that for this purpose they should be left at school as long as possible, say till 10 or 12 years of age. My own experience as a school inspector convinces me that though boys may be sent to school before six, they can acquire little or no instruction till after that age, and that it is perfectly impossible in the period of two years to afford them such instruction as will be permanently useful. What they have acquired before eight years of age will be lost in a few months, and the boys might just as well not have been at school at all. Those who advocate the employment of boys at an early age in the fields say that all the education the boys require may be obtained at a night school; but then they forget that the keeping of these night schools in poor rural parishes entails additional work and labour on the clergymen, as no one else is frequently found to be able or willing to attend to it, and that this takes him away from other work of equal if not greater importance, and that this additional burden is often cast upon him when he is at the sole expense of maintaining the day school, and when he bestows much personal labour in the superintendence and management of it. But the night school is in my opinion to a great extent a failure, both from the want of sufficient teachers, the dullness and heaviness of the lads, the shortness of the time given to the school, and the sleepiness and weariness of the scholars. Besides the most important parts of day school education, the moral training and religious teaching, must be either altogether omitted or will be but imperfectly given. No one who has not had the personal management of a night school can be aware of the difficulties and discouragements to be encountered and the little progress that can be made.

One reason for not removing boys from school at so early an age is that it is politico-economically wrong and unjust on society at large. If the long hours of labour, the exposure to weather, and the overtaxing of the strength of the boy—for the other labourers often make boys and lads carry heavier burdens than is proper, as I can personally testify—lay the foundation, as I am convinced they do, of disease, which manifesting itself in after life causes the man to be obliged to resort to the union for support, or if he dies early throws the burden of supporting the widow and family upon the union, then an act of injustice is done to the other ratepayers, who are obliged to pay increased rates in order that agricultural labour may be supplied to the employer at a lower price. Besides this, I have pointed out that the employment of boys and lads does displace man labour, and does also in the long run lessen the quality of the labour. Inquiry will show that when lads reach the age of 18 or 19 and demand men's wages their demand is refused and they are obliged to leave their homes and travel elsewhere in search of higher wages, whilst younger boys are taken on to supply their place. This, I am certain, has a prejudicial effect upon the moral character of the younger adult labouring population. The home influence and the home feelings are destroyed, and they frequently fall into vicious courses which they might have escaped if they had remained in their own village under the friendly supervision and advice of their relations and those who had known them as children. Nor is there any real money advantage to the parents. When boys are earning in the fields only 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* a week, it is doubtful whether that sum will cover the expense of the increased wear and tear of clothes, especially of boots; and if the chance of subsequent illness and their being thrown in consequence upon their parents for support is taken into account, it appears to me that to such parents is applicable the saying, "Penny wise and pound foolish."

With respect to the employment of female labour in the fields, I think that it has generally such an inju-

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rious effect upon the physical, moral, and religious character of the female labourer that it should be discouraged, if not prohibited, by legislative interference. In this opinion I am glad to believe that very many of the best educated and most respectable employers of agricultural labour and the greatest part of the respectable or better class of agricultural labourers agree. The scarcity of labour is not such as to require women to work in the fields. Widows, for instance, who are often compelled to do so in order to obtain support for their families, almost invariably say that they would not follow such an occupation unless they were compelled, and that they would much prefer gaining their livelihood by washing and needlework if they could obtain sufficient employment. The married women who follow field work and earn from 10*d.* to 1*s.* in the day are generally slatternly and careless, their cottages are dirty and uncomfortable, and their children neglected and uncared for. The more respectable labourers always say that they would not allow their wives to work in the fields, as they do not think, besides other reasons, that it is any advantage to them in a pecuniary point of view. The waste of food by the children in the absence of the mother, the wear and tear of the clothes, the breakage of articles of furniture, and many other extra expenses consume the additional money earned. The discomfort of the home to the husband on his return from work is frequently the cause of his betaking himself to the public house and hence becoming a confirmed drunkard. I can safely say that the field workers amongst the women are generally the least respectable of the labourers' wives and the least attentive to their domestic and social duties. Undoubtedly the proper place for a married woman is her home, and her proper occupation the care of her children, who frequently from her absence incur the danger of accidents by fire and other causes, and also from neglect die at an early age. With respect to the girls and unmarried women, there are two classes employed in field labour. Those of an immoral character, who occasionally work in the fields, and more respectable girls and young women, the former of whom, the girls, are either driven to it by their parents, who are generally some of the most careless and dissipated in the parish, or who, having large families and only girls, are glad to add something to the weekly earnings by the additional wages of the elder girls of the families. Again there are other girls who dislike the restraint of school or have so misbehaved themselves as to be turned out of it, who either take to field work of their own accord or else are driven to it by their parents as a punishment for their misconduct at school. The general effect upon all these girls is much the same as that produced by their working in gangs; they become rude, immodest, slatternly, and unfitted for domestic service; and when they marry generally make bad wives and mothers. Of course there are exceptions, but those who are such generally quickly give up field labour, because it becomes wearisome and disagreeable to them. More than one parent has confessed to me that they traced the ruin of their girls to their work in the fields, and have said how much they repented having permitted them to follow field labour, and have expressed their opinion that no girls should be so employed.

Physical ends.—All the physical evils, which in the evidence given to the commissioners on the gang system, have been stated to apply to the employment of female labour in gangs, is equally applicable to the employment of female labour in agricultural work of any kind. As this is a medical question, I would refer the Commissioners to the evidence given by Mr. Adney, surgeon, of Whittlesea, in Mr. White's Report, No. 168, page127; Mr. Joshua Love's, Castleacre, qualified statement, No. 32, page 93; Rev. John Howman, No. 46, page 96, No. 213, page 140, No. 253 (10), page 149, also in Mr. Longe's Report to No. 160, page 36. As I have now attended the cottagers of my parish medically since the spring of 1859, somewhat more than eight years, I am able to speak personally of the causes of disease and death, and I can safely say that the greatest amount of disease amongst the women is attributable to overwork and exposure to weather in field work. I find that since 1852 there have been 116 deaths in the parish, of this number 21 were of children under 10 years of age, three under 2 years, and 30 under 1 year, making a total of 54, or nearly half of the whole number. Of these 10 died of diphtheria in 1862. Above 70 there have been 25 deaths, and between 10 and 20, 3, of which, 2 were attributable to exposure to weather and cold; and between twenty and sixty, 36 funerals, namely, 16 males and 20 females, and of these 9 males died from diseases, such as asthma, consumption, and pleurisy, caused by hard living, over fatigue and exposure to weather, and 11 females from similar diseases produced by field work. I am pleased to say that the injurious effects of field labour on females has been of late so much recognized by the cottagers themselves, that at present I believe there are only in this village one widow, four married women, and 2 girls so employed, and these only occasionally. I think, therefore, that the legislature may fairly interfere to prevent female labour in other parishes, or at any rate not to suffer females under 16 to work in the fields. It would be better to say 18, as the time when the greatest injury is likely to be done to the female constitution by exposure to wet and cold and by over fatigue is from 12 to 16 or 17.

The remarks I have made respecting the employment of child and female labour in field work are applicable also to the employment of the same classes in musseling and cockling upon our sea shore, an employment which occupies a great number of women and children, with the same injurious results, morally, bodily, and religiously. I believe that the present commission does not embrace that kind of outdoor work, but I think that the inquiry should be extended to that kind of labour, in order to prevent the increase of evils, which might arise if restrictions were applied in this neighbourhood to field work and not to shore work.

Duration of time of labour and time for refreshment.—In answering the questions proposed by the Commissioners numbered 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, I think it necessary to state that the usual hours of labour in this neighbourhood are for men from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. with intervals allowed of from 20 to 30 minutes for breakfast, and 1½ to 2 hours for dinner, making the usual length of work 10 hours; for women or girls, from 8 till 5, with the same intervals of rest; a woman's actual working time is therefore 8 hours. In grass mowing and harvest the usual hours of work are from 5 a.m. till 7 p.m., with an additional half hour's rest in the afternoon. When getting up the hay or corn the labourer may be perhaps required to stay later, say till 8 or 9 p.m. For the additional work they get additional wages, for whereas the usual weekly pay is 12*s.* per week, the wages for the harvest are 6*l.* a month, or 30*s.* per week. As long as the usual hours from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. for men, or from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. for women, are kept, I do not think there is any need for legislative interference; but in the case of boys, and a system prevalent in this part of Norfolk, called the one-journey system, I think interference is necessary.

First, with respect to the labour of boys of all ages. These boys are constantly employed for much longer hours than the men. I believe from the inquiries I have made that boys are in the fields as early as half-past 4 a.m. to 5 p.m., and continue till 7 or 8 p.m., or even later. In fact, unless the boys, who are set to keep off crows and birds were very early in the fields, they would be of little use, as the birds feed principally early in the morning and late in the evening; but at the same time, as the boy is on his legs during the greater part of the time, I am convinced that the period of exertion is too long and is injurious to his physical development. But in addition to this he has often to walk a mile and a half, or two miles to his work and the same from his work, and when he reaches home has to get his supper before he can go to

bed. Under these circumstances he probably does not retire to rest till half-past 9 or 10; and as he must be up by 4 or half-past 4 the next morning, the hours of sleep are restricted to 6 or 6½ hours, which I believe most medical men would think too short a period of rest for boys or young lads. I would suggest that where in the case of boys such long hours of work are required, two boys should be employed instead of one, and that the one should be in the field from 5 a.m. to 12 a.m., and the other from 1 p.m. to 7 or 8 p.m. This would also permit of alternate schooling for the two boys. This undue amount of labour is also exacted from boys in other agricultural pursuits; and they are frequently seen returning from their work long after the adult labourer has reached his home. The man will insist on his proper hours, but the boy or lad fearing to lose his place, will stay long beyond his proper time of leaving off in order to feed the cattle out of hours, do some odd jobs, or even finish work which the men have not completed. In fact, the men often put upon the boys. I think much of this might be prevented, if the boys were licensed, and upon their licence were dated the number of hours (varying according to their age) they might work, and a penalty affixed for subjecting them to longer hours of work than that for which they are licensed. I do not think that a boy of 8 or 10 or even 12 years should work the same number of hours, and at the same work and equally hard as the lad of 14, 16, or 18 years.

I think that the one-journey system though much favoured by both employers of labour and the labourers themselves should be suppressed. I am sure it is a mistake; and I will not permit it on my own land, nor would I, if I were farming hundreds or thousands of acres instead of tens. The system is this, and in the working of it, both men, women, lads and boys and even girls may be included. The labourer (whether male or female) gets breakfast at 5 or half-past 5 before he starts for his work, he gets on the ground at six, and then works away without rest or intermission of any kind, even for taking food till 3 p.m., when he breaks off and goes home. Thus he gives his master 9 hours work instead of 10, and as he becomes fatigued and weary during the last 3 or 4 hours from want of food and rest, the quality of his work is inferior; and thus not only is the time of work shortened, but the labour is less effective. In some cases a rest is allowed of 20 or 30 minutes at 9 o'clock. Of course the labourer prefers this plan, because unless he is closely watched, he will rest, and will take a bite and a sup, or if not will do his work less fairly, than he would otherwise have done. The advantage to him is that he has the whole of the afternoon from 3 p.m. to himself, and after getting a meal on his return home; goes to his allotment garden and labours there till 8 or 9 p.m., thus adding 4 or 5 hours to the amount of his day's labour, and if he has acted fairly to his employer, exhausting his bodily strength more than he should do. This "one journey system," which was at first confined to thrashing, ploughing, harrowing, and horse-hoeing is now extending itself to other kinds of field work, such as hoeing, weed picking, getting up and topping and stacking turnip and mangold, and will, if not stopped, become general. If the employer and adult labourer mutually like the plan, I suppose they must be allowed to pursue it, but I think protection against it should be given to the woman, girl, and boy labourers. I am so certain of the injurious effects of this system both to man and horse, that I would not permit it on any land I might farm, and in this opinion I was confirmed by an old farming friend from Essex, who has farmed for nearly 50 years, who, when I explained to him, whilst on a visit to me, this system, said he was astonished that Norfolk farmers would tolerate it on account of the injurious effect it must have upon both man and horse. The only reason I can learn for its being sanctioned by the employer is, that where the horses are employed at a distance from a farm in ploughing or harrowing, it saves the journey home and back in the middle of the day, which may in some cases be 3 or 4 miles in addition to the day's work in ploughing, which I believe is generally equivalent in distance to a journey of 10 or 12 miles on a bad or rough road. I think particular attention should be directed to the fact, that under the one journey system neither man nor horses are to be fed during the nine consecutive hours of labour, and I have been assured by a trustworthy lad in my village that whilst working under this system his eating some bread which he had put into his pocket whilst he was harrowing, was objected to by his employer as rendering him less attentive to his work. This employer I am bound to say is not a hard master, but one who is liked by his labourers. Another most respectable man told me, that if under this system they rested for a short time or took any food, it must be done unknown to the master as it was not permitted. Such a system then is either harsh and unjust on the part of the employers, or if evaded by the labourer renders him dishonest and unfair. I think, therefore, that the system should be discontinued, but this is a question between master and man. In the case, however, of lads under 20, boys, women, and girls, I think this should be protected by an enactment securing them half an hour for breakfast, one hour at least for dinner, and if called upon to work beyond 6 p.m., half an hour or one hour at 4 p.m., as medical evidence testifies to the fact, that food should be taken at intervals of 5 hours in order to preserve health.

No. 10.—*Limitations as to distance*—With respect to distance, I think it would be well if women, girls, lads and boys were limited to two, or at most, three miles to travel to their work, or else that the time which may be consumed in going from and returning to their homes to and from their place of work should be deducted from the usual hours of work, or in the case of boys under 14 they should be confined to their parish, provided the boundaries of such parish or their place of work are not further than two miles from their home.

No. 11.—I think it would be well, that boys under 14, and women and girls should not be permitted to hoe or weed in wheat, barley, or other grain, or to enter into crops of turnips or mangold for the purposes of hoeing, topping or tailing the roots, when, in consequence of falls of heavy rain or snow such crops are so wet, that such employment would necessitate their being wet up to their knees or waists, or require them to work for the day, or return home in wet and dripping clothes. The cause and necessity of such a regulation I have explained when speaking of the physical injury to boys and girls. I think that the regulations as to women and girls not being allowed to work in the same gang with men and boys, should be extended to the employment of women in any kind of agricultural labour.

I find that in this parish 14 boys above 12 and under 16—9 above 16 and under 18—that 8 above 20 and under 25 are employed in labour, and that 8 under 12 and above 8 are wholly or occasionally employed: in the whole, 39 boys and lads—and that 17 above 18 have left the parish. That of these 6 became sailors at Grimsby, 2 entered the army, and 9 have sought work at a distance from home. That of the lads and young men employed in the parish, 7 are employed as team men, 5 at lad's wages (say 7*s*. or 8*s*. a week), 1 is a shepherd at 7*s*. per week; and that of the adults only 4 are employed as team men or plough men at 14*s*. a week, the rest being now labourers at 12*s*. per week; whereas 12 of these men were employed as team men a few years ago; thus boy and lad labour has superseded man labour. Four men are only occasionally employed. I also refer the commissioners to my statement in a letter to Mr. White, assistant commissioner on agricultural gangs, Report No. 227, page 143.

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ACTUAL STATE OF EDUCATION AMONG THE YOUNG FOUND AT WORK.

I think that the education of boys and lads engaged at field work who have never been at school at all, or only for one, two or three years, is most deplorable, and their ignorance very great. I have already stated that I do not think that either Sunday or night schools could remedy this evil, and the only plan I could propose is to render the attendance of boys at school till 12 years of age compulsory. I am convinced that in agricultural districts it would be almost impossible to substitute either half days or alternate days for regular daily attendance, either to the satisfaction of employers of labour or of school managers. These two plans have been again and again discussed by both parties, both together and separately, and the general opinion is (of course there are some few dissentients), that the peculiarities of agricultural labour, and the difficulties attending the carrying out such a plan would prevent its success. I shall furnish as an appendix a statement of the length of time during which different boys of this parish have attended school.

The deficient education of boys engaged in field labour is not in the Heacham Deanery of the Docking Union to be ascribed to the want of schools. In the 17 parishes of the deanery there are 15 schools; three of the parishes are united for educational purposes—one parish, having a dame's school, is within a mile of a good boys' school and girls' school, and an excellent mixed school. Another parish, without a school, is within two miles of two schools. There is no want of schools.

All the schools, except three, of this deanery are well conducted, and the education given good, and quite sufficient for the class of children, who would resort to them. I am bound to say, however, that the numbers have decreased, and the attendance has become less regular, since the introduction of the new code, and the practical giving up of teaching grammar, geography, and general knowledge. Neither parents nor children take so much interest in the schools as they formerly did. I fear that the bad attendance at schools may be traced in a great degree to the want of interest taken in the education of the poor by the gentry, employers of labour, and the poor themselves. The schools are not generally supported by the subscriptions of the residents in parishes, but only by one or two persons; and where subscriptions are given, the greater part of the expense is borne either by the squire or the clergyman. Thus, out of the 15 schools of this deanery, 1 is a free-school, supported by endowments; 5 are maintained by the squire; 2 by the clergyman entirely; 2 almost wholly by the clergyman; 4 by subscriptions; but where the principal portion of the expense is borne either by the clergyman or the squire, or by both, the interest in education amongst the employers of labour may be, in my opinion, considered but as small.

Poverty of parents.—As a general rule the parents could scarcely plead poverty. When families can obtain a meat meal two or three times in a week and have a sufficiency of other kinds of food, besides being well clothed, I think poverty is not the cause of their sending their children to field work. There are of course cases where the feeding and clothing of a great number of very young children, or where, from the recent illness of some member of the family, great expenses incurred, press heavily upon the parents, and make them desirous of lessening the debt by sending as many as possible of their children to field work.

The indisposition of the parents to forego weekly sum earned.—This, I think, is one of the causes of children being sent early to work, especially, as I have already pointed out, in the case where the husband is given to drink, or where the wife, from a love of fine dressing, is secretly and unknown to her husband in debt to the tally-man. I know that such cases do occur, and that then the mother is desirous of sending her children to work.

The chief causes of sending children early to work.—But the chief cause seems to be a growing indifference on the parts of the parents to education. This arises from several causes: one is, their perceiving that in some, if not many cases, the resident gentry and the employers of field labour not only take no interest in schools, but are rather opposed to them, and that they even prefer the children should not be educated, and accuse the parents of bringing their children up in idleness if they keep them at school beyond 8 or 10 years of age. I think that on the part of small farmers or those who have themselves been badly educated, there is a fear lest the labourer should know more than themselves. Again, I think that many of the parents do not see the advantages of education, and are unwilling to lose a present and certain advantage for a prospective, and as it appears to them, uncertain one; and undoubtedly in some cases there is a pressure put upon the parents by the employers, who decline to employ the father if they cannot have the children also.

Cottage accommodation.—I do not think that deficient cottage accommodation has any direct bearing upon the question of the non or small education of the children of the lower classes. But I do think that legislative interference is required in this matter for the protection of the cottagers and for the securing their health, and happiness and moral welfare. Where, as is the case in some villages, the cottages are built as a mere matter of speculation or investment by small tradespeople or persons themselves scarcely above the cottager, the cottages are of the most indifferent character and the rents are high. I have known instances in which stables, cowhouses, and old and ruinous malthouses have been converted into cottages. In my own village there are 16 cottages, where there is only one small living room below with a lean-to washhouse and scullery and one bedroom, and these cottages, having no extra conveniences, are let at from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* per annum; and I have known as many as 10 and 12 persons,—father, mother, grandmother, grown up sons and young children—living in them. I remember in the visitation of diphtheria in the parish in 1862, one instance in which a son aged about 17 was lying dead in the lower room, whilst a girl of 16 and a boy of 12 were dying in the room above, and in these two rooms slept the other members of the family, 5 persons. Other cottages have the same accommodation downstairs, but two bedrooms above, and in two of these cottages I have had typhus fever patients, where two lads, brothers, were lying ill in one room, in which another brother slept; in the lower bedroom there was a daughter of 19 ill with the same disease, and in this room the father, mother, and two daughters about 13 and 15 slept. I think that where there are families, not less than three bedrooms should be provided, that the father and mother may occupy one, the boys another, and the girls the third. I would propose, that no new cottage should be put up without a magistrate's licence, and the licence should be granted after the plans had been shown to and signed as satisfactory by the county architect or some other architect appointed for the purpose; that every cottage to be built must have three bedrooms; and that with respect to the old cottages a magistrate's licence should be required, and that in the licence should be specified the number of persons permitted to live in the cottage, and this should vary according to the number of bedrooms provided. I am glad to say that in this village cottages of a better character have been lately erected, which have fairly provided for the wants and acquirements of the family. As a good cottage of the character I have described would cost from 100*l.* to 140*l.*, the rent, if the building was considered as an investment, would vary from 5*l.* to 6*l.* or 7*l.* per annum—by far too high an amount for the cottager to pay. I think, therefore, that the landed proprietors should build cottages of this description for the cottagers working upon their own lands,—that they should be content with 3 per cent.

interest, so that the rent should not exceed 4*l.* 10*s.* per annum, and that the employer should deduct this rent weekly from his labourer's wages and become responsible to the landlord for the amount. My reason for proposing this is, that in this part of Norfolk the cottager depends entirely upon his harvest wages to pay his rent. He makes no provision nor lays by anything in the early part of the year towards his rent, but depends entirely upon his harvest wages, 6*l.*, for that purpose. If then sickness, or an accident, or any other cause just about the harvest time prevents his earning these wages, he is in debt to his landlord, and in order not to be turned out of his cottage, borrows the money. This debt from that time becomes a burden upon him, crushes his energy, makes him poor as compared with his neighbours, and prevents his giving his children the advantage of the school. A regulation, then, which would make the rent a part of the week's wages would be most beneficial.

Sanitary arrangements.—As connected with the subject of the dwellings of the cottagers, I would mention the great neglect in country villages of sanitary measures and precautions. This, as giving rise to sickness, is of course a cause also of poverty. I think that a law is especially needed to provide against this evil, and to secure to the poor a supply of good water, and guard against the evils arising from bad drainage, open sewers, obnoxious cesspools, privies built against the very cottage walls, and dirty pigstyes and heaps of rotting refuse within a few yards of the doors and windows of the cottages. During the last 12 years there have been two visitations of sickness in this parish, diphtheria and typhus fever, and in both cases they originated in some of the causes I have mentioned, and ceased when those causes were removed. On both occasions my efforts to remove the nuisances which were poisoning the neighbourhood were not only not seconded by the resident gentlemen and the parish officers, but were even opposed by the latter, and by the medical officer of the local board of health. In the first case a month or six weeks elapsed before I could procure the removal of the nuisance, and several deaths occurred in consequence; in the second, in order to secure my object as quickly as possible and so save life, I was obliged to threaten to apply to the Board of Health in London to send down a medical officer to inquire into the cause of the disease. In the latter case, immediately on the removal of the nuisances I pointed out, the disease was stopped and spread no farther. A very similar case occurred in a neighbouring village where the clergyman brought upon himself the dislike and disapproval of his neighbours by his efforts to improve the sanitary condition of the village. I would propose then, as the parish officers are dilatory and unwilling, on account of expense being incurred, to move in these matters, that every ratepayer should have the power of obtaining from a magistrate, if satisfied of the urgent necessity of the case, an immediate order for the removal or abatement of the nuisance, and that in case of such order not being complied with, a heavy fine should be inflicted. To defer the application to the magistrates in petty sessions would often, from the delay of time incurred, defeat the object of the order.

Medical attendance and medical Poor Law Relief.—One of the most frequent causes of the poverty and distress of the cottager is to be found in the sickness which may fall upon himself or the members of his family, and the inadequacy of the medical assistance afforded. I believe there is no cause more productive of poverty than this, and no subject which more requires legislative consideration and regulation. To those who have been long acquainted with the condition, feelings, and wants of the cottager, this subject will appear one of the greatest importance. The regulation carried out in some unions, that the cottager in full work should be refused the assistance of the union medical man entails great hardships. Considering that the amount of weekly wages is only sufficient to defray the actual weekly expenses, it is cruel, impolitic, and uneconomical to throw upon the cottager the necessity of providing and paying for medical assistance and extra comforts and necessities for the sick when illness attacks one or more members of his family. A debt is often thus incurred which presses upon him for years afterwards. When the father is himself ill, and medical assistance is granted, the actual relief afforded by the union is so much below his average weekly wages that a debt is thus also incurred. I would therefore propose that every cottager earning only labourer's wages, not exceeding 16*s.* a week, should have a right to the medical assistance of the union medical man for himself or any member of his family residing in his cottage, and that the order for such assistance should be granted by the guardian, churchwardens, or overseers of the parish, and not as now by the board of guardians. The delay in obtaining such an order from the board is often attended with fatal results, as sometimes a person is ill for a week or a fortnight before the order is procured. Every order given by the guardian, churchwarden, or overseer should be subsequently reported to the board of guardians. In case of the illness of the father, the relief given ought to be, if the medical man certifies that he is unable to work, equal to the weekly wages, or if the man is in a club, so much should be added to the pay given by the club to bring it up to that amount. There is also a great necessity for a strict supervision of the union medical officers, for under the present system it depends almost entirely upon the personal character and the disposition of the medical officers whether the pauper patients are humanely and efficiently attended or not. I know that, as some of the medical officers are careless in their duties and wanting in humanity and kind feelings, lives are lost through negligence and inattention, which might have been saved if only a proper amount of attention had been paid to the case and proper medicines given. For a medical man merely to look at the patient and not send any medicine, or if he does send medicine, such as is of no use, is to render his attendance a farce, and the cottager might as well be without the supposed aid of the medical officer. Now here an act of injustice is done not merely to the cottager himself but to the ratepayer. If a pauper patient remains in consequence of bad medical attendance ill for a greater length of time than he would have done if properly attended to, or if from a similar cause he dies, when by more care and better medicines his life might have been saved, in the first case a greater amount of union relief is given than ought to have been required, and the poor rates are thereby increased; in the second, the widow and family are thrown for support upon the union, and a long-continued expense is incurred, which if better medical assistance had been given might have been avoided. It is, therefore, in a politico-economical point of view more prudent to pay larger and sufficiently remunerative stipends to medical officers, and compel them to afford the proper remedies and sufficiently attend the poor. To effect this I would propose that the stipends of medical officers, which at present are ridiculously low, and utterly inadequate to the providing good medicines or the proper performance of their duties, should be raised and the amount fixed, not by the board of guardians, but by the Poor Law Board in London. Then to keep a control over the officers themselves, I would suggest that they should be required in each case they attend to give a written prescription, and that they should be bound to keep a log book or daily diary, in which should be inscribed each cottager's case, the nature of the illness, the length of its continuance, the number of visits paid during the illness, and copies of the prescriptions; that this book should always be open to the inspection of a superior medical officer to be appointed for each union, or two or more unions, by the Poor Law Board in London, and that it should be his duty to report and bring under the notice of the board any cases of neglect which on his inspection he might

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discover, or to which his attention might be directed, either in the not supplying of proper medicine or the insufficient attendance of the medical officer. The latter appears as important a point as the securing the giving the proper medicines, and yet I have known again and again that in severe illnesses requiring great watching and care the medical officer has not paid a visit oftener than once in a week, and sometimes only once in ten days or a fortnight. The board of guardians say that they are unable to take notice of such neglect, as the medical man must be the best judge of the necessity of his attendance and the medicines he should give. Another defect in the present administration of medical relief which I would point out, is the very inferior drugs which are frequently given, and the long distances the poor have frequently to go to obtain them from the medical man. These two defects in the medical parochial relief might be met by the unions, instead of the medical man, purchasing their drugs wholesale from a respectable general drug firm and furnishing the medical men with them, and by appointing depôts of medicine in various villages of the district, and requiring the medical man to make up his prescriptions at such depôts before he left the village, that so the cottager might not have to go more than one or two miles at most, instead of seven or eight as they frequently have to do at present, and then have to wait a long time until the medical man, should he chance to be absent, returns home. This is of course a great discomfort and unnecessary trouble to the cottager, for in cases of sickness it is difficult to spare the mother or one of the elder girls to fetch the medicine.

Relief in wine, beer, and extra nutriment in times of sickness.—This, according to the present poor law arrangements, depends so entirely upon the medical man, that in different unions and in various districts of the same union the relief afforded varies greatly; nor only so, but even one parish is often more favoured than another, for if the medical man has from any cause a dislike to the clergyman, guardian, or resident gentlemen, he will visit the dislike upon the poor of that parish, in not ordering them that amount of relief which he will give in another and more favoured parish. Now this is both cruel and unjust, especially in cases where the residents in the parish are either unable or unwilling to afford such relief as a matter of private charity. I would as a remedy for these evils propose that where the medical man is negligent in the matter, permission should be given to the relieving officer or guardian to order such relief, and then bring the case under the notice of the board of guardians. As it is now, the cottagers often make every exertion to provide such expensive necessaries and comforts for the sick members of their family, though in doing so they incur great expense and add thus to the burden, which afterwards presses so heavily upon them, and prevents their sending their children to school.

Union relief of the aged poor.—One other cause of the poverty of some of the cottagers, and their inability or unwillingness to send their children to school, is that they are obliged to contribute in a greater or less degree to the support of their aged parents. The necessity for this assistance differs greatly in different unions and different parishes, according to the different amount of relief afforded by different unions, or the extra assistance afforded in some parishes through private charity. For a single old person the relief varies in different unions from as little as 1*s.*, with half a stone of bread, per week to 1*s.* 6*d.*, 2*s.*, and 2*s.* 6*d.*, with the same amount of bread, per week; and for two old people, from 2*s.* 6*d.* per week, with a stone of bread, to 3*s.* 6*d.* or 4*s.*, with a stone of bread. The lower sum given in either case is perfectly inadequate, when we consider that out of that sum lodging, food, clothing, firing, and candles are to be provided. I think that two rates of pay should be fixed by the Poor Law Board in London, and that these rates should be made general throughout all the unions, and that the amount of relief should not be left, as it is now, to the descretion of the different board of guardians. I have proposed two different rates of relief because I think a difference should be made between those who have always conducted themselves respectably and properly and brought up their families well, and those who have lived viciously or in a dissipated manner and have neglected their duty to their children. I believe that in some unions at least, if not in most, no difference is made in the amount of relief afforded to these two classes, so that there is no reward in old age for good conduct, prudence, and respectability in earlier life. I have ascertained that in many cases the great objection of old people to becoming inmates of union houses is not the confinement and necessary discipline, or the being shut out from intercourse with their former friends and neighbours, or the diet, so much as the cold of some, if not many, of these houses. Where the large rooms are warmed only by a single open fire, they say that the quieter old people cannot approach it because they are kept from it by the more turbulent and rough, and thus they often become not only uncomfortably, but even unhealthily, cold. Some old people have also complained to me of the bad language and conversation used by the more disreputable aged inmates. The former of these complaints might clearly be removed by a better system of warming the rooms.

Widows.—Their position and wants.—The treatment of this class varies greatly in different unions, and the difference of treatment affects in a great degree the education of the children, especially the boys. In some unions the guardians are willing to continue the relief to the boys till 12 or 14 years of age, provided they know that they are kept at school. In other unions the relief is discontinued as early as 8 or 10 years, and then the boys are of course obliged to go to work. Again, in some unions the relief is given to the widow herself for six months after her husband's death; in other unions no relief is afforded and they are obliged to support themselves from the first. Surely the relief given to widows should be uniform in all the unions, and the more liberal and charitable plan ought to be followed. Considering the difficulty widows often have to obtain support,—for employment in needlework, washing, or charing is not always to be procured, and in winter field work is equally uncertain and precarious—the rule which refuses outdoor relief except in sickness, and compels the widow, if deprived of the means of obtaining her livelihood, to come into the house or starve, ought to be rendered less stringent and severe, and temporary relief should be given in those cases where the relieving officer or guardian, or both, will certify the board of guardians that the widow is utterly unable to obtain work or a sufficiency of work to support her. I have known instances in which widows have been reduced in the winter season to great distress and almost starvation from the failure of employment, and because they are unwilling to break up their homes and go into the house. They have deferred doing so because they have continued to hope each week that the next they would be able to obtain some occupation whereby to gain their subsistence. Of course widows as a class would be utterly unable to afford the education of their children unless assistance is given either to themselves or to their children.

I would mention in conclusion that the average wages of a labourer in Norfolk are at present 12*s.* a week, out of this he probably pays 1*s.* a week for different clubs, and if he is prudent he will lay by another shilling towards the rent, leaving 10*s.* for the supply of the weekly wants of himself and his family.

[Mr. Beckett has added to his statement three Appendices, showing—

I. The relative number of boys and girls during the last six years at the various ages from 12 to 7 and under 7, in the inspected Church schools in the Deanery of Heacham.

II. The proportion of children educated in these schools to the whole population, indicating an absolute and relative decrease.

III. The difference between the nominal and real school life of all the boys who have left his parish school at Ingoldisthorpe since its opening.]

APPENDIX I.

Year.	Sex of Children.	Above 12 Years of Age.	Between 11 and 12.	Between 10 and 11.	Between 9 and 10.	Between 8 and 9.	Between 7 and 8.	Under 7.	Totals.
1862 -	Boys -	8	26	26	67	37	48	159	371
	Girls -	7	39	64	63	64	18	114	369
1863 -	Boys -	38	15	36	38	29	39	184	379
	Girls -	20	43	35	35	44	30	141	348
1864 -	Boys -	15	13	38	54	38	72	190	420
	Girls -	20	46	70	50	47	56	149	438
1865 -	Boys -	13	30	21	46	52	65	191	418
	Girls -	39	50	52	35	28	45	183	432
1866 -	Boys -	13	18	13	47	74	63	168	396
	Girls -	57	32	45	60	59	35	165	453
1867 -	Boys -	12	10	30	44	76	60	155	387
	Girls -	54	44	45	48	44	58	162	455

APPENDIX II.

Year.	Population.	Children educated.	Proportion to Population.
1862 - -	9,687	1,232	1 in 7·8
1863 - -	9,687	1,225	1 in 7·9
1864 - - -	9,687	1,157	1 in 8·37
1865 - - -	9,687	1,158	1 in 8·37
1866 - - -	9,787	1,174	1 in 8·34
1867 - - -	9,802	1,092	1 in 9·9

APPENDIX III.

Number of Years at School.	Number of Boys.	Boys taken Separately.	Supposed Period of School Life.		Real Period of School Life, reckoning 215 Days to a Year.		
		No.	Yrs.	Mths.	Yrs.	Mths.	Days.
7	4	1	7	8	5	10	0
		2	7	4	6	1	5
		3	7	6	1	1	3
		4	7	11	6	1	5
6	3	5	6	1	3	7	0
		6	6	7	5	2	7
		7	6	8	5	5	11
5	3	8	5	2	4	3	5
		9	5	2	3	4	0
		10	5	5	4	10	8
4	4	11	4	6	3	3	0
		12	4	0	3	0	0
		13	4	10	3	5	0
		14	4	1	3	3	4
3	14	15	3	5	2	6	9
		16	3	5	3	0	14
		17	3	10	2	9	10
		18	3	0	1	10	4
		19	3	6	2	3	0
		20	3	0	0	9	5
		21	3	11	3	3	3
		22	3	0	1	1	0
		23	3	1	2	1	12
		24	3	6	1	4	3
		25	3	4	1	6	10
		26	3	5	3	0	9
		27	3	3	2	8	4
		28	3	10	2	8	14

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Appendix III.—*cont.*

Number of Years at School.	Number of Boys.	Boys taken Separately.	Supposed Period of School Life.		Real Period of School Life, reckoning 215 Days to a Year.		
		No.	Yrs.	Mths.	Yrs.	Mths.	Days.
2	13	29	2	7	1	6	3
		30	2	3	0	7	5
		31	2	5	1	6	2
		32	2	7	2	2	4
		33	2	3	1	3	11
		34	2	2	1	1	12
		35	2	3	1	2	3
		36	2	6	2	2	0
		37	2	11	2	7	11
		38	2	2	2	2	0
		39	2	7	1	4	0
		40	2	0	0	10	7
		41	2	10	1	8	14
1	1	42	1	8	0	6	11

Nos. 3, 18, 24, 27, 32, 33, 34, 38, and 40 either attended other schools previously, or left to go to other schools. The rest were wholly educated in this one school.

[This table has three important significations:—

(1.) It shows how short even the supposed school life of the majority of boys is; only 14 out of these 42 boys attended school upwards of four years.

(2.) It exhibits the marked difference that exists in many cases between the supposed and the real school life; and,

(3.) That this difference is greater in the case of those boys who have had their names on the register for the shorter than for the longer period.

The first fact points to early withdrawal; the second to irregular attendance; the third probably indicates that those boys whose school life was shortest and whose attendance during its nominal continuance was most irregular, were in all likelihood the children of the more needy or the more improvident class of parents.]

In a communication of later date, Mr. Beckett says,—

"My experience in my night school this year quite confirms my former impressions, that the night school never can be rendered efficient as the sole means of affording education, but that it is most useful and important in maintaining and establishing the education previously obtained in the day school. I have two or three boys in the night school who have never been taught previously, and who are most willing and desirous to learn, but cannot master the first difficulties, and find it dreadfully uphill work. Some other boys who have been in the day school, are getting on capitally, and delight in their work. I hear no complaint from their employer, that because they are better educated and stayed in the school longer than the others, they are worse workmen. In fact, I think the farmers in my own parish think quite differently, and prefer them as being more tractable, willing, and intelligent. One thing I do know, that my own farmers are taking more interest in my work, and this I can only attribute to their seeing and being convinced of the good effects arising from it. When I speak of 'my work' I mean the education and care, bodily as well as spiritual, of the poor."

13. COMMUNICATION *from Rev. Edgar Montagu*, Rector of Kettlestone, near Fakenham, Norfolk.

"The value of a man's opinion on any matter much depends on his position in relation to it. I am rector of a parish at once very small (200 population), so that I ought to know exactly what every one in it is doing, and yet with a surplus population, which circumstance keeps wages down a trifle, and creates occasional distress. Also I farm 50 acres, employing all hands I can on extra weeding and such like.

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"A surplus population on reduced wages is bitter towards employers. Self-respect is lowered, the great check to immorality. Anyhow the place is full of bastardy, the stain of which is acquiesced in and disregarded.

"Now I believe in nothing less than a general determination to repress this immorality, as the starting point on its own account. Secondary legislation without this determination will fail. Laws evaded only increase national demoralisation.

"But though I do not believe that legislative enactments will be in themselves very effective in regulating the employment of women and children in agriculture, yet the attempt and the ventilating the subject may lead to an improved morale outside of the letter of the law.

"First as to boys. The best-toned labourers are, I suspect, usually those who ever as little children followed good fathers to the field; their young ambition ever more and more fired by fancying they could 'work like a man.' Whereas it will take very good handling to bring a boy, conceited of his scholarship, and who has been idling in school and worrying his dame, to a proper frame of mind. I am sure that the best sort of boys little like being taught by women (which is all we can hope for), and look on to when they shall earn a pair of boots or cord trowsers, as the proper work of a boy. Many boys are much injured by this contemptuous, frivolous idleness at school.

"I do not believe in compulsory education. If learning bring eclat or better wages, it will be sought for itself, and then a woman can drive a willing colt. What we want is that the boy shall be ever valuing himself as a man, and that the employers should encourage the boy. But here lies the blot. Boys are not paid according to their effective value. The farmer is afraid of showing his sense of value, because he does not want to increase the wages proportionately, He wants cheap boy labour. The boys soon feel this, and resent it. Therefore they are too independent, feeling that the master has more need of them than they of him. They believe in exaggerated reports of life elsewhere. They change and change till they become mere self-seekers, believing that all their masters cheat them, and have a higher value of them than they choose to shew. And thus their proper moral position is subverted.

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"Employers must encourage their boys more, try and get them on, give them occasional holidays. They should distinguish those who are scholars or trying to become so. With this moral support, schooling would be easy, and the taught, instead of conceit, would acquire respectfulness towards superiors—that real ladder towards their own true rise.

"Then, to assist these private efforts, I would have peripatetic examiners who should go round the villages, bestowing orders of scholastic merit. These should be simple, but really handsome, things, in bronze, medals in fact, with all details of name, &c., lettered thereon; while as a further inducement, a crown piece should be given, out of the rates, with the first gained medal. On the coast, swimming should be required before gaining the money. Encouragement is better than compulsion.

"Next, as to girls and women working on the land. No doubt it roughs them, and if they can earn money so, they prefer the freedom, unless they are by nature very gentle and domestic.

"But query, if all persons who want servants have not got them, such as they are. I doubt if there is room in service to absorb more. There must be a residuum. How are they to maintain themselves?

"Is field-labour necessarily prejudicial to morality? How is it in Belgium and in Greece? I doubt if modesty suffers in either of those cases. It is our universal hopelessness, and therefore disregard, on the subject of female chastity, and not the work, that is at the root of the matter. Bastardy must be more outspokenly condemned and hunted down, and modesty markedly, if silently, appreciated, till the young girls love their own.

"Of course, Castleacre gangs are simply an abomination. But take my case. Here are girls and women sadly wanting to earn something to buy clothes with; also wanting employment. I want forking twitch, and other light jobs done, which barely pay even at their wages.

"Well, I take care and keep insisting on it to my head man that their separation from young men and boys, and their working with their own parents, and the like, are to be most carefully, and even to an extent obviously, observed.

"Miss R. here again, a tenant of 400 acres under Sir Willoughby Jones, a sensible, good woman, has to employ a number of women wheat hoeing and the like, and she does it with a man she can trust to overlook the whole. I don't see how these women could live if they did not so work. I fancy when women go in improperly selected companies the bad women are far more corrupting and destructive of proper female feeling than the presence of the other sex even. I, for one, would not have a woman who had committed herself go with the others at all; and that is one of the things I say the masters should show their sense of the matter by; but they, the masters, are hopeless; many careless, only thinking of the profit.

"I don't believe, therefore, that any direct legislation will be effective if you endeavour to restrain the employment of women. What you cannot entirely stop you soon cannot stop at all. Let us not be afraid of the employment, but let us restore our ruder forefathers' feeling about female chastity, working from the top of society downwards. In this way and by each master carefully watching over the females he employs, agricultural employment instead of being a refuge for the debased might become a school of virtue; and when girls saw how carefully men would guard them from harm, they would come to value themselves that which their nature ever most values. The discipline of the field by day would guard the lanes by night.

I believe in nothing but in women being brought up to value their purity; and in the boys taking a pride in working like men—the natural, healthy feelings of the two sexes."

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14. Letter from *Rev. Arthur Hanbury*, Vicar of Bures, Suffolk.

Bures Vicarage, near Colchester,
4th Nov. 1867.

Dear Sir,

Absence from home has prevented my giving earlier attention to the circular of inquiries which you were good enough to send me. As many of them have no application to my parish, I think it best not to answer them seriatim, but to give any particulars relating to my parish, which bear upon the object the Commission has in view. My parish consists of Bures St. Mary, in Suffolk, with the hamlet annexed, in Essex; population, 1,560; acreage, 4,100. It is entirely a rural parish. There is no employment of gangs, and very partial employment of any females in agricultural labour. The employment of boys under nine is quite exceptional, and confined I think entirely to families of five or six children. On enquiring of my master the number and age of boys belonging to the school who have been at work during the past six months (from 1st April to 1st October), I find there were 29, and only three of them under 9. I am sure there could be no objection either on the part of parents or farmer, that the age of employment should be made illegal under 9. To extend the restriction to the age of 10 would, I fear, be objected to on the part of both, although it would be a great gain in favour of education. A certificate of acquirements of every boy under 12 should, I think, be made compulsory. There is no want of eagerness on the part of parents to avail themselves of the means of education placed within their reach. As a proof, my schools (day, Sunday, and night), now number 340 on the books. This, in a

population of 1,560, speaks for itself. Some of them, however, come from other parishes, even from a distance of three miles. There must, however, always be great disadvantages operating against the adequate education of the agricultural labourer, which no legislation can meet, not only from the withdrawal of boys from school at the very age when they would begin to make most advance, but from their irregular attendance when at school, and perhaps still more from the very nature of their employment—keeping pigs and sheep, and scaring birds, &c., which afford no exercise for the mental faculties, but the mind becomes stagnant and sluggish, and not only forgets what it has acquired, but is blunted and incapacitated; whereas in the manufacturing districts the very nature of the employment and constant collision with other minds keeps the faculties ever sharpened and alert. No wonder that if you examine a boy you meet casually on the road, he should make but a poor show of his learning.

Still with all the drawbacks, the schools have been I consider, an incalculable blessing to the parish. To this assertion the farmers doubtless would in some measure demur. Hitherto they have been very liberal in their support of them and have been proud of their success, but they are complaining and with some reason that all the sharper lads are migrating to London and other large towns, and the "clods of the valley" alone remain. The fact is so, but I believe that the facility of communication by railroad and by penny post, and the circulation of information by the press, are more instrumental to this even than education, though no doubt the latter helps them to better situations. These causes (in conjunction with the present Poor law) have operated a marvellous change in my parish. I remember 30 years ago that we had constantly 30 to 40 out of work during the winter. Now the supply is just equal to the demand, and it is generally felt that when the present race of able-bodied men is worn out there will be a great deficiency. The only remedy for this would be to build good cottages on the farms, with large gardens (of 20 or 30 rods). The profit of such gardens is so great that it would enable the occupier to pay a rent sufficient to return a fair interest upon the outlay, and far more than that they would attach the labourer to the soil and produce a closer bond between him and the employer than can exist now, when the former is compelled to live in the town or village, and too often in houses totally unfit for human habitation. There is no improvement so needed as that of our cottages, the state of which, from want of accommodation, drainage, ventilation, and supply of water, is a constant source of incalculable evil both physical and moral. The appointment of an inspector would be welcomed by all. I hope he would also combine the office of inspector of nuisances, which, entrusted as it now is to the relieving officers (already fully employed), is very inadequately fulfilled.

It is generally felt that the multiplication of beer-houses is a very great evil. I may add that I have found allotments, in the absence of cottage gardens, a great benefit, not merely as affording employment after work, but as making the tenants feel that they have a little stake and interest in the soil; and an annual show, with prizes, has created a wholesome spirit of competition amongst them. A large circulating library, both for families and the school children, has fostered a taste for reading and given the adults the opportunity and desire to keep up what they had learnt at school.

I remain, dear sir,
Yours very faithfully,
ARTHUR HANBURY.

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15. EXTRACTS from a Letter of *G. Kersey Cooper, Esq.*, of Euston, near Thetford, Manager of the estates of His Grace the Duke of Grafton, dated Nov. 1, 1867.

"I am very glad that the Government has appointed this Commission of Inquiry; for when we consider that our working classes are really the means of our nation's prosperity, as well as the foundation of our social fabric, it is most desirable that their condition should be based upon such principles as to ensure contentment.

"I am quite of opinion that legislation is desirable, not only to protect children in their employment, but to promote their education, which is now more than ever a question of imporiance, as nothing, in my opinion, can be more dangerous to the future than political power without intelligence to direct it.

"There are many parishes in the neighbourhood of which I am residing in which considerable interest has been taken within the last 10 or 12 years in educating the children of our rural population. A few of our schools are under Government inspection; but generally our clergymen desire to have the schools under their own management.

"I am a decided advocate for Government direction; it removes the responsibilities of the landowners by certifying to them that the children are instructed upon the most approved principles, and it satisfies the contributors to the school as well as the parents of the children, that the instruction given is of a sound kind. I have witnessed the best results from holding adult evening schools in our parishes, where the lads and young men very willingly pay their small contributions to obtain instruction. I fear, however, that these observations will not apply to all parishes in our county (Suffolk). There are many without a school, or with only a dame's school which does little more than keep infants out of danger for a few hours in the day.

"On referring to your questions:—

1st. As to the age to which boys and girls should remain at school.

"I would recommend that every boy should have the advantage of remaining at school until he is 10 years of age;* and I am so opposed to female labour in the fields that I shall not presume to offer an opinion as to the age up to which they should be kept under scholastic instruction. I only feel that it is very desirable that they should have the good use of their needle and get into service as soon as possible; for the earlier they get to work, such as is proper for them to do, the happier they are and the better members of society they become.

"I am very glad to say that we have not any gangs in this district in which females are employed. I have employed for several years a well-conditioned man to superintend a gang of small boys on my farm, who have grown up to be useful and skilful labourers, from their employment being so constant and the rotation of work so regular.

2nd. As to the state of education in our rural districts.

"This varies with the care and attention that have been bestowed upon the matter. The difference is most marked between parishes that have been cared for and parishes that have been neglected, and the traveller through our country will find great in-

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* In a second letter (Nov. 16, 1867) Mr. Cooper states his opinion upon this point more explicitly.

"I have thought a good deal on the subject of education in our rural districts since I last wrote you, and if there is any probability of our Government bringing in a bill to make the education of children compulsory I fear the limit of time to be kept at school must be of shorter duration than 10 years, so many are the instances in which it would be practically impossible for a labouring man to support a large family of children, the eldest of whom must be 10 before he could contribute anything to the weekly earnings of the family. No one appreciates the value or feels the importance of education to the rising generation more than I do, and certain fundamental rules and principles must be taught the children in their early infancy; but the evening school is the place where the greatest and most important lessons of education must be taught, when the scholars can, by their industry, afford to pay in part for what they learn. I cannot see why each child should not obtain a certificate from the clergyman or schoolmaster that he can write, read, add figures, and say the Lord's prayer and the Commandments. This should be his diploma to obtain work. He could then attend an evening school for two or three nights a week after his work—which is never heavy for children—is over."

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equalities in the general intelligence, comfort, and condition of our agricultural population. The causes of this inequality are chiefly three:—Want of schools; inefficient teaching; the poverty of the people. This poverty arises, again, from various causes; from want of constant employment; from very large families; bad habits; want of skill as workmen; and in some instances from the want of a frugal expenditure of the small pittance that they earn. And although I do not desire to speak with any other feeling than respect, of small occupiers of heavy land, their resources are also very limited, and occupiers in heavy land districts invariably pay 1*s.* to 2*s.* and 2*s.* 6*d.* per week less wages than occupiers of land in light or mixed soil districts.

There is much more money required to develop the resources of the soil. If this were invested, the labourer then would be better paid, better housed, better fed, and would feel that he too had a stake in the prosperity of the country. As it is, he appears to me to be the only creature that has not marched on with the times in which we live.

"I am quite satisfied that the over-crowding in cottages in our rural districts has done more to create a low state of morals than any other cause. It has blunted the poor man's enterprise and lessened the self-respect of both sexes. And the next great bane to their social happiness and comfort has been the great temptation to spend money in low village pothouses, which are far too plentiful throughout the country.

"I have the honour of representing the interests of the Duke of Grafton's estate in Suffolk, who, with the late duke, for many years past has exercised the greatest care and interest, not only in the education of the children upon his estate but in the condition of the homes of the labourers; yet even with this unbounded desire to keep the cottages enlarged and yearly erecting new ones, it is no easy task to meet the increasing wants of an increasing population.

"I believe one of the most practical and important steps that could be taken to improve the dwellings of our rural population would be for the Government to issue a Commission of inquiry into the present condition of cottages in every county in England, ascertaining the population, average number of people residing in each cottage, and the size of every sleeping room. I do not believe that the public are half aware of the demoralizing effects of over-crowding, or of the extent to which that over-crowding is frequently carried.

"You have alluded in your letter to me to my endeavour to introduce social club-rooms in some of the parishes upon his Grace's estate. It occurred to me that they would relieve the cottages on a winter's evening when the room was occupied with domestic duties, and that they might attract those who frequently spent their time and money in pothouses, and the youths in our villages who are fond of assembling at some favourite spot or other to interchange their thoughts and views. For we must not forget that man is a social creature, and will have society in some form or another; and if we can direct his habits and refine his tastes by offering him a well-lighted room with a cheerful fire, healthy periodicals, harmless and amusing games, such as chess, draughts, or tactics, with coffee as good as it can be made for a halfpenny a cup, I feel it would be money well expended.

"After two or three years' experience of these clubs I am very pleased to inform you that they have been a general success. There appears to be an increasing desire to discuss the papers and enjoy themselves socially, and the younger members, none being admitted under 15 years of age, take great interest in the various games.

"I do not desire to impress you with the idea that the members of these clubs are already mentally improved, but I really believe that their tastes and habits are softened, and they appear to enjoy each other's society with their pipes at a far less cost to them in purse and health than they would do at a publichouse, and they show a growing taste for reading and hearing read the passing events of the day."

Mr. Cooper, 10 years ago, wrote an "Essay on the "elevation, improvement, and education of the work-"ing classes" (which was rewarded with a prize by the Suffolk Agricultural Association), the views of which carry with them all the weight that is due to practical experience, enlightened intelligence, and generous philanthropy. I venture to make the following extracts:—

"The fonndation of any real or permanent improvement in the condition of the labouring man must begin in his having a comfortable house, with the necessary accommodation of three bedrooms, to separate the parents from their children, and the different sexes from each other. This alone would teach them more to respect and value the common decencies of life, for it is impossible to inculcate a strict regard for morality and virtue, whilst a whole family, some grown and growing up into man and womanhood, are occupying (as is too often the case) two, and in many instances but one miserable and badly ventilated bedroom. The wonder is that our poorer neighbours are so orderly and well conducted as they are.

"A piece of land attached to the house, or as near as circumstances will admit, is necessary to produce vegetables, &c. The quantity might vary from 30 to 50 rods, according to a man's capacity and requirements; and in instances where there is a large family of boys, it would be expedient to extend this quantity, for the children's industrial occupation after working hours. I have seen the best results from this arrangement. The parents are encouraged by their own and their children's united industry, and their resources increase in proportion to their wants, with the great advantage of training the boys to frugal and industrious habits, which are not forgotten in manhood.

"The village beerhouse, I am sorry to add, has become one of the most practical evils in our rural community. A few, and very few, may be required for the wants of the people and may be properly conducted, but the wholesale way in which they are licensed, and the general character of those who preside over them, have entailed, I venture to say, incalculable misery on the lives and habits of our peasantry. Indeed, next to their miserable dwellings, I do not think any single cause can be mentioned which has more tended to demoralize the mass of our rural population, corrupted more promising youths, or afforded greater facilities for arranging any mischief or crime.

"The poor themselves seem becoming more and more sensible of the advantages of education for their children, and where there is good and judicious teaching, there is no lack of scholars; but the great drawback to the school's usefulness in a rural district is the early age at which the children are withdrawn from the master's daily care. Yet the demand for boys' labour especially has so greatly increased in these districts, that I do not see how it would be possible to keep them at school later than 11 or 12 years of age. The large families which so many of our labourers have, render it absolutely necessary for them to avail themselves of the wages of their boys to help towards the general maintenance and clothing of their family as soon as they are able to earn anything towards the common support, and they are consequently compelled to remove them from school just at the period when they are beginning to derive the greatest advantage from it. It is an evil, and a great one, I admit; but good and valuable as education is, food and clothing must be provided as well and before all, so that we must not blind our eyes to the stern necessity, which renders such a step absolutely indispensable, if bread is to be got for the daily meal. But cannot this difficulty be met by the employers themselves in some way, and modified so far as not to deprive the boy of a proper education, while he still does his part towards earning something for his own and his parents' support? Could we not gain a point in this respect from some

of the manufacturing districts, where they allow their artizans, both old and young, certain portions of time, an hour or two from each day, or from certain days, to obtain that instruction, which, next to the supply of his immediate wants, is most essential to the improvement and welfare of the man? Might we not spare our boys in turn, say two afternoons in each week (excepting in the busy periods of the year), paying them their full wages, on condition that they regularly devoted those hours to school? Where there is a desire, there would generally be a way found, by judiciously managing our stock and cultivation, to effect this arrangement, and I believe we should soon be repaid in seeing an improved tone and increased intelligence in our rising generation. But if this could not be done in some places, none should omit at any rate to encourage them to attend the evening schools which are open now for adults and youths in so many of our parishes; their establishment has been a very great benefit in my own immediate neighbourhood, and I trust before long no parish will be left without one."

[With such principles animating its management, I can readily believe that the social and material condition of the labourers on the Duke of Grafton's Suffolk estate is, as it was described to me as being, far superior to the condition of the same class of the population on properties where, though perhaps with equal opportunities, there is a more restricted exercise of generous sentiment and active beneficence.]

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16. Letter from *Herman Biddell, Esq.*, of Playford, near Ipswich, Suffolk.

Dear Sir,

I think perhaps the better way for me to handle the subject will be in the form of answers to the 11 inquiries as given in your paper of instructions. The first series—in page 2—I shall handle totally regardless of the matter of education. I conceive they are inquiries relative to prevention of physical injury and moral danger. The matter of education I will treat of separately.

1st, Is legislation required for the purpose of fixing the age below which boys should not be employed?—Unless for the purpose of securing a foundation for education I do not think it is. A close observation and some years' experience have failed to bring before me a case where government interference would have saved a victim from injury to health by over-work, exposure, or ill treatment on the part of the employer. I am speaking of those employed on the farm either at keeping birds, tending stock, &c. A little attention on the part of the employer can at all times obviate the necessity of legislative enactments, and no act of parliament, however stringently applied, can ensure protection against insufficient clothing, exposure in open fields in wet, cold weather, &c. A few broken hurdles, a few rough faggots, and a bundle of straw will save a boy getting wet to the skin while crow-keeping, and instead of raising the little boy's wages, which from time to time takes place, an expenditure of 4*s.* or 6*s.* in shoes and leather buskins ensures dry feet to the boy during the winter months, when tending stock in wet yards. A worn-out waggon cloth on two poles will easily make a shade from a March wind while cleaning roots for sheep in the open fields. Attention to little matters like these will in every case make the employment of boys in agriculture perfectly harmless at whatever early age they may be sent to work. The smallest boys in a family will mostly cry to be allowed to go out to field work.

These remarks apply to the general employment of boys on a farm; the gang system is another matter. I have for years occasionally employed a gang of from 20 to 30 under a gang master. The locality I allude to (East Suffolk) is comparatively thickly populated, and therefore the system is but a modification of that pursued in parts of Norfolk, Cambridge, and the Fen districts. There I believe the children come from a much greater distance. The furthest any of the children come who have been under my notice has been about three miles. The gangs I have employed have consisted of boys from about 10 or 12 to 15 years of age, girls of all ages, and a few adult women. The latter have mostly come from a town some 4 miles distant. They get to work about ½ past 8 o'clock, stop for dinner half an hour about 12 o clock, and leave off at half-past four. I found upon inquiry the gang master paid just about the same wages I should have done for the same sized boys. He took the work I put out to him at half the money it would have cost me to do with the general staff of boys and women I had on the farm. He did little work himself, but took great care none of his gang were idle: they were chiefly employed in weeding corn, singling roots, and picking stones. The work was light, the secret of his getting more done than I could was his continued efforts to keep the little folk's attention to their work. If the morning was wet the children did not come. If the corn was not dried after a wet night I did not allow the work to be done, as trampling corn in the wet injures the crop. I saw no ill-treatment, and the children seemed rather to like the company than object to the labour. There was one fact which struck me as requiring attention, and that was the bringing little children too far from home. They left early, it is true, but what with the master's voice all day urging them on to the time of their going away, and then the walk of two or three miles home, I thought it was hard upon the little ones. I was also strongly impressed with the idea that the employment of girls over 14 years of age should be prohibited, certainly in gangs, and I rather lean to the impression that girls should not be employed in agriculture at all. What a girl can earn on a farm before she is 12 or 14 is very little indeed, either as money brought home to the family or as service to the farmer. After that age the danger of moral evil, the tone assumed in after life, and the opening there always will be as indoor servants, strongly suggest to my mind at least, the necessity of actual prohibition of the employment of girls in farm work. The employment of young women in the fields encourages mothers to keep their daughters at home instead of sending them to indoor service. The love of liberty, gossip, and frequent idleness are great temptations to field labour, and if that is to be had, a little disagreeableness at a place away from home is sure to result in the girl "giving warning." The help they are in the household at home and the comparative freedom it entails on the mother, act as a strong temptation to her to keep the daughter from service, and in too many cases self-interest blinds her to the danger of moral evil such a life entails. This is not of course always the case; in many instances mothers do their best to keep their daughters at service and are anxious so to do; but still if there was actual prohibition of employment under the age of 20 years, there would be no temptation to keep them at home. The employment of adult women must be matter for the individual herself to determine. There are many who like the freedom and gossip of field labour too well to stay at home and see after the household; no enactment would remedy a case of this sort, and where a man has a wife strong and healthy, with no family, I see no good to be effected by putting a difficulty in the way of her obtaining employment.

In legislating on the subject of gangs I think the following points should be kept in view, of course premising that the idea of the enforcement of non-employment of girls might be thought unadvisable.

1. No gang to be of mixed sexes.
2. No boy under the age of 10 years to be employed in a gang, and boys under 13 not to be employed more than three miles from home (two would be better perhaps).
3. No gang to be employed later than 4 o'clock.
4. No girl over the age of 14 years to be employed.

The latter clause I am aware will read odd to many. In the majority of opinions what have been put forth to the public the limit has been the other way. My idea is that the mischief is greatest at the very age

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when most would allow the employment to commence; but my opinion is strongly in favour of prohibiting the employment of girls at all.

The enactments which I imagine would work beneficially are only those which apply to the gang system. I do not think legislative interference at all required either as a protection against physical injury or moral evil in the case of boys employed on the usual routine of farm labour.

The private gangs are not open to the same objections as the public ones. In the former case it is merely a man set to overlook a number of children. He is paid by his employer and so are the children under him, both mostly by the day. In the case of the public gang the master has an immediate pecuniary interest in the individual industry of all the children under him, and possibly his love of gain may overcome his feelings of humanity.

My opinion as regards the abstract questions put before me are, that no legislation (apart from the question of education) is required on behalf of boys employed in agriculture where they are not employed in public gangs; no girls should be allowed to be employed; but no restriction should be applied to adult women in relation to farm labour.

As regards the gang system, no boy to be employed under 10 years of age; no boy under 13 to be allowed to work in a gang more than two and a half miles from his residence.

The question of education embrances a far wider range and is less a matter for practical evidence of experience than of speculative opinion. From actual observation I do not think the prevalent idea of ignorance among the labouring population in the eastern counties is at all exaggerated, but I think the general idea of the moral evil attending such a state is. Immediate acquaintance with individual cases must of course be very limited, but however much I should wish—and I do wish very much that I could make it out so—however much I could wish that the best educated exhibited the best moral conduct or attained the highest position in that rank of life, so far as my observation goes, I confess that it is not so. I do not say that they are below others in either; in fact I believe they are much the same. For all this I can but regret that the want of a knowledge how to read and write is apparent to a degree that would shock an American or a Scotchman. There seems a want of appreciation of the pleasure and advantage which is generally accredited to at least a limited education. Those whose education should have been effected 20 years ago had difficulties to contend with which now are comparatively insignificant. Then there were many parishes where there were no schools; but now there are few places in these districts where a tolerably efficient school is not to be found. Reluctance or apathy on the part of the parent is, I conceive, the chief obstacle to the better education of the rural population in the eastern counties. Next to this the poverty of the agricultural labourer stands in the way. As soon as a child can earn 3*d.* a day and a master is found willing to employ the child, he is removed from school. When the family is large and the nominal day wages only what they are in these districts, the temptation is great, and necessity in many cases leaves no choice in the matter. The wages paid in the neighbourhood of Ipswich and Woodbridge are now about 12*s.* per week, and horsemen about 14*s.* In the district round Hadleigh, Bildeston, and the south-west part of the county, a shilling or two lower; and in a few districts they are paying I believe 13*s.* This however does not represent the weekly income of the labouring man, if you take the year through. In harvest this year many have had something over 6*l.* for about 27 days work; and at all times of the year work is put out to the labouring men by the piece; when they are so employed they would earn from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* a week more. The present price of wheat is about 70*s.* per quarter, and pork (the only meat in general use among agricultural labourers) about 6*d.* a lb., sugar and tea are much cheaper than years back, but linen and clothing stuffs they say are still dear. Single men and men with small families do pretty well; but where the families are large, present wages and present prices do not offer a great facility for educating the children. The matter of the cost for schooling is little, but the two, three, or four shillings which the boy would earn is often what one of my own men lately described to me as "just the difference between living and starving." This was a case of somewhat rare occurrence; the man has 7 children, all girls except the eldest, and he is not yet 11. I give him 3*s.* 6*d.* a week, but not one of the others earn anything. Now to put in force any measure of compulsory education below 12 years would be neither more nor less than to introduce starvation into this deserving household. The father of this family has a slight knowledge of figures and writing, and would, I have no doubt, be glad to have his children taught as much. In other cases, within my own experience, the men spend in drink, not a pint at a meal or regular allowance, but in publichouse orgies, more than enough to educate one child at any rate; instead of which they are growing up without any secular, moral, or religious instruction whatever.

The questions *c*, *d*, and *e** embody the whole cause of the prevalent ignorance in these districts. The pressure put upon parents by the employers has I imagine very little effect. Boys when they first come to work on a farm are of very little value to the employer except to a gang master. The attention they require and the mischief they do at an early age take away the profit of employing little boys.

I do not think there are half a dozen parishes in the county where there is not some opportunity for the children gaining instruction. The schools where there is any government inspection or private superintendence leave nothing to be wished for as far as the mere education goes. In regard to the endowed schools I know several which now for 1*d.* or 2*d.* a week give a boy a better education in every way (save association) than the small farmers' sons got 25 years ago. The want of education is certainly not now attributable to inefficient systems or masters.

Somehow or other the parents do not appreciate education. If their children are to become what they are themselves, agricultural labourers, it is no easy task to demonstrate to them the benefit which they would derive in a wordly or commercial point of view. How far the argument that, if better educated they would be better employed, is good to apply is another matter. I am merely speaking of persuading them to send their children to school, when you acknowledge that in after life in all probability they will be herdsmen, shepherds, or horse drivers. It requires, however, but little to convince a man, unless he is more than usually degraded, that his children ought to be able to read the Bible; but the great educational movement of the present day, even if it does not exclude the religious element altogether, aims at a great deal more than that, and when you come to words with the class we are dealing with, you must have something to say which will put some solid advantage before them.

The first rise a common agricultural labourer has in view is to become foreman or bailiff. The steam-engine has of late presented another little opening for a rising man; but the office of driver to a portable threshing machine requires no education that can be obtained over a desk or under a schoolmaster. Men are picked for the place who show what we call in Suffolk, "nous," that is, a little tact, and a knowledge of how to use his hands,—a careful man who has brains, whether they have been brightened or not. No one would deny that a man who showed himself

* The questions referred to are,—

(*c*) Is the defective state of education attributable to the poverty of their parents?

(*d*) Their indisposition to forego the weekly sum that may be added to the family earnings by the child's labour?

(*e*) The low moral tone of parents which leads them to be indifferent to the education of their children?

Suffolk.

Rev J. Fraser.

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fitted to direct others, to take care of stock, to economize fodder, &c., would be vastly enhanced in value to an employer, if to this he could add the knowledge which any of our government schools are ready to impart. But however much this would render him more efficient, it would not weigh one bit scarcely in his chance of promotion among his fellows, unless he had that intuitive judgment, tact, and energy, without which he would be useless as a bailiff. My father farmed something like 1,000 acres. He had three stewards or bailiffs. One could not chalk his initials on a barn door if he were paid a sovereign for the job. He could not read a word of two syllables to the day of his death. The second could read a little, but his writing and figuring were only to be deciphered and understood by one who had gone through a course of study especially directed to the purpose. The third could do a little of both, but would not pass an examination in the lowest form of a present day charity school. Yet on the list from which these were taken, were men who could read, write, and do sums decently. I have two farm bailiffs; one reads and writes tolerably, and has a fair knowledge of addition, subtraction, &c.; the other can neither read nor write. He is at an off-hand farm. I have a large dairy there, and a great deal of the produce is retailed in the village. He pays the labourers, and when he was in my employment, had an unmarried daughter who "did the writing;" in fact, she kept the books. I went once a week, or not so often sometimes, and balanced them up. She was what might be called a fairly taught national school girl; but the confusion and the blunders which her knowledge when put to a practical test exhibited, made it almost useless for me to keep the books square at all. She married, and the man was left with his wife, whose store of learning in this particular branch was about on a par with his own *plus* an increased amount of prejudice against every sort of education which did not lie in the line of making butter and raising fowls. Henceforth the men's wages, the butter money, retailed egg and milk account, all had to be kept in the man's head till I relieved it by transferring it to my book. I go no oftener now than when his "educated" daughter kept the books. I have now no trouble, no confusion, and I believe very very few errors to set right. The secret of this is the man has a bit of head, and though he has had no education, he manages to fill a place, and very satisfactorily too, which no one now would think of filling but by an educated man.

You will think by my giving you this history, that I am endeavouring to persuade you, and myself too, that to teach a labouring man to read, write, and cypher is unnecessary and uncalled for. By no means. There is not one of these men but would have been a more useful servant if his education had been pushed only as far as is practicable in a boy who can be kept away from work till he is 13, and is not allowed to lose what he has learned; but at the same time none of these men were prevented from rising above their original position because they could not read or write. The question, however, of the desirability of teaching the lower orders to read and write is not I imagine now a matter of dispute. Few would now advocate the "total ignorance" system, although there are many who are by no means sanguine of the good effects which are mostly thought to be in close attendance on an improved state of education among the rural poor. I confess myself I think many over-rate the moral improvement likely to accrue from increased education. That a man should live and die unable to read the Bible is a state of existence for which, in a country like England, his betters will one day be called to account. I am speaking of the case where he has had no opportunity of learning to read. His own neglect will be matter for himself to explain. We may be called upon as a nation or individually for neglect of our weaker brothers' interests. Up to this point (the mere learning to read) I look upon education as a duty, beyond this, as a matter of opinion. In a few years, I believe even under existing circumstances, there will be the opportunity put before every parent for his children to learn to read, when the wages he is in receipt of enable him to live without the additional income derived from his young children's wages. Even in this case, the hardest of all, the child may be taught to read before he can be of any service to the agriculturist; but then comes the difficulty, how is the little you have put into the child's head to be kept there? Few indeed at the present day are the children who have not at a very early age perhaps been taught to read a little; but from the first time they are sent to work all is undone. There is where the mischief is. This applies also to boys that have been kept from work to a more advanced age; they totally neglect to keep up what has been instilled into them, and there are few parents who are sufficiently alive to a sense of duty in this respect to force their children to do it. If the evening school could always be carried out, if where it is established it would continue to flourish as it did before the novelty had died out, there would be some means of keeping up what had been begun at the day or Sunday school; but somehow or other such institutions flourish for a time, and then the efforts of those who start them relax, or what is far more common, the attendance, without any apparent reason, slowly but surely falls off, till the whole thing dies a natural death. I imagine it is the little store set on education amongst the poor themselves which is at the bottom of it. If the parents saw the benefit of education, they would enforce it amongst their children, and those children when grown up, would carry it on to another generation. Whether what has been done within the last 20 years will bear fruit, which at present is hardly to be detected, in another generation, is a question we must hope for the best upon.

In the parish I reside in we have no endowed school; still every child has the opportunity of being taught everything required if his parents would send him. It is kept up by the clergyman and lay ladies assisted by a donation from the landowners of the place. The boys learn to read and write and do simple sums, and the girls are taught to sew besides. The parents pay a small sum, and wherever they can afford to lose the service of the child he is sent to school. Poverty as I said before keeps some away, and I am afraid apathy somewhat more than poverty. Legislation if applied to my parish would perhaps keep some from work till the prohibitory age was passed, but I am not sure whether obstinacy on the part of the parent would not seek a kind of gratification in keeping the child from school out of pure revenge. If legislation is ever applied I hope the test will be what the child knows, and not what time he may have been sent to school. In other words let the examination be regardless of what has been done to get the result, so long as the child shows he has been taught the requisite amount of learning by some means. This would encourage the parents to teach their children in an evening, or make the best of any other opportunity that presented itself. If a child at the age of 10 knew all that the standard required there is no reason why the parents should be debarred from the assistance of the 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* a week he might earn merely because he did not happen to be of the age at which the law allowed him to be employed. I am, however, afraid to say much upon this point, for I should be sorry to see the compulsory element introduced at all. If one could only make the parents see that to know how to read and write is better than to be in ignorance, they would find means to get the necessary instruction for their children; but that state has yet to be arrived at in these districts.

The question of a lad who has received a good education at one of our best conducted National schools making a better farm labourer than one who has had no education at all, is one to which I should give a very decided answer. Putting the foreman out of the case, I have not a man on my farm (something like 400

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acres), to whom education is of the slightest use as a farm labourer. I have no occupation, from the shepherd and horse-driver to the lowest scale of farm work, in which there is the least opening for education as obtained in school or under a schoolmaster. The commercial value of education to a farm labourer is *nil*; that is, bear in mind, as long as he is a farm labourer. The question of his getting from that to something else qualifies my assertion directly. This point opens up another matter altogether, and inasmuch as a better education might offer him a better occupation, such is the way it ought to be placed before him; but if once you grant to the parent that his child will end his days as a farm labourer you must take your stand as a champion of education on some grounds other than that of education leading to pecuniary benefit to the child. If the object of educating the sons of the labouring population of the rural districts is to enable them to acquit themselves in higher branches of labour, provided they have industry and brains pretty much alike, those best educated would soonest find places; but the drafting to higher offices would even in that case be by few individual instances. On consideration it will be seen that even in this country education, such as we will suppose the most fortunate of farm labourers' sons to get, opens up no advancement unless that education is supplemented by apprenticeship to some specific trade or occupation. The effect, I apprehend, of a general bettered state of education among the class we are speaking of, would be to enable a few of those with the best abilities to embrace occasional opportunities of advancement. But beyond the placing a man in a position to read the Bible and write a fair hand, I confess I do not see the benefits likely to arise from a generally increased standard of education among agricultural labourers.

It is said that a boy who has been to a school gets his wits rubbed up and is a more intelligent lad than the common crow-keeping farmer's boy. If it is so it is the fault of the farmer himself, and not the fault of the individual boy. I have boys on my farm from I believe as low as eight or nine years of age. The most intellectual amongst them, and the lad I believe 20 years hence, if he should live so long, who will be in the best position, is one who can neither read nor write. I confess I am a little ashamed to admit it, especially as he has been with me ever since he was about seven years old. I take a great deal of pains with the boys I have about the premises, and I believe the lad I now allude to is a fair sample of what by attention most boys may be brought to. I don't know why a lad on a farm should be more stupid than one brought up in a country house or warehouse in the city. The fault as I said before lies with his master. I never allow a boy when he is called to walk; the moment I call a lad on my farm he runs; the moment I speak he answers. There is no occasion to have a boy just because he happens to come of parents who are agricultural labourers, grow up into a slow inanimate being. Quickness and sharpness come of tuition, not of parentage. I never allow a boy to come to me and say he can't do so-and-so; if I set him to put the bridle on a horse he can't reach the nose of, he gets the stable pail, or skip, or crawls into the manger, anything rather than come to me and say he "can't do it," and if farmers would take the trouble to instil habits of quickness and sagacity into the lads in their employ the future generation of farm labourers would be different men. I seldom flog a boy, however small, and then only on occasions of telling lies, ill-using animals, or using bad language; they understand when I am angry, without being flogged. The punishment most dreaded is to be sent home for a week. A great deal may be done with a big inattentive lad by getting a little boy to do his work and shame him into habits of industry. Rewards have their effect as well, an occasional copper or 6*d.* to a boy who knows nothing of money except to carry home to his parents as weekly wages, goes a long way; so does a new cap or a pair of shoes, and if by judicious use of the means I have named a boy is not to be be made into a useful man no indoor schooling will do it.

Yours &c.,
HERMAN BIDDELL.

Playford, Ipswich,
Nov. 1867.

To the Rev. Jas. Fraser,
Assistant Commissioner.

17.—*Allen Ransome Esquire*, of the Orwell Agricultural Implement Works, Ipswich, believes that a good wife is half the battle to a poor man.* A labourer with 15*s.* a week and a good wife may get on better even if he has three or four children than his neighbour who earns a guinea, if the wife of the latter is a slattern. The slattern, too, generally becomes a drunkard. Field labour for women in itself is not physically, and ought not to be morally, deleterious, but it is undesirable, as unfitting them to become good housewives. If he were a labouring man he would'nt choose a milliner or a straw plaiter, but a good domestic servant for his wife. One great obstacle to progress in the case of the agricultural labourer is that it is very difficult to offer him any direct encouragement to attain excellence. All are paid on a level, hence a man's only or at least his chief spur is personal pride in his work. This motive, however, operates largely, and no class of men feel more satisfaction than a good agricultural labourer in seeing his work thoroughly well done. The alternate whole day system was in operation at the Oswell works for two or three years. Its results are described by the firm in their answer to the "Queries issued by the Commissioners of the "Paris Universal Exhibition." "The alternate system created considerable difficulty in the existing organization of the piece work arrangements, and was deprecated by many of the parents, who could ill afford the diminution of the wages earned by their sons on half time. The plan was nevertheless in operation with a fair degree of success for two or three years, until machinery had superseded the necessity for employing so large a staff of boys."

18. *Mr. W. L. B. Freuer*, of Eye, Suffolk, agent to the Marquis of Cholmondeley's estates in Norfolk, and to those of Sir E. C. Kerrison, bart, in Suffolk, thinks nine years is the age at which a boy should begin agricultural life. Does not believe that allotments do much good unless they are under proper supervision. Both on the Marquis's and on Sir Edward Kerrison's estates, prizes for good cultivation are given, and the effect on the people's condition is very remarkable. All the allotments are cultivated by spade husbandry. Sir Edward's are in size 20 rods and 40 rods; there is great competition when any happens to fall vacant. The 20 rod ones answer best; the occupiers cultivate them more thoroughly, and so to more profit. They pay the same rent as the land of the farm from which they are taken, *plus* tithe and taxes. On Sir E. Kerrison's estate there are 330 cottages, and the aggregate rent is nearly 1,000*l.* a year. Sir Edward succeeded to them in a bad state of repair, and in the last 12 years he has expended 9,788*l.* in putting them into thoroughly good condition. He has only been able, in consequence of this heavy outlay to build seven new ones. A cottage register is kept by Sir Edward ruled in eight columns to show the following particulars of each cottage on the property:—1, name of tenant; 2, number of children and their ages; 3, nature and extent of occupation; 4, rent; 5, chamber accommodation; 6, space for remarks; 7, amount expended in repairs; 8, date of such repairs. Each cottage is inspected annually by the clerk, to ascertain the number of inmates and the above particulars. If the

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* So, too, thought the old poet of Ascra,—

Οὐ μὲν γὰρ τι γυναικὸς ἀνὴρ λῄζετ' ἄμεινον,
τῆς ἀγαθῆς. · τῆς δ' αὖτε κακῆς οὐ βίγιον ἄλλο,
δειπνολόχου, ἥ τ' ἄνδρα καὶ ἴφθιμόν περ ἐόντα
εὔει ἄτερ δαλοῦ, καὶ ἐν ὤμῳ γήραϊ θῆκεν.

Hesiod. Op. et Dies., 648 sqq.

family outgrows the capacity of the house they occupy, they are shifted to a larger. The rents range from 3*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.*, depending on the size of the garden, allotment, and house. The rent of the allotments averages 7*s.* 6*d.* per quarter acre. Sir Edward looks over his cottage register every February before ordering his repairs for the year, enters whatever directions he may wish to give in the proper column, and his agent sees to their execution. The cost of a double cottage of "clay lump" with brick foundations 3 feet above ground, would be from 140*l.* to 150*l.* Sir Edward uses his own bricks, which are charged at 17*s.* 6*d.* per thousand. Mr. Freuer thinks that landlords generally dislike the mode under which money for building cottages can be borrowed (by the Act of Victoria), because they wont brook the necessity of advertising. Believes that many owners of cottages are not aware of their real interior condition, and are contented with a decent outside. He knows it was so in the case of one estate of which he had the management. There were about 20 cottages which were like 'whited sepulchres' with miserable bedrooms bitterly cold in winter, suffocatingly hot in summer. On mentioning their condition to the owner, his statement was at first received with incredulity; but having been persuaded to visit them and see things with his own eyes, he was shocked and amazed at what he found, and improvements were immediately ordered. Sir Edward Kerrison has a gang working on the farms of his estate, under one of his tenants. He fixes the terms on which the children are to be employed, and the gang master is under complete control. No female is permitted to work in the gang. The master takes his gang to any place in the district where its services may be required. The boys who go into this gang turn out the best agricultural labourers in the neighbourhood. The gang averages about 25 strong. At one time they used to go to the school at 6 o'clock a.m., get a simple breakfast there, and have an hour's schooling before going to work; they were also induced to come to school on wet days.

[The breakfast and the hour's schooling before work had both been abandoned at the date of my visit to Eye. My experience is that the influence of all such artificial attractions is brief, and even while it lasts, unsatisfactory. They do not help to generate an interest in education for its own sake, the "one thing needful" to make our attempts to educate any class successful.]

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19. Letter from the vicar of Assington, Suffolk, (who was absent from home when I visited the parish), in reply to a request of mine that he would give me his opinion of the effects (1) of the co-operative store, and (2) of the co-operative farms, upon the general social condition of the people.

"Assington Vicarage, Sudbury,
Nov. 15, 1867.

MY DEAR SIR,

FROM what I have seen of the working of the co-operative store in this village, I have no doubt that the effect is good; inasmuch as the poor are able, for ready money, to procure a good article at a less price than the same could be purchased for elsewhere; and if the existing interests of small shopkeepers were regarded, as was the case in this village, I should be glad to see a store opened in every parish in England.

As regards the co-operative farms, there is much to be said *pro* and *con*. It would perhaps hardly be fair to form an opinion of the system from what is going on in this village, as it is an exceptional case in most points of view. Mr. Gurdon, who also owns nearly the whole parish, started the scheme, and has for many years forwarded it as a landed proprietor alone could do upon his own estate. Since I heard from you I have endeavoured to gather more information on the subject than I before possessed, and I will now give you, in as few words as possible, the results of my investigation.

First, as to the advantages of the system. It tends, I think to attach the labourer to his parish, and is a decided help to him in a pecuniary point of view, when the value of his share has been fully paid up. Where rules such as Mr. Gurdon has drawn up, are strictly carried out, it materially suppresses vice, at least such as the law can touch. If widely adopted, it would greatly diminish the poor rates. These appear to be the advantages of the system, and without doubt are of great importance.

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"I cannot gather that the system has any affect upon the education of the children. Those of the co-operators and non-co-operators are employed at an early age and in various ways and equally upon all the farms in the parish, nor do I think that any real effect is produced in the way of morality or religion.

"The disadvantages appear to be these;—that the farms are held by an inferior class of men who cannot take the place of the English farmer. They are paid a trifle over labourer's wages, and may be (through sickness &c.) as much in need of charity as any other labourer in the parish. They can take no part in the management of parish matters, nor can they render any assistance to the poor who need a helping hand. They occupy the place of those who are able and willing to aid effectually in these matters. Were the system to be generally carried out, it would materially affect the trade of the country, and if it were to become general, the farmers of England will ever oppose it, and it will be an endless source of ill-feeling. These appear to me to be the drawbacks of the system, and I doubt much whether they do not outweigh the benefits to be gained from it.

I remain, dear sir,
Yours, &c.
(Signed) H. LANDON MAUD.

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20. REPORT of the PUBLIC MEETING held at HALSTEAD, ESSEX, on Oct. 14, 1867, in connexion with this Inquiry, *reprinted from the Halstead Gazette.**

Essex.

HALSTEAD.

On Monday last a public meeting was held at the Town Hall, by Rev. J. Fraser one of the Assistant Commissioners, appointed to make inquiry into the state of young persons employed in agriculture, with a view to improvement in legislation.

The chair was taken by S. Courtauld, Esq., and there were also present, J. R. Vaizey, R. E. Greenwood, J. T. Adams, E. Hornor, D. Sinclair, Esqrs. Revds. D. Fraser, J. Trew, W. Gough, E. Stott, J. Gleaves; Hon. and Rev. E. H. Grimston, Rev. A. Dowell, Dr. Borham, Messrs. J. Savill,—Ferguson, J. Blomfield, W. Whitlock, G. D. Green, T. Ray, E. Haiden, J. Sudbury, R. C. Hughes, J. C. Everitt, J. Bunn, H. Candler, &c.

The Commissioner said before stating the general business of the meeting, he proposed asking a few questions with reference to the parishes of the district from which there were gentlemen present.

[These particulars are to be found in the minutes of the meeting No. 53.]

The Commissioner then proceeded to enquire about the district generally:—

Mr. Savill said the farms were chiefly arable; the soil was principally a stiff loam, but a little was sandy. Some of the soil was very poor, but it was very good in the valleys. The small occupations were rented highest—from 25*s.* to 40*s.* an acre, but some was only 15*s.* or 18*s.* an acre. Females did not work on the land except a little at dropping wheat in seed time, and a little stone picking; they did not work at harvest and very little at haymaking. Female labour was not wanted, and the women got other employment— straw plaiting, and working in the factory, and there was a deal of clothing made up.

Mr. Bond, relieving officer, said plaiters earned about 4*s.* a week; but lately the trade had been very bad and they earned scarcely anything.

* I print this report as a sample of the course the discussion took, and the manner in which the results were arrived at, at the various public meetings which I held.

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Mr. Whitlock observed that since the plait trade had been bad he had seen several women at work in the fields.

Mr. Savill: A woman would earn from 8*d.* to 1*s.* a day.

The Commissioner remarked that he was speaking to a labourer in this district, who told him they could spare 100 labourers; was it a fact that the farmers did not require female labour?

Mr. Savill said they did not require it, and did not encourage it.

Mr. Blomfield was of opinion that male labour was better and cheaper.

The Commissioner thought that boys were largely employed very early.

Mr. Savill said they began about 10 years old to go in the fields.

The Commissioner: A gentleman was telling me that the six best labourers on his farm began from six to seven.

Mr. Blomfield considered they must be useless at that age.

Mr. Haiden. It must be an exceptional case.

Mr. Courtauld said on his occupation of 700 acres there was but one boy not 11, and another not 13, and 3 under 14; the one under 11 watched sheep; both these two youngest boys could read and write.

The Commissioner said he was prepared for that, seeing the facilities for education they appeared to have at Gosfield.

He asked how the boys were employed?

Mr. Fergusson said in spring they tended sheep, and prepared food for cattle; but under superintendence.

Mr. Savill. They lead horses in hay and harvest time and in winter for carting dung, &c.; the slackest time would be between hay and harvest time.

Mr. Haiden said they would be wanted for mangold seeding.

The Commissioner said it appeared there was no slack time after the boys once went to work; but they were not wanted very early.

Mr. Grimston considered they did not make good labourers unless they began early, about 9 years of age.

The Commissioner remarked that a respectable labourer told him that there was no necessity to begin before 12, if the parents could afford to keep them till that time.

In reply to an observation of Mr. Courtauld's, the Commissioner observed that he did not call it reading unless the person could read a portion, say of the New Testament, without a painful effort; nor writing, unless he could write a letter. He asked the rate of wages; he found it varied a great deal.

Mr. Savill said it was 11*s.* a week here; 10*s.* at Hedingham, and 9*s.* at Toppesfield.

Mr. Bunn said in his district, as relieving officer, the wages were 11*s.* but they had not been long raised to that.

The Commissioner: How is the harvest paid?

Mr. Savill: I let mine by the acre; any way it comes to about 7*l.* Though wages are called 11*s.* they may earn 12*s.* or 13*s.* by the piece for hoeing wheat and turnips and stirring muck dungles and threshing with the flail.

Mr. Whitlock said many earned more by piece-work.

The Commissioner said taking the average earnings at 11*s.* a week for 48 weeks and 7*l.* for the harvest it would give 35*l.* 6*s.* for the year's earnings, assuming that the labourer was regularly at work and not hindered by the weather.

Mr. Ferguson said he thought 11*s.* 6*d.* would be more the average.

Mr. Savill remarked in wet weather the farmers generally found their men a job indoors.

The Commissioner remarked there must be a great number of men who were not in regular work.

Mr. Hornor said, though there were, he did not think they could find an able-bodied labourer of good character without regular work.

With reference to boys' wages Mr. Savill stated that a boy of 10 years of age would earn 6*d.* a day, at 12, 8*d.*, and at 14, 9*d.* to 1*s.*

The Commissioner observed that most of the cottages were of lath and plaster, or brick, and some of clay daub.

Mr Courtauld said either lath and plaster or clay daub make good cottages, if they were plastered inside; lath and plaster was better than thin brick.

The Commissioner then proceeded to explain the object of the meeting. He said he attended as one of a commission appointed in May last, to enquire and report upon the employment of children and young persons in agriculture, and to ascertain to what extent and with what modifications the principles of the Factory Acts could be made use of to secure the better education of such children. The scope of these Acts had been considerably increased, and in the last session the Workshops Act had extended the principle to almost every handicraft whatever. The principles of these Acts were physical, moral, and educational; physical, as they prevented the employment of young children at an immature age, and of young persons and females for an exhaustive period, and educational as they provided that children between eight and 13 employed in any factory or workshop should receive a certain amount of instruction. No child under eight was allowed to be employed in any handicraft whatever, and between eight and 13, not more than 6½ hours a day, and no young person from 13 to 18 for more than 12 hours a day, nor must they be employed on Sunday; for employing children contrary to this Act, the proprietor of the workshop was liable to a penalty of 3*l.* and the parents to a penalty not exceeding 20*s.*, and every child between eight and 13 must attend school 10 hours in every week, and there was a penalty of 20*s.* on the parents for omitting to send their child to school, and 3*l.* on the employer of such child, for employing him without a certificate. He wished to ascertain their opinions with reference to the application of similar principles to agriculture, for it could not be doubted that Parliament, having extended the principle to every handicraft and trade, would not allow farming to be the only trade free from such restrictions, and he thought the time was not very remote.

Mr. Courtauld: And the sooner the better.

The Commissioner thought so too, but the point was how the legislation could be made to act most beneficially to the children, and least prejudicially to the farmers, and the tilling of the soil. It was not a simple problem, and the most perplexing part was that the wages of a labourer would not allow him to keep his children unemployed up to 13. Only earning 35*l.* wages in the year, it was impossible to suppose he could dispense with the wages of his children up to 13, and it seemed to be considered there was not any slack time that could be made use of to send these children to school after they once went to work. Though they could not hope to set the standard as high as 13, he thought they could dispense with their labour up to 10 or 11 years of age. He was told by many farmers that the alternate whole or half-day system of the Factory Acts was wholly inapplicable to agriculture, and the only way in which anything could be done was to keep them off the land to a certain age. If they could only keep a boy at school to the age of 10, they could turn him out into life with the keys of knowledge, which he must put to the lock for himself. The difficulty was this: the children were supposed to be at school for four or five years; but if they looked closer into this they found they were not there half that period, and at very irregular times. The result was that not half the agricultural population could read or write, and we were behind other countries that we fancied were below us—Sweden, Prussia, and Holland; and he was told by gentlemen who went to Norway, fishing, that you could hardly find a person but could read or write; but here if one went into a small village, 50 per cent. could not read or write. The Legislature ought not to allow things to remain as they

are now, and whether when educated a man made a better labourer or not, they were not justified in allowing any class to remain in brutal ignorance. The simple question was how the end could be obtained in the most favourable manner.

Mr. Courtauld said he felt at once that the system of whole or half-days would not work at all; the only practicable way was to fix the period of age below which the children must not go on the land.

The Commissioner said he would first take the opinion of the meeting on the point that the education of the agricultural labourer was not satisfactory.

The Rev. D. Fraser said he did not think it was satisfactory, but he must demur to the extent of the Commissioner's remarks.

The Commissioner remarked he did not speak of a want of intelligence, but of an inability to read and write.

The Rev. D. Fraser said the National Society's report went into certain statistics, to meet the objection raised that we were behind other countries in education, and stated that the education of the country was on the whole satisfactory and would bear favourable comparison with many countries, and was nearly up to Prussia, where education was compulsory. The figures he quoted were taken in 1858, and since then considerable progress had been made. Though he could agree to the resolution that the state of the agricultural labourer was not satisfactory, he must demur to the very strong remarks as to the failure of education upon the present system.

The Commissioner said he was familiar with the figures Mr. Fraser had quoted, but there was a fallacy in them, for while the time of education here was taken from 3 to 12, in Prussia it was from 6 to 14. Holland and Switzerland were ahead of us, and though France was behind, it was making prodigious efforts as only an imperial power could make. In Prussia every school was efficient, but it was no exaggeration to say that 30 per cent. of ours were inefficient. Gosfield with 115 children attending school out of a population of 620, was an exceptional case. The children leaving school at eight or nine years old possessed a very small stock of information, which in two years was forgotten, and he thought he was guilty of no exaggeration in saying that 50 per cent. of the adult agricultural labourers could not read or write. He had talked to several labourers he had met, and one could not read, another could not write, and almost every case he came across was unsatisfactory.

Dr. Borham said nine out of 12 could not sign their own declaration in clubs.

The motion was then agreed to that "That it is the "unanimous opinion of this meeting that the educa- "tion of the agricultural labourer in this district is not "satisfactory."

The Commissioner said that the question was how we were to improve it; the meeting appeared to think the half-time system inapplicable.

Mr. Courtauld said if they all thought this half-time system was entirely inconsistent with agricultural pursuits, then clearly there was but one alternative—to fix an age below which children should not be employed. He should expect to find great resistance from many tenant farmers and proprietors; for he himself was one of the most active opposers of his principle at the outset, when the present Lord Shaftesbury inaugurated this legislation. He was opposed to it on the principle of political economy—believing that the matter would ultimately find its own level. He was now entirely a convert to the principle of these acts, seeing how well they worked, and that they had been both for the benefit of the employers and employed—beneficial both in a physical and moral sense. He was prepared for considerable resistance, but he thought the safe course would be to proceed tentatively and be moderate in the first limitation,—say ten years, and if it worked well, (as he had no doubt it would) then they might carry it further. With regard to evening schools they were most admirable institutions in the neighbourhood, for they offered the only opportunity for those whose education had been neglected; but they worked most unfavourably for the day schools. The girls were largely employed as nurses for infants, and they went to the factories at 13, never having been to school because they said they could be taught afterwards at the night school; but if there had been no night school they would have been forced to go to school earlier.

The Rev. D. Fraser believed that there was a good deal of ignorance through the people forgetting what they had learned.

Mr. Whitlock considered the children were better educated than their parents.

The Commissioner: No doubt there is improvement.

It was unanimously agreed that the meeting would wish to see an age fixed below which a boy should not be allowed to work; but afterwards be allowed to work freely.

The next point as to the age, was then discussed a majority being in favor of fixing the age at 10, and a minority in favor of 11.

The Commissioner remarked that merely prohibiting the employment up to a certain age would effect nothing unless the children were sent to school.

Mr. Courtauld said at Manchester the manufacturers voluntarily agreed that even after 10 they would employ no children except they could read and write.

The Commissioner suggested that even after 10 the children should not be allowed to be employed unless they could produce a certificate that they had passed an elementary examination.

The Rev. D. Fraser and several gentlemen objected to this, that many parents who did not care at all about their children would not send them, and it would be the means of flooding the place with a lot of idle persons. Ultimately it was resolved as follows:—"It is "the opinion of the meeting that little advantage "would be gained to education by simply limiting the "age at which children should be employed, without "securing their regular attendance at school, and "they would wish Parliament to devise a satisfactory "mode of compulsion, direct or indirect, which would "best meet the ends in view."

The meeting disapproved of the employment of females on the land, and in this district they considered it was not needed.

A discussion took place with reference to the inspection of labourer's cottages, with a view to prevent overcrowding, the Commissioner suggesting the appointment of an independent inspector for the district; and ultimately it was agreed, "That some indepen- "dent surveillance of cottages was absolutely required, "to prevent overcrowding, &c., and that an annual "return should be made by the overseers of the "cottages in their parishes with the number of "inmates, to a government officer appointed for the "purpose."

The question of beerhouses was also touched upon, and their increase was considered a great evil; it was resolved, "That the meeting would desire a much "stricter system of licensing beerhouses, which are "at the present time felt to be great sources of "poverty and crime." The proceedings then terminated, having lasted several hours.

No. 21. Letter from the *Rev. J. M. Cripps*, Rector of Great Yeldham, Essex.

"Dear Sir,

"I am extremely sorry I should be absent from the conference you are about to hold in my parish, but I am quite unable to return for it. You will doubtless have it brought before your notice, that one of the great drawbacks to education in the immediate neighbourhood of Yeldham, is the employment of the children in straw plaiting. They are kept at school from 9 to 5 with nothing else but plaiting to do; and too generally, after going home, they are kept to their plait at the tenderest age till 10 or 11 o'clock. In any

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practical scheme for promoting the education of the labouring classes in our district, this difficulty would have in some way to be met.

I have the honour to be,
(Signed) J. M. Cripps.

No. 22. Letter from *Charles Page Wood*, Esq., of Kelvedon, to the Churchwardens of the Parish.

Scrips, Kelvedon,
Oct. 25, 1867.

"Dear Sirs,

"I much regret that I am unable to attend before the Commissioner at Kelvedon to-day, as I should like to raise my voice against any interference with agricultural labour on the part of the Legislature. Conscientiously, I do not believe that boys or women undergo the smallest hardship, physically, when employed in agriculture; the time has gone by for coercing anybody. We rarely employ boys or women in the winter months, and in the spring the light work they are capable of performing brings in a few welcome shillings to aid in the sustenance of large families. Unless some equivalent be provided for the labouring man, it will be unjust to deprive him of his children's aid; and, in some respects, the loss of the service of their little fingers will go against the farmer.

"If it be within the Commissioner's province to inquire into the state of the cottages of the labouring poor, I wish to state my conviction that such houses are not nearly good enough, as a general rule, for their inmates; and if good and roomy accommodation is provided, I believe the occupiers of land would be found willing to guarantee the rent to the landlords of such houses.

"If you think fit, pray lay my note before the Commissioner, to whom I beg to apologize for not being able to attend in person.

Believe me, yours faithfully,
(Signed) Charles Page Wood.

To Messrs. Fuller & Siggers,
Churchwardens of Kelvedon.

No. 23. *Lord Rayleigh*, of Terling Place, Essex, used to have a gang of boys between the ages of 10 and 12, varying in number according to circumstances from 10 to 40, whom he employed upon the half-day principle.* He paid them at the rate of 3*d.* a day for the first year, and 4*d.* a day for the second year. He did not advance beyond 4*d.* a day, because he did not wish to interfere with the farmers' labour-supply. He was induced to form the gang, which was placed under the superintendence of an old experienced workman (who got an extra shilling a week for the duty), in consequence of seeing such a number of idle boys about the village. A condition of employment was that the boys went to school. They attended school every day from 9 to 12; then had their dinner and assembled in the playground; were then marched, under their old commander, from the playground to the scene of their work, and were employed from 1 o'clock to the ordinary leaving-off time. The experiment was continued for about 10 years, and in Lord Rayleigh's opinion worked successfully. The school never was so full of boys, and the master said that the half-timers learnt as much in three hours as they used to do in five. The plan, however, has been discontinued about four years, in consequence of the supply of boys in the parish falling short. He still employs four boys on the half-day system, to be about the farmyard and under the stockman. He does not see why the system should not work generally, if the farmers would take the trouble to employ two boys instead of one; but he doubts if their zeal for education is intense enough to lead them to do that. Believes that under this half-time system, with superintendence, he got more work out of these boys in four hours than he would otherwise have got from them, without superintendence, in the whole day; and altogether considers that the gang answered economically as a mode of employing labour. Thinks the half-day system would work better than the alternate whole day. Under the former the boys are lively, both at school and at their work; but the situation of the school, and also the kind of employment would have a good deal to do with the determining the mode that could be best adopted to suit the requirements of each case and district. If the school is central, the half-day system would be most applicable; if remote, the alternate whole day might be preferable.

Lord Rayleigh makes it a rule that no unmarried girl or woman between 14 and 30 years of age, shall be allowed to glean on his property. He found that mothers would actually make their girls leave their places in service to come home for the month's gleaning; so he put a stop to what he thought a mischievous practice. He finds that most women think that field labour is healthful to them. Cannot see any strong desire on the part of parents to avail themselves of the opportunities of education for their children.

24. *Miss Bramston*, of Witham, who is a regular visitor in the homes of the poor, and consequently is well acquainted with their feelings, says that the thing which, above all others, disheartens the agricultural labourer and makes him seek other kinds of work, whenever an opportunity offers, is the *precariousness* of his employment,—his liability to be thrown out of work when there comes wet weather or a frost. What they say they want is "wet and dry work." Believes that they would be both contented, and where there is good management comfortable enough, if only they could depend upon constant employment; but when a man comes to his work, and is told he is not wanted and perhaps lies idle half the winter, it is enough to make him look out elsewhere.

[The *Miss Moseleys*, of Olveston, in Gloucestershire, entirely confirmed this opinion. Very few men in that parish are employed "wet and dry." They have been heard to say they would rather have 10*s.* a week regular wages throughout the year, than be paid upon the present system, subject to its uncertainties.]

25. *Mr. W. Sparkes*, shop-keeper and assistant-overseer, of Wickham Bishop's, Essex (Witham Union). There are 120 cottages in the parish. The rent is high, ranging from 4*l.* 4*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.*, and the gardens are generally small. There would not be half a dozen cottages out of the 120 with three bedrooms. Cannot see much improvement in prospect. There is not much drunkenness in the parish; there never was. Many of the people are ashamed to run into debt; about half of them perhaps might be called honest in this sense. Most of his customers owe him from 1*l.* to 2*l.* Sees a great difference in families. This depends mainly on the wife. A man with an active, managing wife, will do better if he has eight children than another with a poor helpmate would with four. The people in this parish are well employed. Pea-picking,*

* It contained, however, almost every element required to ensure success, such as could rarely be brought to bear upon a similar experiment by an ordinary tenant farmer. The school is central, close to the land cultivated, and both it and the village are entirely under Lord Rayleigh's command. The occupation was large, 2,000 acres, and afforded constant employment to the gang. Some farmers of the neighbourhood, who attended my meeting at Witham, rated the success at a much lower level than his Lordship did; in fact, considered the experiment a failure; and asked, if it was a success, why it had been discontinued? Lord Rayleigh's account of its discontinuance is stated in the text.

Col. Shakespear, of Witham, a magistrate for Essex, who took the chair at my Witham meeting, threw out in private conversation what appeared to me a good suggestion. He thought that it might be very advisable to organize the elder boys in the workhouse schools into a gang, who could be hired out to work, under a proper superintendent, on the neighbouring farms. Part of the money earned might be allowed to accumulate for the boys' benefit when they start in life, and part might be applied to diminish the cost of their maintenance. They would thus also be redeemed from the reproach that generally attaches, in the minds of farmers, to workhouse boys, that they are allowed to grow up utterly ignorant of, and unfitted for, the practical work of agricultural life.

* The clergy and farmers at the Witham meeting spoke very strongly on the demoralizing effects of "pea-picking" on the women and girls. The work is akin in its nature to hop picking, and the evils generated by it are, no doubt, the same also.

gleaning, and acorning are the chief employments for women. A woman at pea-picking may earn 2*s.* a day. She would also pick perhaps three pecks of acorns in a day, selling this year at 1*s.* 3*d.* a bushel.

Mr. Kaye, Bailiff to W. E. Hubbard, Esqre., of Lower Beeding, Sussex (Horsham Union), estimates the cost of a block of three cottages, weather-board outside, lath and plaster within, walls seven inches thick, on ground-floor two rooms, pantry, and wash-house, with oven (stone floors), and two chambers above, with separate wood-houses, pigstyes and privies (the latter fitted with Moule's patent earth closets), tiled, at 200*l.* The ordinary rent of each cottage would be 2*s.* a week with garden.

27. The following evidence of the condition of the agricultural population in the Union of West Hampnett (containing 38 parishes round the City of Chichester), County of Sussex, was taken from the five relieving officers of the Union, Messrs. W. Dawtrey, F. Heath, E. Adames, R. Ellis, and T. Humphreys, at the Union-house, Nov. 18, 1867.

The occupations in this union vary considerably in size, ranging from 300 to 1,000 and more acres. The land below the downs is rich arable land, a nut-brown loam; can grow 40 bushels of wheat to the acre. The standing weekly wages since last winter has been 13*s.* for ordinary labourers. Very little work, except grass-mowing and harvest, is done by the piece. The people, where there is good management in the home, live in tolerable comfort; and are better off than many a mechanic in the town; particularly than those, such as bricklayers &c., who depend upon weather. There is very little time lost by agricultural labourers in this district. There is hardly any real destitution. Many of the cottages are not what they ought to be, having only one bed-chamber, and there are frequently cases of overcrowding. On the Goodwood estate the cottages are much improved. Every new cottage the Duke of Richmond builds has five rooms, two on the ground-floor with a pantry, and three above. Lodgers are not allowed to be taken. Most of the cottages are of brick, or brick and flint, the roof either thatched or tiled. Speaking generally it is a good district for water. Most of the cottages belong to the landowners. There is not quite adequate cottage accommodation in the district. Rents vary from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a week. But the Duke of Richmond and some other landowners let their cottages mostly at 1*s.* The allotment system does not prevail in the district, but most of the cottages have good gardens. Drinking and smoking are prevalent habits with the people; the former is considered to be the primary cause of nearly all the poverty which exists. The habit of profane swearing also prevails to a lamentable extent. Married women and widows are largely employed on the land, but young unmarried girls rarely. The chief employments of women are weeding, stone-picking, trimming turnips, &c. They earn 9*d.*, 10*d.*, and 1*s.* a day. In some of the parishes where there are large woods, girls are kept away from school to go into the coppices and pick wood. This is considered to be a mischievous occupation, generating idle habits and indisposing them afterwards for domestic service. There is not, however, very much illegitimacy in the district. In some places, boys are taken to tend sheep or scare birds nearly as soon as they can crawl; a boy of eight will earn 2*s.* a week. In the administration of out door relief, though there is no absolute rule laid down by the Board, no objection would be made to a pauper's child remaining at school till 12 years of age. The school fee, however, is in no case paid by the guardians, nor, is the attendance of the children made a condition of out-door relief. The allowance is 1*s.* a week per child, and this would not be diminished, in respect of the other children, by the fact that one of them might be earning wages at work, so long as this did not exceed 3*s.* a week. There is a decided improvement, of late years, in the educational condition of the district, but there are still a great many people who cannot read or write. On the whole, parents seem anxious to give their children an education; but if it became a question between the school and a job of work, the school would give away. There is a considerable amount of dissent in some of the parishes; but the officers have never heard the objection taken by the parents that they don't like their children to go to the Church school or to be taught the Church Catechism. They consider that in most cases the schools would fall to the ground, but for the support they receive from the clergy. There is no other class who really concern themselves about their management. The poor and county rate in this Union is about 2*s.* in the 1*l.* per annum. There is no highway district.

28. *The Rev. F. A. Bowles*, Rector of Singleton, in this Union, informed me that during the Goodwood race week many of his cottages, or at least the ground floors of them, are turned into loose boxes for race-horses. Some, I believe, have even been constructed with this view. He has not observed that any particular demoralization has followed the practice, and he can only trace the birth of one illegitimate child to this cause; but it makes the people very covetous. They let half a bed for 20*s.* for the week. so that two rooms will produce 4*l.* The family meanwhile sleep where and how they can. Happily the races are in the month of June. Mr. Bowles encourages the people to brew at home; keeps a set of utensils, which he lends out for the purpose; thinks the habit conduces to sobriety.

29. Letter from *Rev. C. B. Wollaston*, Rector of Felpham, Sussex.

Dear Sir,

I am very sorry that I am quite unable to attend the meeting which you have called at Yapton on Tuesday next. I have asked my churchwardens if possible to represent me there*. The subject you have to bring before us is one of great interest to me. I have already, as a school-inspector, reported to our Bishop to the effect that the employment of very young boys in the place of men, principally as horse-boys, is having a most damaging effect upon our parish schools. The average age of the first class in our national schools has fallen 11 months in the last 10 years, mainly owing to the demand for boy labour. One remedy is to make attractive evening schools helped by Government. I wish I could be present to give you my experience on this subject.

I remain, &c.

(Signed) C. B. Wollaston.

Felpham Rectory, Bognor,
17 November 1867.

30. *Captain Valentine*, the Duke of Richmond's agent, mentioned the case of a woman from Mid Lavant now removed to Boxgrove. In her former parish she had a wretched cottage and was an utter slattern; she is now well housed, and there is not a tidier woman in the parish. *The Rev. H. Foster*, of Selsey, told me of a similar case in his parish of improvement in the habits and conduct of a whole family in consequence of being put in one of Mrs. Vernon Harcourt's new cottages. A similar happy effect in the tone and manners of the people, I was informed by one of the relieving officers of the district (Mr. Heath), had followed Mr. Crosbie's improvement of the cottages in the parish of Donnington; it had "made all the women tidy."

Good cottages, however, are sometimes badly planned. Miss Foster pointed out to me a new cottage of Mrs. Harcourt's at Selsey, admirably built and picturesque in outline, but with four doors opening into the sitting room, filling it with draughts and making it miserable.

31. *John Bayton, Esq.*, a magistrate residing in the district, informed me that 15 or 20 years ago women were extensively employed on the Goodwood estate and home farm, even to do such work as driving dungcarts. In that day the parish of Box-

* No one, however, was present at my meeting as a representative from Felpham.

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Gloucester.

grove, in which Goodwood House is situated, was one of the most demoralized in the neighbourhood. The practice has been abandoned. The character of the parish has proportionately improved.

[I heard the same story from other sources also.]

32. *Mr. Webb*, bailiff to T. B. L. Baker, Esq., of Hardwicke, near Gloucester, thinks that either the half day or the alternate whole day system is inapplicable to agriculture. It would be better to fix an age—10 or 11—and keep children regularly at school till that was reached. Does not think it would be any hardship upon the parents to prohibit boy-labour in the fields under 10. Would trust something to local benevolence to relieve cases of hardship if any occurred. Women are a good deal employed on the farms in the Vale of Gloucester at the rate of about two to the hundred acres. They are mostly married women. The young girls generally get out to service, though some of them prefer employment on the land. Boys are rarely, if ever, employed under 10. Farmers themselves are becoming more intelligent, and appreciate more fully than they once did the value of an educated labourer. It is also found necessary by employers, if they would retain the services of a good labourer, to treat him with consideration.

LETTER from *Rev. W. Douglas*, Curate of Hardwicke.

Hardwicke, Gloucester,
January 23, 1868.

MY DEAR SIR,

CHILDREN'S labour does not, I think, work so prejudicial in this parish as it may perhaps do in some others. The farmers are generally a kindly set of people, and not disposed to be hard taskmasters. Want of method or regularity in the work is, I believe, what tells hardest on those employed. The bad fruits are, too long hours for those constantly employed at farm labour, and desultory attendance at school on the part of those who are only occasionally employed, either as crowkeepers or otherwise temporarily.

We have very few boys indeed employed constantly at farm work under the age of 13, though, as you will see by list appended (I have thought better to omit names), there are several others just over 13. The hours of work for them are as a rule much too long, often entailing an absence from home, or employment of time to the amount of 14 hours out of 24, and this for wages varying from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* per week.

I cannot speak positively on the subject of crowkeepers, as we call them here, or of those who are employed in full working time; this is unfortunately the wrong time of year for gathering such statistics, being full school time, not full work time. The schoolmaster's great difficulty in full working time is with children of large families and of farm labourers. Parents in the former case want to gain 6*d.* when they can; in the latter often do not like to refuse a boy to an employer if he wants him. Hence irregularity in school attendance, and poor scholars in the long run.

A. B., age 12, wages 3*s.* a week, goes to work at 6 a.m., returns 8 p.m.; one of a large family.

C. D., nearly 13, wages 3*s.* 6*d.* a week, goes to work half-past 6 winter; spring and summer, 6; returns home from 7 p.m. to 9 or 10 p.m., according to what is doing; one of a large family.

E. F., age 14, works half-past 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.; wages, 3*s.* 6*d.*

G. H., age 9 years; has been at work the last 10 weeks, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., but is to go to school next week. May have to go to constant work as ploughboy in spring; hours then will be 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.; wages so far 1*s.* 6*d.* weekly.

J. K., age 14; works half-past 6 a.m. to half-past 6 p.m.; wages, 3*s.* 6*d.*

L. M., age 11 next March; begins work 6 a.m., finishes about 8 p.m.; wages, 3*s.* a week. Works on Sundays.

N. O., age 13 last December; begins work 6 a.m., finishes 8 or 9 p.m., and works on Sundays.

The two last live opposite their work, and come home for their meals; in every case the parents find the food. All this information (with the exception of J. K.) is gathered by myself from parents.

I believe the farmer will, when appealed to, let them off in time for night school, proving, I think, the possibility of a limitation of hours.

I cannot myself see how a half-time system is to work in these districts, either half day, alternate day, or even four months at school out of 12, though this latter is perhaps the most practicable.

If it were possible to limit the age at which boys were allowed to engage in constant farm work to 10½ or 11, I think a half-time system for crowkeepers and irregular workers might perhaps be enforced.

But it will be most necessary to limit the hours of farm labour at least in winter. I do not see how boys can grow into fairly able-bodied men without such provision, or how their early schooling can be kept up. Some system of regular hours would, I believe, also be highly beneficial to the farmers themselves, and it would tend to raise the tone of the labourers if they felt the law prohibited them from being worked over time by their employers without extra remuneration. I think the labourer wants such protection in these districts now, and that he is too much in the power of his employer.

Please forgive a hurried statement. I find myself pressed for time in writing, but the information has been gathered with care, and the suggestions thought over.

I remain, dear Sir,
Yours very faithfully,
WILLIAM DOUGLAS.

The Rev. James Fraser.

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34. *T. B. L. Baker, Esq.*, of Hardwicke, believes that it is a mistaken charity to let cottages at an unremunerative rent. It is one of the influences that go to pauperize the labourer, and keep down his wages. Is himself endeavouring to raise the rent of his cottages to what will bring him in a fair return for the money laid out upon them. Any other principle is economically vicious, and really aggravates the evil that it attempts to remedy. Apparently relieving the poor man's pocket, it really depresses his whole social condition. Speaking generally, the moral and social condition of the poor who live in cottages for which they pay perhaps merely a small quit-rent—miserable hovels, to which however they cling because the rent is low—is the most degraded of all. If rents were higher there would soon be a supply of better cottages, and with them a general elevation of the condition of the labouring class.

35. *Frederick Knight, Esq. M.P.*, formerly Secretary of the Poor Law Board, considers that the attachment of the cottages to the farm (beyond the number required for the shepherd, carter, and stockman), and the placing them at the disposal of the tenant, is a bad arrangement for the labourer; it makes him too dependent upon his employer. Is ready to admit that the condition of many, too many, of the labourers' cottages in England is not good; but wishes it to be remembered that the English farm labourer, on the whole, is better housed than the corresponding class in any other country in the world. The Scotch peasantry are notoriously worse off in this respect than ours.

36. *Mr. John Williams*, parish clerk and assistant overseer of Almondsbury, Gloucestershire (Thornbury Union). Is well acquainted with the parish and with the habits and feelings of the people. Considers the people in Almondsbury better off than in many other places. The average rate of wages now is 12*s.* a week. There is a large fund, upwards of 200*l.* a year, arising from some 200 acres of land in the parish, which is in the hand of trustees for parochial purposes. The first charge on this fund is for the repair of the church,

the remainder is applied at the discretion of the trustees. They allot a certain sum to the support of the school, distribute sometimes as much as 20*l.* in coal; give 10*s.* 6*d.* to every lying-in woman, &c. Women are not much employed on the land, they mostly occupy themselves in washing and charing. Children, boys chiefly, are largely employed both in planting and getting potatoes, and in picking fruit. Boys are not much used to drive plough till they are 11 or 12. People are anxious to keep their children at school as long as they can. A man's worst time is when he has five or six young children. Thinks in such cases it would be a hardship to compel him to dispense with a boy's earnings and keep him at home till he is 11 years of age. Many families get fresh meat once a week, generally on Sunday, but this would not be the case with all, and many labouring men might even go through the week without tasting even a bit of bacon. Their staple food is bread and cheese. All the distress he knows of in the parish arises either from the husband being given to drink, or the wife being a bad manager. Does not remember a case of real distress where the man is sober, and his wife thrifty and contriving. Thinks there is more labour in the parish than the farmers can employ all through the year. There are some able-bodied men out of work now, and to some extent the employment of boys with horses displaces adult labour.* Most of the farmers have a young man or two living in their house; they are hired by the year or half-year, generally at the "mop"; sometimes they come for a month on trial. A considerable number of the people are probably in debt, though the amount would not often be as high as 5*l.* Finds the generality of the people honestly disposed, though of course there are rogues amongst them who will run into debt without any intention of paying. Some of the farmers find work for their men whether wet or dry, but others do not, and this is what pulls the men down. There are a good many of the young working men who can neither read nor write. They often ask him to read a bit of something for them, or to write some lines, and express a regret that they are not as good scholars as he is. Yet for all this they have not resolution or steadiness enough to attend the night school; they seem to prefer spending their evenings elsewhere. The spirit of the people in one respect is high; they would rather do almost anything than come upon the parish for relief. Even if a pauper dies his friends will endeavour to bury him without asking for parish aid.† At the same time there prevails rather a mendicant spirit, and some of the people complain that there are not so many gifts in Almondsbury as elsewhere.

37. LETTER from *Rev. F. W. Rice*, Vicar of Fairford, Gloucestershire.

Fairford Vicarage, December 6, 1867.

DEAR SIR,

I AM sorry to be prevented coming to the meeting to-day by a cold. We have only a few unmarried women and boys under 10 employed in field labour. The supply of labour, except in the harvest, is abundant in this parish. In the neighbouring villages, where the population is small in proportion to the extent of land, the children are taken earlier from school. We find the employment of young women in the fields very injurious to their moral character. The most respectable among the poor will not allow their daughters to go out to work.

Yours faithfully,
(Signed) F. W. RICE.

* I saw an instance of this in this very parish. A farmer, on whom I called in company with the vicar, mentioned that he could not get a boy to drive plough and had been obliged to put on a big lad of 17 or 18. If he could have got a boy, he would probably have saved 3*s.* a week in wages, but then the "big lad" would in all likelihood have been out of work.

† Miss Mosely of Olveston informed me that the same independent spirit exists there. It is considered "quite a disgrace to be buried by the parish." The "mendicant spirit" stated to coexist with this independent feeling in Almondsbury may perhaps be generated by the large eleemosynary endowment.

38. LETTER from *Rev. Thomas Maurice*, Magistrate and Chairman of the Cirencester Board of Guardians. Gloucester. Rev. J. Fraser. a.

Harnhill, December 19, 1867.

DEAR MR. FRASER,

I HAVE this morning gone through the amount of my farm labour for the present year, and I have calculated the amount paid to one ordinary labourer, who has worked on my farm throughout the year. I find that he will have been paid by the end of the year for day work and piece-work, 32*l.* 5*s.* 0*d.* This being something over an average of 12*s.* a week confirms the estimate arrived at in your meeting at Siddington.

You will recollect that Mr. Lewis suggested a difficulty in the way of those who dispense with boys by driving plough with reins, in the want of such boys when at cart work. I met his difficulty by saying we put on women to drive, which certainly was not mending the matter. I refer to this point because it would not be an accurate description of the general mode of working on farms where horses are driven with reins. Ordinarily the ploughmen, stout lads of perhaps 18, would be put to drive their own horses when at cart work. Nevertheless, on my farm, in order that the lads may help to fill the carts, a woman is sometimes put to drive; but this need not be.

I am, yours very truly,
(Signed) T. MAURICE.

EVIDENCE OF LABOURING PEOPLE. Norfolk.

1. *Curson, Fanny*, of Great Witchingham, aged 17, works in a gang belonging to Reepham; the gang-master's name is Henry Cole. Has been working four years in the same gang. There are about 24 in the gang, girls and boys about equal in number; no girl or boy under 9. Boys and girls work together. There is work all the year through, except harvest. If not hindered by weather, earns 4*s.* a week. A great many in the gang can read very little; the biggest part can't write. She herself reads nicely [I tried her], but can't write. Has never found her work too hard. The master is civil; rarely gives an ill word, except the children are very wrongful. The young children are more unmanageable than the older. Has no complaint to make of gang work, but would like service better; only, being one of a large family, has no things to go out in. Has three brothers, aged 16, 13, 10. The two eldest can read a little and write their names, but could not write a letter. The youngest can neither read nor write, owing to irregular attendance at school.

[The Rev. W. Howard, Vicar of Great Witchingham, who procured this witness for me, informed me that Cole, the gang-master, did not bear a good character, and that statements like this young woman's cannot always be depended on. The girl's elder sister, who also works in the gang, the Miss Howards had tried to teach to be a servant, but without success. An aunt also had failed to make anything of this very girl. She was nice-mannered, and nice-spoken, and bore a good character. Her mother industrious; her father a drunkard.]

2. *Pratt, Jeremiah*, labourer, of Sprowston, aged 27, never had any schooling; can't read or write; wishes he could; has tried to learn himself; if there were a night school, would be glad to go to it. There are three men besides him working on Mr. Barnes' farm; none of them can read or write. Was better off with wages at 10*s.*, and flour cheap, than now when he has 12*s.* with flour dear.

Pratt's wife goes to work; wants the money; though doubts when there is a young family whether there is any real gain. If a woman can stay at home and cook a bit of warm victuals, there would be more stay in it for a man than in cold bread. Does not work in the winter. Has four young children. Would rather stay at home and send the children to school. Can

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read and write a letter; got her learning at Sprowston school.

[In the row of six cottages, in which Pratt lives (called Barrack Yard), there is not one child, out of 13, who attends school; but the children are mostly young, and the school is perhaps a mile away, and the elder girls are kept at home to look after the younger, while the mothers go to work.]

3. *Reynolds, Elizabeth*, of Sprowston, widow, aged 45, works on Mr. Hardy's farm; is now singling turnips; earns 8*d.* a day for eight hours' work; finds the work hard; stooping so long, on insufficient food. Wheat tying is the hardest work for women; the day would then be about 10 hours. Has one boy, aged 11; earns 1*s.* 6*d.* a week; is now keeping cows. He can read and write a little. Has no other source of income, so that she has only 5*s.* a week to support herself and boy. The parish makes her no allowance; her rent is 1*s.* 2*d.* a week.

[I thought this woman's lot hard enough, and remarked so to Pratt, in whose house she was sitting during her dinner-hour. Pratt's answer implied that even out of this miserable weekly pittance she managed to find money enough to drink more beer than did her good.]

4. *Kidd, Amelia* of Ringland, husband a small market gardener; has brought up nine children, all to hard work, and that never hurt no one. It's a pity that children should be taken from school to work on the land, they do themselves no good and hinder their learning; doesn't think young women should go out to work in the field; had best go to service. There's much bad language used in the fields. But poor people with large families must make their children earn something. Cottage rents are high in Ringland, 4*l.* to 5*l.*, nothing lower, unless it be some mucky place, not fit for a creature to live in.

5. *Gowan, Elizabeth* of Crostwick, lives in one of Col. Clithero's cottages [one of a row of six, with kitchen, back place, two chambers, and about 16 rods of garden; rent 4*l.*] Husband earns 12*s.* a week, with piece-work. Doesn't herself go out to work now; where there's a family a woman is better at home. Children are generally taken away from school too soon; but parents can't afford to keep them longer. Neither of her boys (22 and 20) have any learning; can neither read nor write. They went to school, but didn't take to books. The school wasn't so good then as now. There was an evening school when Mr. Bell was clergyman here; quite old men went. Thinks them good things; a boy's learning might come back to him again.

6. *Holmes, Susan*, lives in same row; husband a yardman (*i.e.* looks after stock); takes 12*s.* a week. Has four children, 8, 6, 4, 2 years of age, three are at school. Finds the times hard; has paid 18*s.* 8*d.* for flour (eight stone) the last three weeks. Her children are hearty. Is a little in debt, about 3*l.* With her family it wouldn't answer to go to work in the fields. Her rent is 4*l.* Doesn't think it out of the way. Can read and write; not so very grand but a little. Husband has no learning. That's why she keeps her children at school; knows a little learning is useful; may help them to a good place some day. Finds her children getting on nicely at school. Manages to get along, but has no money over at the end of the year. Husband is a steady man, aged 30; herself 28. Thinks there are a good many men of her husband's age, who can read and write, and a good many who can't. Boys are taken away from school too soon, she knows that; and the money they earn don't keep them.

7. *Tubby, Levi*, works for Mr. Cookes, of Haverland, earns 2*s.* 6*d.* a week; will be 12 come harvest; has been at work three years; never went to school but a year, his mother wouldn't let him; can't say why; there were seven of them at home; thought he could write his name [tried and produced a remarkable signature]; could read a little [tried him in a very easy passage and found he could not get on at all; said "would" spelt "how"].

[A remarkably frank and naturally intelligent boy, but who simply had never had the chance of an education.]

8. *Holmes, William*, of Cawston, works for Mr. Fuller, aged 14, earns 6*s.* 6*d.* a week. Went to Haverland school for a year, left school at six to go crow-keeping; was in a gang a little while, liked it; it was at Cawston. Can neither read nor write; hasn't been to Sunday school for four years; goes to church on Sunday, but can't understand much.

9. *Blogg, Walter*, of Brandistone, aged 15, went to a private school at Cawston for six months, has been at work six years, earns 6*s.* a week; has left Sunday school two years; hasn't time to go now; hasn't time to read at home.

[This boy was evidently intelligent. He could read fairly, and could write his name legibly, but without any freedom. It would be a great labour to him to write a letter, if he could do it at all.]

10. *Case, George*, of Brandistone, thinks he is 13; learnt to write at Reepham school; could write his name fairly, read moderately.

11. *Turner, Benjamin*, Scripture reader for parishes of Felthorpe, Heveningham, Haverland, Brandistone, and Booton, containing 1,500 people. Thinks the labouring class have not sufficient education. The majority of men between 16 and 25 can't read; two-thirds can't write in such a way as to be of any service to them. Perceives, decidedly, a growing desire among the people for education. But the great difficulty is early employment. Thinks the night school the only remedy.

12. *Lubback, Robert*, of Swannington, aged 22, married; works at Haverland; went northwards last year in search of better wages, but returned; 13 years since he left school; could write his name and read fairly. Wife can read and write a little too.

13. *Woodcock, William*, of Salhouse, going 13; works for Mr. Hayles, earns 3*s.* 6*d.*; is now bird-keeping. Went to Rackheath school; has left three years; doesn't go to Sunday school; can't read without spelling; sometimes reads a little book at home. Could write his name.

14. *Woodcock, George*, elder brother of former, going for 15; earns 6*s.*; can't read or write; never had much schooling.

[This boy worked on the same farm as his brother, and had come during his noon hour to amuse himself with his brother's gun. I was afterwards told they belonged to a very thriftless family.]

15. *Gubbald, Ebenezer*, of Wroxham; 12 next birthday; earns 2*s.* a week; works for Mr. Chamberlain; went to Wroxham school for several years; has left school more than three years; does not go to Sunday school; never reads at home; can't write; tried to read a very easy passage; had to spell "not" and "know;" could not make out "could;" has been at work three years for the same master; has been sheepkeeping for three weeks; before that, tended bullocks; before that, scared rooks—that was the first thing he did after leaving school; sometimes went to night school last winter, perhaps eight or nine nights; did not get home till late; is fond of a book when he can get one.

16. Educational and moral condition of five young women engaged in the laundry at Pulham Union-house:

A. Aged 40; could just read simple words; could not write; has two illegitimate children.

B. Aged 35; a field worker; could read very fairly and write her name; got her learning in the house; has one bastard child living, and had two others who are dead; said to be very violent tempered and troublesome; only to be managed by kindness.

C. Aged 24; went to school at Long Stratton; went into the fields for a few weeks; then to service; could write her name distinctly, and read nicely; has two illegitimate children.

D. Aged 22; went to school at Morningthorpe; could read and write very well; has never worked in

the fields: always been out in service; has two illegitimate children.

E. Cannot read or write; aged 17; belongs to Pulham; worked in the fields; parents refuse to keep her; and so obliged to come into the house.

[This last girl belongs to a family whose character may be estimated from the following note which was shown me in the medical officer's book. She is one of the daughters:—

"I visited Noah H——'s boy according to order, and found that he could be removed to the Union-house without danger. The family happened to be having their dinner at the time; a well-supplied table, new potatoes, ample meat pudding, and rhubarb pudding; and the following Monday, the woman as smartly dressed as the rest of the people, took an excursion ticket for Yarmouth. H. and his wife are great humbugs, and ought not to be encouraged."

(Signed) J. D'Eames.]

17. *Edge, Charles*, of Starston, aged 12; has left school nearly two years, but still goes to Sunday school; could write his name very legibly, and read fairly, and could explain such phrases as "pay his score," "staggered in his gait." He earns 2*s.* a week; keeps rooks off wheat, potatoes, and barley; goes to work at 6 a.m., and leaves off at 6 p.m.; goes home just to get his dinner; when at other work has from 12 to 2 for dinner. Went to night school to a neighbour for three months last winter. Three other boys went; paid 1*d.* a week for three nights, from 7.0 to 8.30 p.m.

18. *White Henry*, of Starston; a sober labourer; lives in a cottage belonging to the rector, with three bedrooms, and more than a quarter of an acre of garden; rent 6*l.*; has an allotment of 60 rods, for which he pays 18*s.* a year, rate and tithe free. Has had 12 children: there are now five at home, two boys and three girls; the two boys go out to work; the three girls go to school. He earns 12*s.* a week; his eldest boy, aged 16, earns 5*s.*; the second, 14, 4*s.* They consume five stone of flour (70 lbs.) a week, at 2*s.* 8*d.* a stone. Thinks a man worst off when he has four or five young children, none of them able to earn anything. Would rather be wrapped up with a lot of girls than a lot of boys; there is more trouble in getting them out into the world. Does not like his girls to go out into the fields; where there is a lot of boys together he always knows there is some badness in the talk. Is sure there is no profit in a boy's earning 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, it does not pay for the clothes he tears; but when a man's hung up for a sixpence the sight of the money coming in on a Friday night is pleasant. Was better off with his family when wages were lower and flour was cheaper.

19. *Pearce, Ann Maria*, of Earsham; wife of a shepherd; husband earns 10*s.* a week, and has his house rent free. It is a very middling house, with only one large bedroom. Has four children, aged eight, seven, four, and one and a quarter; the boy of seven goes to school at Denton; the girl of eight goes in winter, but is wanted at home in summer while her mother goes out to work. Husband is 30 years of age; can neither read nor write. She is 29; cannot write, and reads imperfectly. Uses 2½ stone of flour a week; it is now 2*s.* 10*d.* a stone.

20. *Butcher William*, aged 11; keeping sheep in Redenhall churchyard. Went to school at Denton for one year; never went anywhere else; left school about a year ago, when he had his last "frolic" (after last school-feast); could never write his name; has forgotten nearly all his reading. Tried him with an easy passage; he had to take the letters in "one," and then could not say what they spelt. Earns 2*s.* a week. Father has four boys and two girls. Father can read a little; mother can read; but neither can write. The other brother, who is 13, cannot read any better than he can, and cannot write. Thinks a sovereign is five shillings; (afterwards changed it to 10 shillings. Asked how many pence there are in a shilling, said "ten;" but questioned again, replied "twelve pennies more likely." Cannot go to Sunday school. Never went to a night school: did not get home soon enough.

21. By way of contrast, less than 100 yards before I got to Wm. Butcher, I met a lad coming home from Harleston school, to which the more promising boys are sent from Wortwell. He was 11 years of age, the only son of a thatcher. (I afterwards heard, what surprised me, that his father was a drinking man). He read remarkably well, with excellent emphasis and expression. He said he could write nearly as well as he could read, and work sums in simple proportion. He hoped his father would keep him to school two years longer. He had to walk upwards of two miles every day to school.

22. *Mann, Mr. G. B.*, relieving officer of Depwade union, and registrar, finds a great deficiency of education; but thinks he sees some improvement, and more young people between 14 and 20 can read and write than between 36 and 30.

23. *Smith*, ——, of Gissing, shoemaker, considers the village has been wonderfully neglected. There would not have been a bit of a charity school in the place, if it had not been for the Wesleyans. Never saw a parish in so bad a plight in his life.

24. *Websdale, Harriet*, of Gissing, aged 33; husband a labourer, aged 36; husband and wife can both read (I heard the woman read nicely), but neither can write. Has seven children, all at home, ages 11, 9, 8, 6, 5, 3, 2; the three eldest and the youngest are boys. The two eldest boys go to work; earn 2*s.* 6*d.* and 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. Husband earns 11*s.* a week, and hasn't earned that long. Does not know why the men get less wages at Gissing than in neighbouring parishes; thinks it must be because they are fools. Rent of her cottage, with a nice piece of garden, 4*l.* 10*s.* There is only one chamber and a low lean-to; her three biggest boys sleep in the lean-to. Whatever the children know, they got at the Wesleyan Sunday school; she and her husband both got their learning there. If there were a school in the parish, would try and send her children, but could not afford to pay much for them. The parish as long as she can recollect has been in the same state as now, neither better nor worse. In her neighbour's cottage is a family of six children, all at home (as wild a brood as I ever saw); the only learning any of them can get is at the Wesleyan Sunday school.

[The rector of this parish informed me that when he first came to Gissing, 50 years ago, he had a school kept in the church, twice on Sunday and once besides on an afternoon in the week. But the Bishop having required two Sunday services, the school had to be discontinued. He has not attempted to build a schoolroom since, because he did not think that education did much good, and besides was afraid of Government interference, and that his school when he had built it might perhaps be taken out of his hand.]

25. *Watling, Sarah*, of Tivetshall St. Margaret's, labourer's wife. Husband works for Mr. Spelman; has eight children alive; three at home, a girl of 11½, a girl of eight, and a boy of five. Her daughter of 11½ accompanies her to work in the field. Lives in a cottage with three chambers; thinks that, with a family, you must have that number of chambers to live respectably. Her five eldest children can read, and can write a letter home. They had a little schooling at a private school, and then improved themselves at home. As soon as they could earn, was glad to take them into the fields; could not have brought up her family without. Wouldn't like to take a girl into the fields before 10 or 11. Has one girl now in service, who worked with her for two or three years in the fields; couldn't have got her clothes to go out in unless she had. Wouldn't have one of her girls join a gang. If a girl works in the fields, she should work under her mother's eye. Thinks that a girl of 17 or 18 is best in service. Has had a sober husband, and so been able to keep out of debt; has never wanted for clothing or victuals in a decent way. Has two children at school, for whom she pays

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a.

4*d.* a week. Would like her children to be able to read a book, or a note from master, and to return one. Has been obliged to take her children away from school at seven or eight. If the law had said she must keep them at school longer she would have suffered by the means, but still must have took it as it was; we didn't ought to rebel against the law.

Her daughter, Martha Watling, 11½, could not read without spelling; could write her name fairly well. Went to school a little last winter, and a little the year before. Has never been at school right through a year. Hasn't had more than six months' teaching in writing.

26. *Hubbard, Sarah Ann,* of the same place, aged 46, labourer's wife; husband works for Mr. Spelman. Has six children living; three at home, a girl of 13, a boy of 11, and a girl of seven. Her eldest girl had but little schooling; went to service at 11, had assistance from her mistress, and has made herself a fair scholar; can write a letter home. The next girl, now 17, is also in service, and can read and write; went to school at Tivetshall, but not very regularly; obliged to be kept at home to look after younger children; she also has improved herself since she went to service. The next is a boy, upon his 16, in service at a farmhouse; never went but to Sunday school, but her husband taught him at home, and he can read and write pretty well. The next girl is 13, come Michaelmas; has been at school, off and on, for a twelvemonth; she can't read yet, but her father is doing what he can to improve her. Her husband is a fairly sober man, a pretty good scholar; wishes his children to have learning; thinks it much pleasanter, when the children are away from home, to be able to get a letter from them. This is the first summer that her girl of 13 has been out in the fields; has always been with her mother or with some other woman on the farm. Works herself in the fields about half the year; could not have brought up her family without going out to work. When paid by the week, earns 4*s.* At wheat tying, which however doesn't last above four or five days, can earn 3*s.* a day, her girl making the bonds. Lives in a cottage with a large chamber, a small one, and an attic, pays 4*l.* 10*s.* rent; has a nice-sized garden. Has managed to get along as well as the generality of poor folk; has kept out of debt. When her family was large she had to live according to her money; generally contrived to keep her children tidy; never can recollect the day but what she has had three meals. Gets a bit of fresh meat at chance times, but chiefly relies on bacon.

27. *Fox,* ——, of Tacolnestone. Was a weaver and bird fancier, is now an agricultural labourer; finds he does better. Had to weave 16 hours a day to earn as much as he earns now. Earns 12*s.* a week; has two boys, aged 10 and 12, who earn 4*s.* a week in a private gang. They begin work at eight, and go on till 12, then have an hour and a half for dinner, and work on till six.

Fox is 43; never had a day's schooling; there was no school in Tacolnestone when he was a boy. His wife is teaching him to read and write. He terribly wants to be a scholar. Has five children, all at home. Neither of the two boys, who are at work, could read without spelling, and though they attempted to do it, could not be said to succeed in writing their name.

28. *Cole, Mary,* of Ingoldisthorpe. Husband a shepherd, earns 12*s.* a week. Has brought up 14 children, eight girls and six boys. Never let a girl of hers go into the fields; has got them all out into service. Turned them out into the world pretty early, at 14 years of age or so. They began to go into little places, just for their victuals. They are now all in good places, and are the greatest comforts that children can be to parents. Her husband can read and write, but she can't. Not having any learning herself she knew the value of it, so she determined her girls at any rate should have as much as she could give them. There was no school at Ingoldisthorpe then, so she sent them to Snettisham. She had four of them, all girls, at school at one time, and paid 10*d.* a week for them. They stayed till they were about 13. She was often blamed by her neighbours for not sending her girls into the fields, but her heart was high, and she wouldn't. She said to herself, "We'll see how it'll "turn out." It's the ruination of the country, girls going into the fields; they will make neither good wives nor good mothers; and what do they know of needlework? They get bold and wild, and independent of their parents. Why, there's three of them joined together and took a house by themselves at Sedgeford, to be their own masters. All her girls can read and write. When she was bringing up this family her husband only earned 10*s.* a week, besides what he got at lambing time; her house rent was three guineas, and she had not a mite of garden. She had to work herself very hard, took in washing, but never went out into the fields. She is sure her family would have suffered for it if she had.

Her boys haven't had as much schooling as her girls, they had to go out to work so young. Three of them went out at six, and took 1*s.* a week. Her husband's master (this was a good many years ago) would have paid him off if he hadn't let them go to work. Her eldest son is now in Truman's brewery in London; he has improved himself, and can write pretty well now. He wrote home to his parents to beg that his younger brothers might be kept at school, as he had found the good of a bit of learning. She has another son living in Herefordshire, he can neither read nor write, because he has been at work ever since he was six years old.

The other two boys who are alive are poor scholars; they've been to night school for two or three winters, but are too tired with their day's work when they get there to learn much.

Her husband is a very sober man, brings home every threepence he earns, never drinks, and the quietest creature as ever was on the face of the earth.

A good school is the greatest blessing as can be in a parish. Only wanted her children to read and write and do plain needle work; didn't care about nonsensical learning. Never knew anything nonsensical taught at Ingoldisthorpe school.

Sees many of her neighbours take no thought about their children's learning; thinks it a great pity. Supposes they could afford to send their children to school as well as she could, if they had a mind. Never grumbled about what she had to pay. They were her happy days when she used to hear their innocent prattle when they used to come home from school. Remembers the time when flour was 3*s.* 6*d.* a stone, and she had nine children at home, and nothing coming in but her husband's wages, which were then "heined" (raised) to 12*s.* a week. They were hard times, surely, but by the blessing of God she struggled through, and never had a penny from the parish.

29. *Sadler, William,* of Ingoldisthorpe, — a boy casually met on the road. Doesn't know his age (seemed to be 15 or 16). Wasn't more than six months at school in his life. Doesn't know how old he was when he went to work. Has been at night school for two winters; could not read an easy passage with which I tried him. Wrote his name; always spells his Christian name "Willam."

30. *Townsend, John,* aged 51, parish clerk and post-office keeper at Ingoldistorpe, and secretary of the Ingoldisthorpe benefit society, a farm labourer. Thinks many men are so bad off because they don't earn sufficient money to maintain them and bring their family up. Finds that the farmers are taking to give daywork to their men instead of piece-work. Hasn't himself had a day of turnip hoeing by the piece this year. Would much prefer doing any sort of work by the piece to doing it by the day. When he's paid what he thinks his work is worth, works with a better heart, and doesn't care how hard the work is. A man may work well for nine or nine and a half hours a day. Sometimes the work is so put as to try a man very hard. For instance, at muck drawing a man begins his day at half-past six, and goes on without

being allowed any time for meals till half-past three, then his day's over; but it's too long a time for any man to go without food. Doesn't like to see women, who have got children at home, working in the fields; never allowed his wife to go. Considers any farmer can do without women on his farm, but he gets them cheaper than men. There's plenty of work that women do that they just take out of the hands of a man. Two women can hoe as much, or more than as much, wheat as any one man, and would be 8*d.* a day cheaper. Doesn't know, however, what widows could do to support themselves unless they went out to farm-work.

If boys are once taken from school to work there's not one in 10 who would ever care to come back to his books. Thinks it quite soon enough for a lad to go out to work at 13 or 14, if his parents can maintain him. Went to school himself till he was 13, and there's no sort of labouring work that he can't turn his hand to. Has had seven children, and they have all had a learning, and they all feel the value of it now. There are some parents who don't seem to see it. There's Tom Richardson's family, the girls all running about with their highlows all undone, and their things flying about this way and that; they'd be a deal better at school. Their mother was a field worker, and never looked after them.

The worst thing that ever come up was girls going to work in the fields; they get their heads so that you can't persuade them to go to service, and they get linked so with other wild girls and young chaps that they fall into bad ways. It's quite as bad, or even worse, for them to go into the fields at 13 or 14 as if they went at 16 or 18; the older ones learn the little ones all sorts of bad things. Would like to see the law prevent girls under 20 from going into the fields at all; it wouldn't hurt the farmer and it would be much better for the girls. A mother perhaps might look after a young girl, and some mothers do, but a girl of 16 gets her head so that she don't care for her mother, or give heed to what she says. Doesn't think that a working man wants more learning than to read, write, and cast an account. Doesn't see that there's anything taught in the school that there's no need for a labouring man to learn; nothing more than what children ought to know. When he was a young man his day's work never took such an effect upon him that he couldn't have gone to a night school. Thinks a night school a very handy thing for those boys that are gone out to work, if they could only make up their mind to learn.

Most of the drinking in the public-houses begins after 10 o'clock. A man goes into a public-house perhaps at 8 o'clock and sits there a couple of hours, and drinks his two or three pints, and then he feels as though he wanted ever so much more; there are some men who would drink a gallon of beer in a night. What draws most men to public-houses is the company; some, no doubt, are drove there by discomfort at home. [Another person told me "A man would rather pay "for his beer in the public-house than have it given "to him if he was bound to drink it at home."] Thinks that not half the young men get drunk now that used to do when he was young. They take more delight in other things; more pride in their dress; 19 out of 20 young men now-a-days have a good suit of black clothes, which have cost 50*s.* or 3*l.* They also put into clubs more, and are more saving. There is also less swearing and less blackguarding than there used to be.

The cottages are not half as good as they ought to be; three-fourths of those in Ingoldisthorpe are very undecent. Brought up his own family in one chamber. There should have been three chambers to make it decent. No labouring man ought to pay more than 3*l.* for his cottage, but he ought to be willing to pay extra for a good piece of garden-ground; wouldn't mind himself to pay 10*s.* a year for a quarter of an acre.

31. *Webb, Robert,* of Ingoldisthorpe, farm labourer, aged 55, married, has had nine children, six still alive (two boys and four girls). Only the youngest boy, who is now at home, aged 15, can read or write. There was no school in the parish when the others were young. Those that can't read and write find out the disadvantage of it; his girl, who is at service, often calls out because she has to get others to write her letters home.

A boy who has got some learning ought to be the better workman for it. Kept his youngest boy at school till he was 13, he now works on the farm; he is not a very bright boy, but is thoroughly steady; doesn't take delight in learning, and so, seldom reads or writes at home. A boy who leaves school with only a little learning is pretty sure to lose it; he ought ought to stay at school till 9 or 10, but a poor man with a large family is often put to it, and is obliged to send out his boys to earn something as soon as he can; but, if it could be managed, it would be much better if the boys stayed at school longer, and girls never worked in the fields at all. But it's no use of him speaking against boys working in the fields or girls either, unless it can be contrived somehow or other that they shall be fed. His wife once wanted one of his girls to go to work, where she would have earned 4*s.* a week; but he had seen the goings on, and so stood out against it. This made a rumpus betwixt him and his wife, and she beat him, and the girl was sent to work, and there she got ruined and had an illegitimate child.

As far as making a good labourer goes it's quite time enough for a boy to go to work at 12, but perhaps 10 is a better age; if they get too far on they think themselves men and won't be told.

Cottages generally havn't got sleeping-rooms enough; they ought to have three. A bit of garden is a great help to a poor man. If you do away with the gangs and working in the fields for children and girls you ought to put a piece of land to every poor family. An acre or two of land would employ the man's family, and they could be sent to school all the same.

Would like to see public-houses done away with. Had a drunken father himself and knows the evil of of it, and therefore has resolved that his children shall never have the same thing to say of him. In the publichouses the drinking begins before 10, but the rowing generally begins after 10. Would like to see the public-houses closed, at any rate, on the Sabbath day.

Thinks the whole question of the employment of boys and girls in the fields must be determined by the size of the family and the father's ability to maintain them.

32. *Godby,* ——, 37 years of age, ostler and fly-driver at the "Rose and Crown," Snettisham, married, and has six children; lives in a poor cottage with hardly any garden ground, and only one chamber, for which he pays 4*l.* rent. Thinks if any restriction were placed on the number of inmates allowed to live in a cottage it would raise rents. Has an allotment, but hasn't time to work it himself; paid 1*l.* last year for its cultivation; finds it very useful. His father was a shepherd, and had 11 children; when he was a lad helped his father to look after the sheep. He started from home when he was 15 to take a shepherd's place, and got one in Cambridgeshire, where he took 9*s.* a week, but gave up the life, as he thought he shouldn't like it. It is a hard life, with a good deal of exposure; 'tis hard in all weathers for a boy of 10 or 12. Can remember many a time when he was a little tot, just strong enough to carry a hurdle, falling down under the weight of one in the snow.

Knows that education is a valuable thing; kept his boy at school till he was 13; he is now a good scholar; helps him in the yard, and, though he has only been at it since the summer, can take a horse out or put him in, or dress him down nearly as well as he can himself. Thinks it would work hard on the poor man with a large family, if he were prohibited from sending his boys to work before 10. Doesn't know how the labouring man pays his way; his harvest money is pretty nearly all he has to look to, to pay his rent and shoemaker's bill. His own rent and shoemaker's bill

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last year came to 11*l.* He would be quite content if he had 15*s.* a week wages and a cottage rent free. Is sure that field work is often too hard and too long for young children. Knows how he feels the cold himself; is often half frozen and can't get himself warm again without taking something. How, then, must they little things feel, out all day in winter, crow-keeping. Though not an old man seems to fancy himself wearing out, and he can't do as much as he ought to do according to his age; attributes this to the early age at which he went to work in the fields.

33. *Tash, Mary Ann,* of Necton; husband a labourer; has brought up nine children, eight girls and a boy. Six of her girls are now in service, the other three are at home. Never went out into the fields herself, except one year to do a little harvesting. Never allowed her girls to go into the field, except one or two years when three of them went with their father, he to dibble and they to drop wheat. Has always got her children out by the time they were 13. The girl she has at home now is nearly 14; she's handy to her in the house, and she means to try and give her another year's schooling; she can't read or write herself, and this girl writes all her letters. All her girls can read and write. Had to work hard herself to keep her girls at school; took in needlework. Hadn't much difficulty in getting her girls out into places. Has often had it put to her, when she went about a place, "Has your girl ever worked in a gang?" Let the woman stop at home and manage for the family, it would be a deal better than her going out to work. If there were fewer women in the fields there'd be more work for the men. Expects there'll be a good many men wanting work this winter. It would be a good thing if children under 10 weren't suffered to work. She cares more about her children's learning than she might have done, because she knows the want of it. Her husband earns 12*s.*, and she makes perhaps, one week with another, 2*s.* 6*d.* or 3*s.* Is sure she's better off with this than if she went into the fields and earned 4*s.* and 5*s.* When she goes out for the day to a gentleman's house as a needlewoman, doesn't find much gain in it; finds a difference at home; the children aren't so sparing in bread and butter. Her husband has done his part as much as she has tried to do hers in keeping the girls out. There can't be better girls in the world than hers are to her. Has three bedrooms in her house and a good garden. The rent has been dropped from 5*l.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* No cottage, where there's a family, ought to have less than three chambers.

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34. *Green, Sarah,* of Necton; husband a labourer; has had 13 children, seven girls and six boys. Never sent a girl into the fields in her life; doesn't like it, there's so much swearing and bad talk; never went into the fields herself; used to go out charing. Thinks girls should go to service; never knew but what they could get places. Has a boy of 14 who left the day school at eight; has attended evening school since, and can read and write.

It would be better that boys should be kept at school till 10, if parents could maintain them; but there's much hardship, and some people are driven to send their children to work in the fields. Has a boy going going to be married who is only just 21. Young people marry very young. If their parents talk against, it they say the Queen marries her daughters very young, and so they are sure there can be no law against it.

35. *Green, Elizabeth,* of Necton.—Husband works in the Hall gardens; gets 13*s.* a week. Has had 12 children (five boys and seven girls); has buried one of her girls, one is married, one in service, and three go to school. Never brought up any of her girls to field work; doesn't like it, whether out of a gang or in it; would rather do with less money. Got on as well as she could without it, and she thinks as well as some of her neighbours with it. She didn't perhaps have so much money, but that isn't all. Has kept her boys at school till they were 10, 11, and 12. Her husband was as much set against the gang as herself. Once when the times were hard she thought she would send out a girl or two; but her husband said, "Bet, if you knew as much of the gang as I do, you'd "never send them," so she never did. Her boys can read and write well, all except one, and he would never learn; he can just read and write, but she don't reckon him a scholar. Is sure a boy ought not to leave school till 10, if he is ever to become a scholar. If they once go they must go (*i.e.*, they are not likely to come back again.) Thinks the evening school a very good thing. She has got along, but can hardly tell how she did; but she could always get trust, and hopes she always shall. Children that go to work wear out more shoes and clothes, and they eat a lot more food; and there isn't much gain in their earnings.

36. *Acres, Martin,* gangmaster, of Gooderstone; has a gang sometimes 20 strong or more; found him at work with a party of half a dozen, four girls and three boys. One of the boys was between 7 and 8. Knows that after January 1 he mustn't employ a child under 8. He shouldn't mind the prohibition, if they were sent to school and taught properly. If he had girls of his own, he would not let them go into the fields; but them three girls there (pointing to three sisters then working under him, all under 12), what are they to do? There are eight of them in family, and the father only earns 13*s.*, and there's no boy old enough to earn anything. It costs them 15*s.* a week for flour (at the rate of half a stone a head).

37. Notes of a walk from Halstead (Essex), out and home, through the villages of Little and Great Maplestead, illustrating some of the phenomena of English rustic life (Saturday, October 12, 1867).

A mile and a half from Halstead came to a handsome double cottage, brick-built, occupied by the coachman and horseman of Mr. Vaizey, a landowner and magistrate, farming a considerable quantity of his own land. The horseman's name was Frederick Mayes; he has 11*s.* a week and his house rent free. He had at first 30 rods of garden, but having no family and not requiring that quantity, he gave up some of it to oblige his landlord. If he had to pay rent, such a cottage would fetch perhaps 5*l.* That would be too much for a labouring man to pay; he could not well afford more than 4*l.* Thirty rods of garden is as much as a man can cultivate properly without hiring labour; and then a garden don't pay. A labouring man's first want is a good wife, his second, a good house, and his third a good school for his children. He married his wife and changed to his present home on the same day, and he has never seen reason to repent of either step. Doesn't think a boy is of any real use on the land till he is 12, provided the parents can maintain him. Why, it's only the other day our bailiff told one of our men named Howard, that his son, who must be at least 12, was more bother to him than all the other men on the farm, for he didn't know what to set him to. Would I walk in and see what his house was like, and talk to his "missus?" I did so, and found an excellent house full of furniture, and excellent preparations making for Sunday's dinner; two rooms and a large pantry below (the man brewing his own beer, and doing but "little "business" as he said, "with the public-house,") and three chambers up stairs; altogether as many signs of comfort as you would wish to find. On leaving, I said to the wife, "Well, Mrs. Mayes, if all labouring men "had as good a house and as comfortable a home as "you and your husband have, England would be a "different country from what it is." "Well," replied the woman, "every labouring man *ought* to have as "good a cottage, and then, maybe, he'd work with "better spirit and respect his master more;" a sentiment with which I fully agreed.

A mile further on, in Little Maplestead, I encountered a man turning manure, having previously seen two men and three biggish boys spreading another lot in the fields. "How do you manage to cultivate

"the land hereabouts and keep it clean without "women?" I asked. "Because there's men enough "to do the work," was the reply. "There's often four "or five out of work as it is; and I have heard tell of "the time, years ago, when 30 or 40 used to gather "together up at the cross roads there out of employ." The man's name was William Coe, a fine young fellow of 23, married, with two children. His wife, like most of the women hereabouts, takes in straw-plait at home. He pays 3*l.* 10*s.* for his house, with only two chambers, and a very small garden. Once, when he was in Kent, he saw women working in gangs in the fields, and doing pretty nigh as much as the men; but then there's no straw-plaiting down there. Another time, when he was near London he got higher wages, but paid 3*s.* a week for his house; so he was no better off than now. He can neither read nor write; supposes it was because he was never sent to school. Wishes he could, and he'd be better off than he is. There's no school in Little Maplestead now, but a "braiding "school," kept by an old man, where the children are taught to plait straw, and read two or three times a day, paying 1½*d.* or 2*d.* a week. Their parents find the straw, and set them their task, and the children will earn 3*d.* and 4*d.* to 1*s.* a week, which the parents take. The straw comes out of Buckinghamshire. There used to be a school at Little Maplestead, kept in a cottage, but the parson broke it up, he didn't know why. He didn't know that there was any night school for him to go to. I afterwards heard from other people that the parson broke up the school, because no children came, and one man said he had heard many parents declare they would not send their children there.* This last man, Sammons by name, also accounting for no field-work in the district being done by women, said there were "men about there, enow "and to spare, and the place would be all the better "if 100 of them were to emigrate."

At Great Maplestead, a widow woman living with two daughters (who act as assistant-overseers of the parish!), most respectable looking persons, farming about 30 acres of land, said the women would not go out to work in the fields; they did better with the straw-plait in their own homes, though the money was not much; they wore out less clothes and shoes, and ate less victuals. Boys go to work on the land at 6 or 7, scaring birds and tending cows and sheep. There was a man from Lincolnshire came and took a farm here, and said he'd have the women, but he tried and could not manage it; so he was obliged to fall into the fashion of the country. Wages here are 11*s.* a week, and at Sible Hedingham, only 10*s.*; and she wouldn't be surprised if at some places farther west, they were only 9*s.*

Half a mile further on I met a very intelligent, brown-eyed boy, driving home a couple of cows from the meadow. They belonged, I found, to my friend the widow. The boy was going 10, was employed all the year through at this work; could write a letter, but couldn't read. His father taught him to write. Wrote a letter last week to his sister at Brighton. "But could she read it?" "Well, she did send word "back that she had had some work to put it together." Earns 1*s.* 6*d.* a week; thinks he is worth more. There's a boy no bigger than he gets 6*d.* a day; knows he do, for he asked him. Does not go with the cows on Sundays, they are kept up then; but on week days looks after them in the meadows. "What, "aren't the fences good?" "Oh, yes, the fences are "good enough, but there's some gates which open "into the road which the cows would get through if I "weren't there to look after them." "But why not "shut the gates?" "O, there's no gates, only like "that,"—pointing to a pair of posts, *minus* a gate, leading into an opposite field. So here was as bright intelligent a lad as I would wish to see, kept from school and paid 1*s.* 6*d.* a week all the year round, to look after cows, because some was too careless or too poor to have a gate hung on its posts in the field. The lad told me there were only two others besides himself at home, so that I am afraid, in spite of his father having taught him to write, that his parents did not set much value on education.

Drawing nearer home I came to a large field of allotments, belonging to Mr. Hornor, a resident squire, let to the poor in lots of 20 rods apiece (some, however, occupying two lots), at 6*d.* a rod. "Why, that's rather a high rent, 4*l.* an acre," said I, to a man who was forking up his potatoes. "Well, we calls 'em cheap. There's some on t'other side of the town lets at 9*d.*; but I believe at Little Hedingham they pay 4*d.*" The man was a young fellow of 26, with a wife and two children, himself working in a tan-yard. He only gets 11*s.* a week, with no harvest, and so is not so well off as a field labourer. He is a good scholar, can read and write well; got his learning at the British school in Halstead, and at the night school in Parson's Lane. He pays 1*s.* 4*d.* a week for his house, which hasn't a rod of garden. His wife does straw plait, and often sits up till the middle of the night at it. Has to work 12 hours a day to earn 3*s.* a week. If he could happen on a good place of any sort, he'd be off to it to-morrow.

I found the people in this district civil, touching their hats or dropping a curtsey, as I met them; well-mannered, ready at apprehending a question and answering it to the point, with no signs of deep or oppressive poverty. The cottages are built either of brick, or of lath and plaister walls, with stout timber framework. The people didn't know which was best, and both sorts looked fairly comfortable. The rent seemed to vary from 3*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.*

In Great Maplestead are a beautifully restored church, a newly erected school and parsonage, and a home for fallen women, under the management of a sisterhood, on the point of completion. I fancied I could trace the difference produced by a closed or open school in the different appearance and manners of the children whom I saw or accosted in the two Maplesteads. Altogether such a walk would give any one who has eyes to see, a lively insight into the actual phenomena of English rural life. In the case of an elderly man at Little Maplestead, just come home from his work, I saw something of its coarseness also; but I forbear repeating more than one of his remarks, that, "Certainly the beerhouse had the trick of emptying the money out of a poor man's pocket." He was not an edifying specimen of the British labourer, a mere coarse-minded, coarse-tongued boor, of whom the neighbours said "they never knew such a character;" but they listened to him as though he were the acknowledged wit or humourist of the village; seemed to enjoy rather than be disgusted by his grossness; and no doubt got, in a measure, corrupted by it.

38. *Wednesday October* 16.—Returning from my meeting at Great Yeldham, on my way to the station, met seven plaiting girls. Four could not read; three thought they could, but on being tried with a very simple passage, could not get on without spelling. Their ages ranged from 7 to 15. One of them told me she could plait three yards of braid in an hour, and get 4*d.* for 20 yards. A finer sort is paid 11*d.* for 20 yards,

* Throughout this neighbourhood, from sordid, selfish motives, as enabling them to turn their children's labour to account at the earliest moment, the straw-plaiting, or as it is otherwise called, the "braiding," school, is preferred by the parents to the public school. The clergyman of Little Maplestead subsequently explained to me the difficulties about a school in his parish. There is a difficulty about a site; 300 acres of land immediately round the church, the most eligible spot for such a purpose, belong to a religious community in London, called "Sabbatarians," and are not available. A large landowner will only offer 5*l.* a year towards keeping a school in a cottage. The living is only 75*l.* a year. There has been no resident clergyman until the present, for 50 years, and consequently the people have had very little done for them spiritually or educationally. The church is interesting as one of the four "round" churches in England.

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and the girl said she could do three yards in an hour.* They were all coming from a plaiting school, in which there were 40 children. It is kept in a room in a cottage, which gets very hot. The school hours are from nine to five, and they go home to dinner. They read twice in the course of the day. The girls were walking home from school in a party, gossiping and plaiting as they went.

39. *Thomas Riches*, a man whom I met in my walk this same evening, returning from his work. Lives in Little Maplestead, works for Mr. Vaizey; earns 11*s.* a week; his boy there is 16; he can't read but very little, and can't write at all; was took away from school so early. Is no scholar himself. A little learning certainly is a very useful thing; a man can't do much for himself without it.† A boy is of no use on the land until he is 10. Couldn't understand what farmers could mean by telling me to-day that if a boy is ever to grow to make a man, he must get on the land by 6 or 7.‡ Why it must hurt 'em, and it do. He'd like to see boys kept at school till they were 12 or 14 if parents could maintain them, but it comes terribly hard on a family where there's 4 or 5 young children, and only 11*s.* a week coming in. Has known boys go out to work at 2*d.* a day, and is sure there is no real gain to the family out of such earnings after all. There's no night school in this parish, but his boy there tries to improve himself by reading o' nights at home.

40. *Albert Merritt*, of Almondsbury (Thornbury Union), aged 10 the 21st of last June. Has been working for farmer Carter; earned 3*s.* a week; drove plough; liked school better; found himself tired with his day's work; got so much walking. Would leave home at 5 or 5.30 a.m.; go to farm, help to clean out his stable and get the horses ready. Then got his breakfast, which he had brought with him, bread and cheese, and half a pint of cider, allowed by his master. Went with with the horses on the land, at work till noon; then got a quarter of an hour for dinner, bread and cheese and cider. Kept on ploughing till three, then took the horses home, that would perhaps occupy half an hour. When they got home to farm, the ploughman went in to get his dinner in the house while he looked after the horses, fed them; helped to cut the chaff. Did not get home till 7 o'clock; had his supper, potatoes and bacon, with nothing to drink. Goes to bed at 8 o'clock.

41. *Wednesday, Jan.* 15.—Returning from my meeting at Berkeley, saw two men, at the entrance of the village of Stoue, spreading stones on the road; one was 25, the other 38 years of age. Were earning 1*s.* 6*d.* a day. Neither could read or write. The elder was one of a large family, and schooling cost 3*d.* or 4*d.* a week when he was young. The farm-work hereabouts is not constant; there is always a lot of men out of work in winter in Berkeley and round here. If fewer boys were employed, there would be more work for men. Many boys are hired at the "mop" to do work which a man would otherwise do. But if a man has a large family, of course he must send out the boys to earn something. Know many married men out of work now; they are living, certainly, and yet not living, *breathing* like.

Just before I met these men, I came across a woman spreading cow droppings in a field. She was paid at the rate of 2*d.* an acre, and it would be hard work, she said, to earn 8*d.* a day. When the droppings are thick, the payment would be raised to 2½*d.*

Soon after parting with the men, I met two boys, one of 14, the other of 8, the eldest of whom gave this account of himself: His name was Joseph Brown of Swanley. He went to Tortworth school, under Mr. Smith. Did not know for how long. Left four years ago. Could not read when he did leave. Has not been to school since. Cannot read or write. Has been earning 7*s.* a week as a bricklayer's labourer. Is out of work now. There are eight of them at home; only father's earnings coming in. He is keeper to Lord Fitzhardinge. Father can write a little and read, and mother can do both pretty well. Of the six children, there is only one, Edith, who goes to Berkeley school and is going 12, that can read and write.

42. *William Stephens*, of Bromsberrow (Union of Newent), aged 14 last birthday.—Has left school three and a half years. Went to Mr. Ricardo's school at the Berrow. Was in first class when he left. Was five years at school. Never went out to any job of work, when at school; was kept constant. Father is a labourer; earns 9*s.* a week. There is father and mother, four boys and a girl at home; three (all boys) go to work, and one to school. Has never been to night school—his house is very out of the way, and he has no time. Has kept his learning up at nights. Father cannot read, but mother can. All his brothers that go to work can read; can read and write himself.* Earns 3*s.* a week; drives plough. Leaves home at 5 o'clock. Sometimes breakfasts first, sometimes takes his breakfast with him—bread and butter, and bread and cheese. Has first to go to the Hawthorns to get the day's allowance of cider (five quarts) for the carter and himself. Of this, he would have three pints. From the Hawthorns he goes to the stable, which makes his walk two miles altogether. Has to be at the stable at half-past 6 o'clock. Sometimes has to wait a quarter of an hour or more for the cider. Helps the carter to clean the stables, and feed and harness the horses. Starts from the stable at 7; begins to plough about half-past 7. Keeps on till 11, and then has a bait—bread and cheese which he has brought with him, and a draught of cider. The horses get nothing, except perhaps some water in hot weather. The bait lasts half hour, goes on ploughing with perhaps a rest of quarter of an hour, for a drop of drink, till 4 o'clock. Then goes home with the horses, perhaps riding one of them, unless his feet are cold, when he prefers walking. Ploughs about three-quarters of an acre of land in the day. When arrived at stable, has his dinner, bread and cheese or bacon, which he has brought with him. This takes half an hour. Dinner finished, goes to the stable, and helps the carter to unharness and dress his horses; makes their beds. He and his carter have to look after six horses; the chaff cut by a special man. Has done work by 7 o'clock, and gets there about half-past 7. Has his supper, garden stuff, and bread and meat. Gets meat (bacon) twice most days. Goes to bed about half-past 8, and sleeps pretty firm. Father wakes him in the morning. They have two bed-chambers to their cottage; he and two brothers sleep in one, and father and mother and

* I can't reconcile these figures with the man's statement at Halstead (No. 37, supra), that his wife had to work 12 hours a day to earn 3*s.* a week. Either these girls exaggerated their earnings or their rate of work, which I think very likely, or the two statements refer to two different conditions of the trade, which is very fluctuating.

I found but one opinion prevalent as to the social results of straw plaiting in the case of young girls; that it is even more demoralizing, and helps to produce a more unsatisfactory character in every way than work in the fields. It is fair to add that this is the opinion of persons belonging to the classes *above* the straw plaiters, but it is their unanimous opinion.

† A labourer in another part of Essex, bailiff to the Rev. C. Burney of Wickham Bishop's, amused me by his quaint way of putting the same idea, "A pen," he said, "earns an easy loaf." I thought of my Aristotle, and remembered the observation, "*οἱ ἀγροῖκοι μάλιστα γνωμοτύποι εἰσὶ, καὶ ῥᾳδίως ἀποφαίνονται.*" *Rhet.* ii., 21. 9.

‡ I had told him that this opinion had been expressed by more than one farmer at my meeting held in the morning at Great Yeldham. It was said that boys of even younger years are very useful to their fathers, to lay the turves after them, in surface draining.

* The boy could write very well, and I tried his reading powers on a somewhat difficult and perfectly strange passage, which he made out very intelligently. He could also read the directions on a packet of physic which he was taking from the parsonage to his mother, and could even make out the bad writing of my manuscript pencil notes. The boy's satisfactory condition, as regards education, illustrated the results that we might hope to produce, if only uninterrupted attendance could be secured for five years in an efficient school.

Samuel (7) and Sarah (5) sleep in the other. Mother never goes out to work on the land, except in harvest; does a bit of gloving at home sometimes. Dislikes road-work most; it makes him so tired. Sometimes goes with a team to Gloucester (12 miles), and Tewkesbury (10). No journey money allowed either to the carter or himself. Often starts at 5, and does not return till 6. When he first went to work as plough-boy, three years ago, used to feel much more tired with his day's work than he does now.*

43. *Mary Peart*, of Kilcote, a hamlet in the parish of Newent; husband aged 47; works for Mr. Hooper; earns 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week. Has five children at home, aged respectively 12, 10, 7, 4½, and 1¼ years; none of them earn anything, but she is trying to get the eldest (a girl) out to service. Requires 3½ pecks of flour a week for the consumption of the family; flour is now selling at 11*s.* 6*d.* a bushel. Has no vegetables, not so much as a potato left. Has had nothing but "stark-naked bread" this month past; no butter, cheese, or bacon. Has had no cheese since harvest. Sometimes even the bread runs very short; has been two or three days without knowing where to turn for a bit. The rent of her cottage, which contains two rooms on the ground floor, and two small bedchambers, with a garden about 30 perches, is 5*l.*, besides rates, which come to about 15*s.* more. It is a good comfortable house; but the rent is too high for a labouring man to pay. Her husband is a steady man, and brings his money home.

[The Rev. Morris Burland, who was present when I took this evidence, informed me that in his district, containing about 400 houses, there must be at least 50 families as badly off as this. I certainly hardly ever saw a district with more marks of poverty about it; many of the cottages ruinous, and unfit for human habitation; a low wage-rate, and a correspondingly low social and intellectual condition of the people; a great number of apparently truant children; a great aversion on the part of some of the worst-housed old people to take refuge in the workhouse, though they would be infinitely more comfortable there. The most wretched dens that I saw inhabited were such as had been erected by squatters on the waste; but there were others (such as those occupied by Ellen Carpenter and Ann Bodenham), not many degrees better in condition, for which rent, in the case of Ellen Carpenter's, as high as 3*l.* 11*s.*, is paid. (January 28, 1868.)]

44. By way of contrast to the picture just painted, I will record a case, inadvertently omitted in its proper place, noted in Norfolk:

Mrs. Wicks, wife of James Wicks, yardman to Mr. Rollison, of Ickburgh (Swaffham Union). Occupies an excellent cottage of Lord Ashburton's, with three rooms below and three above, full of furniture—a sofa, chairs, tables, even ornaments such as china, prints, &c.; and all the very picture of order and cleanliness. Rent, 1*s.* a week. She has brought up six children, and there are six in family now—three boys, a girl, her husband, and herself. Her husband earns 12*s.* a week; two sons, aged 22 and 17, pay her 5*s.* a week out of their earnings for maintenance; and the third boy, who is 14, gets 4*s.* 6*d.* a week. Altogether, has 26*s.* 6*d.* a week coming in. Can get on comfortably, and is thankful. Never worked in the fields herself; thought herself more in her place at home. Would not let her girls go into the fields; thinks it is a bad place for girls; they hear coarse talk, and get unfitted for service. Thinks there would be no hardship if the law prohibited young girls under 16 from going to work in the fields. Boys ought to be kept to school till 10; knows there is no gain in their earning 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* a week; it is a loss; their shoes cost more, and so do their victuals. Her husband is a steady man, and brings his money home; and she was herself described to me by Capt. Caldwell, Lord Ashburton's agent, who took me to see the cottage, and was present while I collected the above evidence, as a model wife. (Sept. 26, 1867.)

NOTES ON SCHOOLS VISITED, AND OPINIONS OF SCHOOL MANAGERS AND TEACHERS.

1. *Drayton School, Norfolk* (*St. Faith's Union*).—Under a mistress, an ex-pupil teacher; 80 children on the books, present 52 (pop. 451). Found a good deal of intelligence among them. The rector (Rev. Hinds Howell) teaches them one hour and a half daily. His children stood highest on the list in the diocesan prize-scheme examination. The school is not under Government. Mr. Howell's two schools at Hellesdon and Drayton cost in the aggregate about 100*l.* a year, 50*l.* of which comes out of his own pocket. In Drayton reside many workers at the mill at Taverham, where a large part of the paper used by the London "Times" is made. The habits and language of the young women working there are said to be infinitely coarser than those of the girls employed in agriculture. The clergyman here takes great interest in his school and his children, and I fancied I could trace the results of this in the generally prepossessing appearance of the children that I saw. I found in the school an example of the physical ill results that sometimes are produced by early employment. Asking a question of a little boy, I could not hear his answer; upon enquiring, I was informed that this boy had been sent to "keep "birds" when he was only six years old, and lost his voice by shouting at them. He is now nine years of age, and it is considered questionable if he will ever recover it.

2. *Sprowston School, Norfolk* (*St. Faith's Union*).—Population 1,500, not more than 200 of whom are employed in agriculture. Parish extensive, about 3½ miles long by 3½ miles wide. The school lies at one end, just outside the outskirts of Norwich. It is attended by about 100 children, and is under the charge of three mistresses, the eldest only 23 years of age, at a salary of 20*l.*; the second, about the same age, at 16*l.*; the youngest, merely a monitor, at 4*l.* The whole annual cost of the school is about 45*l.*, towards which about 20*l.* are produced by the children's pence. Col. Clitheroe subscribes 10*l.*, Mrs. Arkwright 5*l.*, the Dean and Chapter of Norwich 3*l.*, the incumbent 4*l.*; there are, besides, about half a dozen subscribers of a sovereign each. One non-resident proprietor of 1,000 acres, and another of 450, subscribe nothing. This school is manifestly inadequate, both in respect of the number of children attending, the teaching power, and the voluntary support it receives, to the exigencies of this large and important parish.

3. *Catton School, near Norwich* (population 646). There are 66 names on the register and an average attendance of 40. The schoolroom is about 30 ft. by 14. The school fee is 1*d.* a week. The mistress's salary is 20*l.* and the school pence, which amount to 8*l.* She was pupil teacher in one of the Norwich schools, but has not been trained. She has been keeping school nine years and a half, and her experience is that the boys do not remain long enough at school to be sufficiently educated. Of the 24 boys present, only three were sons of agricultural labourers, only four were over 11, three were between 10 and 11, four were between 9 and 10. Their reading was indifferent, but they seemed fairly intelligent. There are two private elementary schools in the parish, one attended

* The evidence of Wm. Stephens should be compared with that of Albert Merritt (No. 40) taken in quite a different part of the country. In both cases the questions were asked and the answers given in the presence of the clergymen of the respective parishes, who had no doubt that the boys spoke the simple truth. That they did so is almost proved by the independent agreement of their stories. And yet at the meeting of the Central Chamber of Agriculture, the case of Wm. Stephens which I mentioned to show that an excessive number of hours' work is not unfrequently exacted, was treated by more than one speaker as an entirely exceptional, if not a highly exaggerated one; I believe it to be quite a common case.

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by about five, the other by about 10 scholars, so that the whole school enrolment in the parish is at the rate of about one in eight of the population, the average attendance probably not more than one in 12 or 13. There were 32 children, 24 boys and eight girls, present on the afternoon of my visit (July 16, 1867). The condition of the school was not commensurate with the apparent wealth and populousness of the parish.

4. *Ringland School* (*St. Faith's Union, Norfolk*), population 360. An endowed school for 28 children, 14 boys and 14 girls. The endowment arises from land in the neighbouring parish of Weston. The present teachers, man and wife both elderly and looking respectable, but I should doubt if very competent, have been in charge eight years and a half. They are allowed to take paying scholars in addition to the 28 foundationers, who get their education free. At this time there are two such scholars. There were present, at my visit, 11 boys and five girls; all but the two paying scholars are children of labouring people. The instruction does not go beyond reading, writing, and ciphering. It is a Church school, and the children are required to attend church on Sunday. It is a rare thing to keep a boy till he is 11. Looking at the number of children at school in proportion to the population, and to the kind and quality of the instruction, the means of education must be pronounced deficient in this parish, which labours further under the disadvantage of having neither a resident landowner nor a resident clergyman. The value of the benefice is only 60*l.* The condition of the beautiful church is one among other tokens of the state into which a parish, subject to these unfavourable influences, is liable to fall. I heard a strange tale of what had become of the richly-carved poppyheads of the old open seats.

5. *Weston School* (*St. Faith's Union Norfolk*). population 470. Entirely supported and managed by Col. and Mrs. Custance, the resident landowners, who take great interest in it. It is taught by a mistress, and is not in connexion with Government. There are 80 names on the books and an average attendance of 60. Boys stay till 11 or 12, girls till 12 or 13. With a few exceptions the schoolmistress finds the parents anxious to have their children educated. At my meeting in this parish it was stated by the farmers that very few children are employed by them under 12. The school seemed in good order, and the mistress active and capable. The writing in copybooks was very fair, and much attention is paid to needlework. The school fee is 2*d.* for one child, 3*d.* for two, 4*d.* for three, 5*d.* for four, per week. All outparishioners, of whom there are a considerable number, the school drawing its supplies from the adjoining parishes of Morton, Attlebridge, and Ringland, pay 2*d.* This school is happy in attracting to itself the interest of the squire, but I believe it does not reap much advantage from the residence of the clergyman, who is both infirm and aged.

6. *Felthorpe School* (*St. Faith's Union, Norfolk*). —Entirely maintained by Edward Fellowes, Esq., M.P., the principal landowner, though not resident in the parish. Population, 514. On the books 90, average attendance 70. Under a mistress trained at Norwich, but not receiving annual aid from Government. Excellent room. 40 ft. by 18 ft. Mistress energetic and competent. Some children are taken away to work at as early an age as seven, few boys stay till 10. They are removed before their learning can be fixed, though possibly the reading may be kept up at home. There has been an evening school, kept by a man in the parish on his own account; apparently it did not answer, as the man has given it up.

7. *Taverham School* (*St. Faith's Union, Norfolk*). —Population, 212. On the books 45, in average attendance 35. The mistress, an ex-pupil teacher, said to be excellent, and everything about the school seemed in the best order. It is not under Government, but it is carefully and effectively superintended by the clergyman. Thoroughly adequate to the wants of the parish. The rector, Mr. Burton, who is a zealous educationist, thus communicates to me his views by letter upon several points embraced in this inquiry:—

"In this parish there are no children under 10 or 11 years old employed on the land—no girls—and seldom any females. I am glad of it, for though I do not see how female labour can be restricted by law, I am fully convinced of its demoralizing effects, and of the physical injuries it inflicts upon those who are subjected to it. It would be desirable to restrict the age, and also the distance to work, both of boys and girls. But this can only be done by pains and penalties—either on the parent or employer, or both. In either case, who is to enforce the law? The parson!! No one else will, and *he* ought not. The same remark applies to compulsory education, to which I am altogether opposed. It can only be enforced by the same means, and no surer mode of sowing dissension in a family, or in a parish, can be devised than that of dragging a father before a magistrate, at the instance of the clergyman, and fining him for neglecting the education of his child, or in default sending him to prison for seven or 10 days! I would not be a party to such a course. I would leave the parent to fulfil his own responsibilities; he has been placed by the Almighty in that position, and the consequence of his neglect must fall upon himself. I do not believe that there is any insuperable reluctance on the part of the labouring classes to educate their children. I believe that, as a rule, they desire it. I am sure that the *one* way to make education more difficult than it now is, is to make it compulsory. The cottages in this parish are fairly good, some of them particularly so. They would be sufficient for the agricultural population if the whole were so occupied. But the mill people occupy nearly half, and of the rest the best are tenanted by the gamekeepers and gardeners employed at the Hall. Mr. Micklethwait intends to build some for the best labourers on his farm, and I have no doubt that gradually he will rebuild the village. Cottage property is unremunerative, unless considered socially and morally; *it then pays better than any other investment.* As I stated at our meeting, there is no real grievance in the fact that the agricultural labour of the parish is carried on by non-residents. The lack of labour of which Mr. Munford complained, but which I do not admit, is caused by the competition of the mill. It *may* make the labourer more independent, which I for one do not regret, but it is not disadvantageous to the community generally. The respective duties of master and servant will be better fulfilled when one or other has it not all his own way." August 20, 1867.

8. *Horsford School* (*Norfolk, St. Faith's Union*). —Population, 665; on register, 90; average attendance, 61, for last year. An excellent new room, 55 ft. by 22 ft., and proportionably lofty. Cost 800*l.*, not 100*l.* of which was subscribed in the parish. The incumbent gave 640*l.* and the ground. It is under a certificated mistress, and receives annual aid. The total annual cost is 66*l.*, the voluntary subscriptions are 35*l.*; two farmers subscribe 1*l.* 10*s.* The mistress cannot ordinarily get a boy into the first class by the time that he is 9; but she can do so with the girls, owing to their more regular attendance. Boys are sometimes, though not often, taken away to "keep" birds at 7. The vicar is not satisfied with the educational condition of the young people growing up in his parish.

9. *Crostwick School* (*Norfolk, St. Faith's Union*). —Population 144. Kept in a tidy room, on a common, near the church. Under an untrained mistress, who has been here 1½ years. Her salary is 17*l.* 8*s.* a year, without a house. There are 33 names on the register, 17 boys and 16 girls. The school is supported by two landowners and the clergyman; no farmer subscribes. George Thickstone, a boy aged 8, was said to "read well," but trying him, I found he could not read an easy passage, which he had never seen, without spelling such words as "earnest," "cottage," "tasted." If taken away from school now such reading-power would be all lost in a year. A little girl, nearly 10, could

write very nicely. The children are taught a little geography, and in arithmetic advance as high as compound sums in weights and measures. Many of the boys go to work before they have learnt anything. A boy, Edward Holmes, was mentioned who had just gone to work, and who did not know his letters. The mistress notices that the children have been very irregular during the last three weeks; accounts for it by the fact that there has been no clergyman in residence to look them up. The school would be sufficient for the parish if only regular attendance could be secured. As it is the fruit is nipped in the bud. There were present to-day (July 22, 1867) 22, and this has been about the average of the last fortnight. All the big children were girls. There is no night school in the parish.

10. *Frettenham School* (*Norfolk, St. Faith's Union*).—Entirely maintained by the rector, and overlooked by him and his family. The mistress is sister of one of the farmers. A boy can rarely be kept at school after 9; hence the education they have received soon evaporates. They come back sadly ignorant, to be prepared for confirmation. There is only one boy in the school at present over 9; he will be 10 in November; he is the son of unusually steady parents.

11. *Haverland School* (*Norfolk, St. Faith's Union*).—Entirely supported by Edward Fellowes, Esq., M.P., who has a residence in the parish. Population 131. There are 60 names on the register, of whom about 45 belong to the parish. The rest come from Brandistone and Cawston. There were present this morning (July 23) 42, of whom 23 were boys. Only three girls and three boys present were over 10. The mistress finds she cannot keep the boys long enough to fix their learning in them. It all depends upon what the parents are. Three girls present had been out to work; one, just turned 12, at crow-keeping; another, over 10, was absent six weeks on a similar job; the third, aged 12, was employed for five or six weeks, pulling up "red weed" (poppies).

12. *At Brandistone* (*Norfolk, St. Faith's Union*), population 181, there is a good school house which has been closed for upwards of 10 years upon some point at issue between the clergyman (whom I did not see) and his people, as to how to deal with the dissent that exists in the parish. Half-a-dozen women whom I accosted on the green expressed a wish that there was a school. "It's not only keeping them out of harm, "but there's the education," said one of them, "which no one can take away." There was a party of children rolling about on the grass before me in every stage of dirt and disorder. The ten or a dozen children who attend school at all go to Haverland; but they have to travel a distance of two miles.

13. *Wortwell School* (*Norfolk, Depwade Union*), under a certificated mistress, and receiving Government aid. The mistress is assisted by three paid monitors. There are 90 names on the register, the average attendance of last quarter was 59. Only one boy on the books above 10; two boys between 9 and 10; two between 8 and 9. There are eight girls on the register over 10. The mistress fears that a boy leaving school below 10 would rapidly lose the greater part of what he had learnt. Of the children present when I visited the school, eight came from homes with three bed chambers; 18 from cottages with two chambers, and two from cottages with only one chamber. The cottages at Wortwell struck me, as I drove through the street, as some of the worst I had seen in any Norfolk village.

14. *Scole School* (*Norfolk, Depwade Union*), population 677. The master untrained, but certificated. School under Government; on the register 78; in average attendance 60. Only two boys over 10; one between 9 and 10; five between 8 and 9; that is only eight boys over 8, nine girls over 11. The whole income of the school, including Government grant, is about 65*l.* There are many dissenters in Scole, but the school is Church of England in its denomination; attendance at school and church on Sunday is not made compulsory. The voluntary subscriptions amount to 32*l.* There was a night school in the parish last winter attended by 40 scholars. In the neighbouring parish of Thelveton there is no school.

There was a very general and liberal desire manifested by the gentlemen who met me at Scole, most of whom were tenant farmers, to see the education of the agricultural labourer improved. After some remarks to that effect, one of them (Mr. Lines) said, almost pensively, "Not that the educated man can dig a ditch any the better." "Nor any the worse," said another (Mr. Pettett). "Well, that's true," was the frank admission in reply. (July 31, 1867.)

15. *Pulham, St. Mary Magdalene*, population 1,279 (*Norfolk, Depwade Union*).—The cost of the school is about 70*l.* a year. The master's salary is 55*l.* There is a charity in the parish, arising from land, and producing an income of about 100*l.* a year, of which 30*l.* are applied to the church, and of the remainder, half to the relief of the poor, and half to the support of the school. There are no large landowners in the parish, the largest holding is 200 acres. There are no resident gentry, which the rector feels to be a great drawback, and there has only been a resident clergyman for the last eight years. Very few of the adult population can read, and still fewer can write. There is a very large number of children growing up without education; their parents have no sense of its value.

16. *Long Stratton School* (*Norfolk, Depwade Union*), population 743. A school, taught by a mistress, not under Government, with 66 names on the register, and an average attendance of 50. The mistress says that the children cannot read fluently. The writing in copy books, which I saw, was very moderate. Most of the boys in the first class can do sums in compound addition.

17. *Fundenhall School* (*Norfolk, Depwade Union*), population 334. Held in a good room, and taught by a mistress. On the register are the names of 30 girls and 14 boys, with an ordinary attendance of from 18 to 24. There is only one boy, but there are six girls, over 10. The mistress has been 12 years in charge of this school. There is no resident clergyman, but a large occupier of land in the parish takes a warm interest in the school, and under his fostering care it prospers.

18. At the meeting held at *Snettisham* (*Norfolk, Docking Union*), Mr. Howlett, an occupier of land at Sedgeford, mentioned that when he farmed at Bircham Tofts, he had some boys working for him, who when they first came to him could read decently, but never keeping it up, lost the faculty, and at last could not even distinguish the initials on his sacks, but only knew his from one of his neighbour's because one set of letters were painted red and the other black.

19. *Rev. Herbert Jones*, rector of Sculthorpe (Norfolk), states that the beerhouses in his parish have effectually neutralized all the efforts that have been made to improve, through the school, the condition of the people. The heart of the previous rector was broken by the disappointment.

The Rev. W. H. Parker, of Saham Toney, who has made large sacrifices of money and labour in that parish in the same cause, and confesses himself disappointed at the results, attributes his ill success to the influence of the gang system.

It would not be an easy thing to decide which is the more noxious influence of the two. There is this difference, that the contamination of the gang system, as hitherto conducted, began earlier.

20. *The Rev. Mr. Tearle*, curate of Great Cressingham and Bodney, informed me that the schoolmistress at Bodney told him that she has applications for at least 10 girls every year to go out into domestic service on the condition that they never have been out to field work. There are now in the school several girls of 13 or 14, and one of 16, waiting for a particular place. The earnings of the parents are not above the level of the neighbourhood. The girls have all been brought up in good cottages. A Cressingham girl, on the contrary, applying for a situation, is viewed with sus-

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picion, because the probability is that she has worked in a gang.

21. *Mr. Howe*, certificated master of Hoxne School (Suffolk), as things are, would rather keep boys regularly at school till 10, than let them go to work at 8, and have them back at catch times till 13. If they all came back together, the case might be different. In this school, with 90 names on the register, and an average attendance of 70, there are only seven boys above 10 years of age and of these seven only two are sons of agricultural labourers.

Sussex.

22. In Lower Beeding school (Sussex), out of 129 children on the books, with an average attendance of 95, there were only three boys, sons of agricultural labourers, above 10 years of age. Many children are kept away from school in this woodland district by "acorning." At this date (Oct. 31), some boys are only just returning to school after harvest. Two brothers are said to have picked up this year 20 bushels of acorns, selling at 1*s.* 3*d.* a bushel.

23. In many of the parishes in Hailsham union (Sussex), children are largely employed in the winter at hop-pole shaving, working generally with their fathers. It is easy work, which a boy of eight or nine can do. The payment is at per 100 poles: 4*d.* a hundred for 10-feet poles, and 6*d.* for 12 feet or 14 feet poles. A boy can shave 100 or 150 in a day, and two lads would earn 5*s.* a week. Thomas Arkcoll, Esq., of Hurstmonceux, a magistrate and landowner, thinks it would be a serious interference with the labour of this woodland district if boy labour were prohibited up to 10 years of age. George Darby, Esq., formerly M.P. for Sussex, and now one of the Enclosure Commissioners of England, recommends that children should be allowed to go to work as soon as they can read with fair fluency, and thinks that this is the only practical solution of the problem. Mr. Arkcoll further mentioned his surprise at finding so many young lads in his district unable to write. He had tested their ability in the case of the boys who had been sent to him, as a magistrate, for licenses to remove cattle under the cattle plague restrictions. In one case which he was led to inquire into, he discovered that out of a nominal school life of five years the boy had actually attended school less than one.

24. In the three adjoining parishes of Hooe, Ninfield, and Wartling (Sussex), I was informed that a nobleman, a considerable owner of land in each, though applied to, persistently refuses to subscribe to the support of any one of the schools, which are only maintained with difficulty. Again, in West Grinstead, in the same county (Horsham union), with 1,300 people, and 7,000 acres of land, I was informed by the rector that only one landowner subscribes to the school, and his contribution is only 2*l.* a year.

In a district adjacent to this last parish, Southwater, the incumbent finds great difficulty in getting support for the school from the landowners, who, though resident, in some instances in the immediate neighbourhood, yet because not living actually within the district, do not appear very vividly to recognize the claim.

These are the cases that illustrate the weak point in the voluntary system, and indicate the necessity of a compulsory rate in some shape or other as the only effective remedy.

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25. *Brome School*, Suffolk, under a certificated master, serving for the two parishes of Brome and Oakley, population 700. On the register 80, average attendance 60. There are only three boys over 10 years of age, of whom two are sons of farm labourers. The following paper bearing on the attendance of the children was given me by the schoolmaster :—

"1867, July 11th.

"Nine boys absent at field work; one aged 11; four aged 10; one aged 9; three aged 8.

During the year the following absences have been specially noticed :—

J. G., aged 11; absent nine weeks at field work. His mother a widow, with other children.

G. F., aged 10; at work 22 weeks.

C. F., aged eight (brother of the last); at work six weeks. Parents have two younger children besides these.

W. G., aged 10; at work 28 weeks. One younger child at home.

G. B., aged 10; at work 21 weeks.

E. B., aged seven (brother of the last); at work 11 weeks. Parents have one other child.

H. W., aged nine; at constant work for his father, who is a thatcher.

W. S., aged nine; at work 23 weeks. No other child to provide for.

W. S., aged nine; at work 11 weeks. No other child younger, but two others older, both at work.

W. K., aged eight; absent 25 weeks at work. Two elder brothers at work, and two younger at home.

The causes of the numerous absences seem to be, first, the great call for boy labour in the district; and, secondly, the poverty of the parents, who if they send their boys to school regularly, *i.e.*, without intermission, for the whole year, do so at a sacrifice of 3*s.* or 4*s.* weekly for a great part of the school year; and, besides this, a certain amount of pressure is put by the farmers upon the labourers in their employ, who have children at all useful in farm labour. The girls are more regular than the boys, their absence scarcely ever being for any length of time. They are kept at home at odd times to help in house work, or to mind house while the mother goes to work."

(Signed) Wm. T. Gaul,
Schoolmaster.

26. *The Rev. Mr. Bowles*, rector of Singleton, Sussex, gave me a list extracted from a book which he has kept for 20 years, showing the age at which each boy had left the school in that parish. The total number of boys was 86; of whom six left at 14, six at 13, 22 at 12, 11 at 11, 18 at 10, 13 at 9, 5 at 8, 3 at 7, and 2 at 6.

Another fact that the list illustrates is, that boys leave school at an earlier age now than formerly. Of the 33 first boys on the list, representing a period 12 years back, only three left school under 10; of the 53 last boys, representing the condition of things in the last 12 years, 19 left under that age. The school is very carefully watched over, and every effort made to keep children in attendance.

The Rev. Mr. Wollaston, rector of Felpham, in the same district, and a diocesan school inspector, informed me that the average age of the first class in the schools which he visits had fallen 11 months in the last 10 years.

27. *Mr. Robert Penny*, schoolmaster of Pagham, Sussex, gave the following list, exhibiting a similar state of things in his school :—

"Of 134 boys who have left in the last 17 years 37 had been only one year at school, 26 only two years, 25 had attended three years, 27 four years, 16 five years, and three six years.

"Of the same 134 boys, one left at 15 years of age, five at 14, 10 at 13, 17 at 12, 19 at 11, 33 at 10, 30 at 9, 13 at 8, 2 at 7, and 4 at 6."

28. The following statement was placed in my hands by the mistress of Slinfold school (Sussex) :—

"Number on the books 57; average attendance 44. Average age of boys at present in the school, 6 years 9 months. The age of all the scholars varies from 4 to 10 years. Five boys have left the school between May and November to go to work, whose ages are from 9 to 12 years. Of these, three at least are very deficient in reading, writing, and arithmetic. There are 13 boys, from 7 to 10 years of age, who frequently stay away from school to work. Many girls are also kept away to scrape bark, pick up acorns, and the like. One boy attends school on the condition that he may work to earn money in the afternoon, and have lessons in the mornings only. He is paid for by the rector's lady.

29. At my meeting at Walberton (Sussex), *Mr. G. D. Hide*, churchwarden and occupier of 500 acres of land, expressed himself in favour of an educational

rate, levied upon personal as well as real property, or paid out of the general taxation of the country. He thought that if education were made compulsory, the condition of schools and the support of schools must be equalized. On a similar principle, Archdeacon Hankinson, in Norfolk, objected to compulsory education in the present unequal distribution and efficiency of schools.

30. I attended (November 21) a meeting of working men at Chichester, called by five clergymen of the city, presided over by the mayor, and attended by perhaps 150 persons, mostly of the working class. The clergy who issued the circular inviting the meeting, stated that they wished to be possessed of the working men's mind on four points: (1.) the advantage of co-operative societies; (2.) the value of State assistance in elementary education; (3.) compulsory education; (4.) an industrial exhibition in Chichester.

The men's interest evidently centred most on the first question, which was freely discussed, though without arriving at any definite practical conclusions. Upon the two educational questions, there was great difficulty in getting any expression of opinion, and many of the men present said that they "did not "know anything about the subject.

The programme was certainly too large for a single discussion; but it was plain from the way in which the different subjects were received, that their material interests held the first place in these working men's minds.

31. *Capt. Valentine*, the Duke of Richmond's agent in Sussex, mentioned to me, as illustrating the capacity of the agricultural labourer, somewhat slow but sure, that when he was in the Sussex Militia, at the time of the Crimean war, he noticed that recruits from Brighton and the towns would pick up their drill in six weeks, while the agricultural recruit took three months; but that the latter retained his knowledge better, and was more to be depended upon in the execution of an order.

32. *The Rev. W. Burnett*, vicar of Boxgrove (Sussex), tells me that he has noticed the markedly *hebetating* influence on boys' minds of such employments as sheep-tending and bird-scaring, carried on week days and Sundays; wearying from their very sameness; requiring no thought or quickness; giving the lad no occasion even to know that he has a mind.

33. At the Cirencester board of guardians, the Chairman, *Rev. T. Maurice*, a magistrate and practical farmer, ventured to think that a half-time system of school and work, might be practicable in agriculture. The majority of the meeting, however, which was a large one, dissented from the chairman's view, and preferred the prohibition of labour up to a fixed age, and were prepared to fix that age at 10. The labour of boys it was thought could be dispensed with, on the Cotswolds, till they are big enough to drive plough, and that would not be till they are at least 10 years of age.

34. *Mr. Walker Wakeley*, certificated schoolmaster, of Amney Crucis (Gloucestershire), who has had 21 years' experience, decidedly would prefer to keep his boys regularly at school up to the age of 10, than to part with them for work at 8, and have them return intermittently up to 13. Out of 45 boys on his register, has not a single labourer's son of the age of 13, the few boys that have attained or are above that age are tradesmen's sons.

The same opinion was expressed by the schoolmaster at Siddington, and by Mr. Sparks, the schoolmaster, of Down Amney—two other parishes in the Cirencester Union.

35. *The Rev. W. F. Powell*, vicar of Cirencester, tells me how he works his Blue and Yellow Schools' endowment. It clothes boys and girls for three years. Thirty years ago, when he came into the parish, children were admitted to the benefit of the charity at the age 8. He admits none before 10, and thus retains them at school till 13. It appears to me that many of our present useless or mischievous local endowments might be used as exhibitions at elementary schools, and have a powerful influence to keep a considerable number of children at school to a later age. Such a conversion of the funds to a very legitimate object would in fact help us to get over that difficulty, which was everywhere pressed so sharply upon me; the hardship at the present low rate of wages, of cutting off from the parent the advantage, at the earliest possible moment, of the earnings of his child.

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36. — *Cartwright, Esq.*, Governor of Gloucester County Gaol, thinks that the crass ignorance of a large proportion of our agricultural population cannot be overestimated. Attributes it principally to neglect of opportunities within their reach, and that neglect to the apathy or cupidity of the parents. Believes that compulsory education is the only effective remedy, but the country is not prepared to accept that yet. There might be a system of indirect compulsion, requiring employers to see that the children whom they employ possess a certain amount of education, which would work well. The children of ignorant parents seem to him to be more ignorant even than their parents; there is a kind of accumulation of stolidity. There is no self-regenerating element in such a class. The professionally criminal class are not uneducated. Nine-tenths of the crime in a rural district is to be traced, directly or indirectly, to drink. Regrets the facility placed in the way of obtaining a licence to sell beer, and that publichouses are open on Sunday. Believes that there is a distinct diminution in the amount of crime.

37. As the earliest purpose for which boys are regularly required on a farm in Gloucester is to drive plough, it became a matter of importance to ascertain how far the substitution of two horses abreast instead of three or four horses in line to draw the plough would diminish the amount of such employment. Three magistrates, each of them a practical farmer, gave me the following opinions on the subject.

The Rev. Thomas Maurice, of Driffield, believes the two-horses-abreast system to be quite practicable, and does all his ploughing in that way. But I believe Mr. Maurice's farm lies on the flat, and he has not to contend with the formidable difficulty that the hills present in other parts of the Cotswold country.

Mr. York, of Forthhampton, does not want a boy to drive, and does his ploughing with two horses abreast quite as effectively as his neighbours with four. Has tried, but unsuccessfully, to introduce the two-horse plough among his neighbours. The difference lies between using two strong and four weak horses. But he admits that in wet weather the "land" horse does poach the ground.

Capt. De Winton, occupies 400 acres of land, close to Gloucester. It is a stiff retentive clay on a blue lias subsoil. He has tried and found it impossible to plough with two horses.

I was universally assured that two horses could not possibly move a plough through the stiff, wet clay, and up the steep hills, of the Weald of Sussex.

38. The schoolmaster at *Olveston* (*Gloucestershire*), informed me that children sometimes leave school in July for hay making; that is followed by the corn harvest, and that by fruit picking, potato digging, and acorn gathering; so that they do not get to their books again till Christmas.

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Mr. Powell, certificated schoolmaster in the next parish of Almondsbury, stated the same thing, and pointed out that his school has almost to be worked on the periodic system now, so large are the gaps in regular attendance caused by the constantly recurring demands for labour. Boys are frequently absent for three months, bird-scaring and potato planting in the spring, and for three months again, gleaning, potato and apple picking in the autumn. Mr. Powell would be satisfied if he could keep his boys regularly at school up to the age of 11. The same opinion was expressed by Mr. Phill, certificated schoolmaster of Thornbury, and Mr. Cheveley, certificated schoolmaster of Tortworth.

39. *The Rev. Frederic Wood*, vicar, and the *Rev. Morris Burland*, curate, of Newent, both thought that

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there were enough boys round Newent to work the alternate whole day system, though they admitted that the system could not be adopted without causing considerable inconvenience to the farmer.

40. State of Education in the parish of Oxburgh, Union of Swaffham, county of Norfolk, as ascertained by the Rev. Alexander Thurtell, rector, late one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools.

N.B.—The return only relates to the Protestant part of the population. There is a considerable number of Roman Catholics in the parish.

——		Total No.	Ignorant.	Read fairly.	Both read and write fairly.
Over 30 Years of Age.	Men -	22	15	2	5
	Women	22	14	3	5
Under 30, but not at School.	Men -	11	4	3	4
	Women	5	0	1	4
Totals -		60	33	9	18

41. Statement of the present condition of education of the labourers in the parish of Foulden, Union of Swaffham, county of Norfolk (population 517), made, after enquiry, by the Rev. Henry Layng, curate.

"Over 40 years of age there are 46 that can neither read nor write; 36 that can only read, and 21 that can both read and write.

"Between 20 and 40 years of age, there are three that can neither read nor write; eight that can only read, and 39 that can both read and write.

"Under 20 years of age there are nine that can neither read nor write; seven that can only read, and 23 that can both read and write.

"Attending school, between the ages of 8 and 12 there are 23; not attending there are nine.

"Attending school, between the ages of 6 and 8, there are 19; not attending there are three.

"On the school books theee are 82 children; 34 boys and 48 girls. In the Sunday school are 56, 18 boys and 38 girls. The average attendance at the evening school is 18."

The following table exhibits the above results:—

Age.	Number.	Can read and write.	Read only.	Neither.
Over 40 -	103	21	36	46
Between 20 and 40 -	50	39	8	3
Under 20 -	39	23	7	9

42. State of education of the seven labouring families forming the population of the Tithing of Caldecote, union of Swaffham, county of Norfolk, (population 39, acreage 673.) Communicated by Mr. Henry Oldfield.

1. *Robert Springfield*, man, wife, and five children, one married, two in service, two (boys) at home. Can all read and write, except the wife. The man never went to school, but was taught to read by his mother at home. She always made her children read to her twice a day. This family live about 1¼ miles from the nearest school, and have the opportunity of going to evening school in winter. Creditable specimens of the handwriting of the man (aged 54), and of his two boys, aged respectively 15 and 14, are appended.

2. *Coker* ——, man, wife, and eight children. One son and two daughters are in service. One girl cannot read or write; the others all can. The man and wife cannot read or write; never went to school; there was no school except they were able to pay more than they do now. Live about 1¼ miles from school, and can attend evening school in winter. Appended are excellent specimens of the handwriting of William Coker (aged 17); Ellen Coker (15); Eliza Coker (13); Matilda Coker (10); and Edward Coker (8).

3. *John Greef*, aged 24. Man and wife and three young children, the eldest three years. The man went to school, but says "it did him no good;" went to evening school afterwards, and has learnt to read and write. The wife went to school until she went out to service; had only one situation, and then married. The sample appended of the man's handwriting is very legible; of the wife's excellent.

4. *C. Starling*. Number in family, man and wife and seven children. Eldest son married, can read and write. Two daughters at service, both can read and write. One son at home, named George, aged 14, can neither read nor write; has been to school, but did no good. The boy thinks he can learn now, which he may do by attending evening school. They have about two and a half miles to go to school. The man himself never went to school, there was no school when he was a boy. Appended are creditable specimens of the handwriting of the wife, Mary Starling (aged 48), Robert Starling (17), Emma Starling (12), and Frederick Starling (8).

5. *Henry Greef*. Number in family, man, wife, two boys, and two girls. The man, wife, and two boys can neither read nor write. The two girls can, one is at service. The youngest boy went to evening school for some time, the man says he paid 8*s*. for sending him, but he did not learn anything, he "might as well have thrown his money away." Appended is a specimen of the daughter "Emmer (*sic*) "Greef's" handwriting, aged 13 years, fairly bold and legible.

6. *Benjamin Bird*. Number in family, man, wife, and four children. The man can read but not write. The wife and eldest girl can both read and write. A younger one goes to school with the little girl. They live about a mile and a half from the school. Appended are fair specimens of the handwriting of the wife, Mary Bird, aged 40, the daughter, Maria Bird, aged nine, and of John Rowlerson, a nephew living with them, aged 15.

7. *John Boddy*. Number in family, man, wife, and five children. The man and wife can neither read nor write; there was no school when they were young. They wish they were scholars. Mean to send all their children to school. They live at about a mile's distance. The two eldest children can read and write. Appended is a tolerable specimen of the handwriting of Ann Mary Boddy, aged 13 years.

The specimens of handwriting referred to consist in each case of the signature, residence, age, and date. The words are in most instances correctly spelt.

43. The following returns I extracted myself from the enrolment books of the Royal North Gloucestershire Militia (69th), which are kept at the head quarters at Cirencester. They indicate a very marked educational improvement in the course of 15 years.

It is to be observed, however, that no record is kept of ability to read, and the record of ability to write only extends to the power to sign the name. Mr. Gorman, however, the officer who assisted me in my search, thinks that a considerable number who say they cannot write really can, but from nervousness or impatience, or some other reason, decline to attempt it.

In the year 1866 there were admitted as recruits or re-enrolled 229 men, of whom 84 came from country parishes, and 145 from towns (the majority from Cheltenham and Stroud). Of the former 58 could write their names, and 26 could not; of the latter 104 could write, and 41 could not.

In 1856, ten years previously, there were enrolled 198 men, 110 from towns, 88 from rural parishes. Of the former 53 could not write, of the latter 54. In 1852, the year of the formation of the regiment, of the first 187 names examined (I stopped the scrutiny there), 53 came from towns, and 134 from country parishes. Of the former 29, and of the latter 91 could not sign their names.

Hence the following comparative table:—

Year.	No. of Cases examined.	Could write.	Could not write.	Per-centage unable to write.
1852	187	Town 24	29	54·7
		Country 43	91	67·9
1856	198	Town 57	53	48·2
		Country 34	54	61·3
1866	229	Town 104	41	28·2
		Country 58	26	30·9

So that, in the case of men coming from country districts, the proportion of those unable to write to those who can has been nearly inverted, in favour of a higher condition of education, in the course of 15 years. In 1852 it was as 67 per cent. to 23; in 1866 it was as 30 per cent. to 70.

As I think it is somewhat an English tendency to depreciate the value of our institutions, and first to magnify and then to expose to the world our deficiencies, I extract, by way of counterpoise to any unfavourable conclusions that may be drawn from the statement in the text, the following passage from Mr. Pattison's report on Prussian schools:—

"Complaints are made of the comparatively imperfect results attained in writing in the North German schools. This is a part of schooling which admits of being unmistakably tested. In the autumn of 1855 this test, applied to the year's levy of the *Landwehr*, gave the astounding result that only 12 per cent. of the recruits were able to write well. Such returns are now very generally made in the various states, and though I have not been able to procure them, I believe I shall be under the mark if I state the average of recruits unable to write at 50 per cent. of the whole."—*Report of Education Commission* (1861), Vol. IV. p. 234.

I venture also to print a paragraph which appeared in the *Times* of May 15, 1868:—

Progress of Elementary Education.

The report which the Registrar-General of England has recently issued shows that in the year 1866 21·6 per cent. of the men who married in England, and 30 per cent. of the women, signed the marriage register by making their mark, and did not write their names. In the preceding year the numbers of the illiterate were larger—viz., 22·5 per cent. of the men and 31·2 per cent. of the women. If we trace the returns back for a quarter of a century, we find no less than one-third of the men and half the women having to make their marks. The return for 1866 is the best that had ever yet been made. Judged by the test of signature of marriage register, the women in most of the agricultural districts appear to have had a better elementary education than the men; but the reverse is the case in the manufacturing and mining districts, and in South Wales only half the women who married in 1866 signed their names upon the register. In Lancashire and Staffordshire only 54·7 and 55·5 per cent. of the women wrote their names. In Scotland in 1865 nearly 89 per cent. of the men, and nearly 78 per cent. of the women, wrote their names on the marriage register, but the proportions were almost exactly the same 10 years ago, so that little or no further progress is shown. In Ireland in 1866 nearly half the persons married signed by making their mark—42·4 in every 100 men, and 52·4 in every 100 women. In France in the same year the registers show, without distinction of sex, that 33·42 in every 100 persons married failed to sign their names on the register; in England 25·8 per cent., in Ireland 47·4 per cent., in Scotland (in 1865) 16·8 per cent., the respective populations being about 21,210,000 in England, and 3,136,000 in Scotland, 5,582,600 in Ireland. The difference between the several departments in France was very great; 20 departments had a lower rate than 15 per cent. signing with marks, 13 between 15 and 30 per cent., 18 between 30 and 40, 17 between 40 and 50, 21 with a rate of 50 per cent. and upwards not writing their names.

There is progress therefore, not indeed sufficient to bid us stop, but sufficient to encourage us to go on.

44. The following letter from W. Batley, Esq., surgeon to the Sussex Militia, relates to a similar inquiry:—

"My dear Sir,

"I am afraid that what I have been able to learn as to the amount of education in the ranks of the Sussex Militia can be of very little service to you. Here it is, however, *quantum valeat*. Last training (April and May 1867) 712 men were on the rolls of the regiment. Of these 239 cannot, and 473 can, write; but the only evidence of this is that they can write their names to the attestation paper, and in the majority of cases I should think that their writing did not go much farther than that. I cannot give you any information about the reading power of the rank and file of the regiment. It is somewhat singular, and has often puzzled me, that men will reply to me, 'I can write, sir, but I can't read.' This is very common indeed. Believe me, &c.

(Signed) "W. Batley."

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45. The subjoined tables show the state of education of the men, women, lads, and boys employed on the farm of Mr. Howell, of Driffield (Union of Cirencester, county of Gloucester), who occupies upwards of 1,000 acres. Mr. Howell had kindly taken the trouble to draw out the tables for my information, and presented them to me at my meeting at Siddington (No. 82), which he attended. A noticeable fact in the tables is the early age at which many of the boys commenced work; out of a list of 13 three as early as six, four at eight, and three at nine. The three who began at six can neither read nor write; of the four who began to work at eight only one can write; of the three who began at nine only one again can write. Of the whole 13 only three can write.

It is further noticeable that only one of these 13 boys appears to have attended night school, whereas, of the 24 men, 16 have been evening scholars, which possibly accounts for the higher amount of education the men seem to possess, as compared with the boys. Fourteen out of the 24 men can write, and all but three can read.

Men.

Names.	Age.	Amount of Education: Read or Write	Attended Day School.	Attended Sunday School.	Attended Night School.
Joseph Kilbey	53	Read	2 years	—	—
James Welavin	71	—	—	—	—
John Brown	37	Read	7 years	years	6 weeks, 1 winter.
Thomas Wilson	52	Read	2 years	2 years	—
Thomas Long	41	Read	3 months	1 year	—
Richard Curtis	72	Read & write	—	—	2 or 3 winters.
William Boulton	62	Read & write	4 years	—	2 winters.
Richard Bedford	53	Read & write	4 years	—	2 winters.
George Welavin	56	Read & write	1 year	—	1 winter.
Henry Shumme	45	Read & write	—	—	—
Henry Dowell	54	Read a little	—	2 years	—
John Blackwood	27	Read & write	3 years	2 years	2 winters.
A. G. Welavin	44	Read & write	4 years	2 years	—
William Brown	28	Read & write	5 years	3 years	3 winters
John Clappen	37	Read	1 year	4 years	1 winter.
John Messenger	32	—	6 months	1 year	1 winter.
Henry Clappen	23	Read & write	3 years	1 year	2 winters.
John Whitman	36	Read & write	7 years	7 years	2 winters.
William Long	44	Read & write	1 year	6 years	1 winter.
Henry Messenger	30	Read & write	2 years	4 years	1 winter.
James Butlin	39	Read & write	5 years	5 years	1 winter.
Thomas Haines	40	—	—	1 year	—
Jasper Whitman	62	Read & write	—	—	2 winters.
George Moss	21	Read	2 years	4 years	1 winter.

Boys and Lads.

Names.	Age.	Age on commencing work.	Amount of Education: Read or Write.	Day School.	Sunday School.	Night School.
William Smith	16	10	Read	2 years	—	—
John James	15	8	Read	1 year	1 year	—
Edwin Long	13	8	Read & write	2 years	4 years	—
Thomas Clappen	13	10	Read & write	3 years	4 years	—
George Walker	13	12	Weak mind	—	—	—
Edwin Butlin	12	9	Read	3 years	4 years	2 winters.
William Long	12	6	—	—	6 months	—
George Welavin	12	9	Read & write	2 years	2 years	—
William Messenger	11	9	Read	6 months	1 year	—
William Long	10	8	Read	2 years	3 years	—
John Long	9	6	—	—	—	—
William Kilbey	9	8	Read	1 year, 6 months.	1 year	—
Henry Long	7	6	—	—	—	—

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WOMEN AND GIRLS.

Names.	Age.	Married or Single.	Children.	Amount of Education: Read or Write.	Attended Day School.	Attended Sunday School.
Jane Bedford -	28	Single	—	Read & write	5 years -	5 years.
Eliz. Brown -	21	"	—	"	"	7 years.
Mary Ann Messenger.	33	Widow	2	"	2 weeks	2 years.
Jane Long -	17	Single	—	"	2 years -	2 years.
Emily Welavin	14	Girl -	—	"	1 year -	1 years.
Eliz. Dowell -	34	Married	—	—	—	—
Harriet Walker	50	"	Family grown up -	Read - -	—	—
Mary Brown -	21	Single	1	Read & write	7 years -	7 years.

SCHEME for providing for the support of Schools from the combined Sources of (1) Government Grant; (2) Voluntary Subscriptions; (3) Children's Payments; (4) Local Rate-in-Aid.*

The problem stated by the Commissioners of 1861.

The Education Commissioners of 1861 stated the educational problem of the moment in the following words:—How "to retain the leading principles of the "present system, to simplify its working, and to combine with it a supplementary and local system, which "may diffuse a wider interest in education, may distribute its burdens more equally, and may enable "every school in the country to participate in its "benefits."† I do not think that the problem with which we have to deal can be better stated now.

Conditions under which it was to be solved.

There were, however, two points, sometimes lost sight of by more recent educational reformers, upon which the Commissioners felt very strongly. Recognizing that "the economy and the local interest which "some amount of local payment and management secures are essential elements in a system of national "education," they recognized also that those elements might be too dearly purchased, if purchased at the cost "of the independence of the religious teaching "and of the good management of the schools."‡

Their scheme of solution.

The Commissioners' scheme, which was to retain all that is valuable in the present system, at the same time that it supplemented it in those points where there exist deficiencies, may be briefly summarized as follows:—

All assistance given to the annual maintenance of schools was to be reduced to grants of two kinds—the first to be paid out of the general taxation of the country by the Committee of Council (whose constitution, it was thought, did not require in any material point to be reformed), at the rate of from 4*s.* 6*d.* to 6*s.* a child on the average daily attendance of the year, the sum varying according to the inspector's opinion of the discipline, efficiency, and general character of the school. The second grant (which might vary from 21*s.* to 22*s.* 6*d.* for every child passing an examination who had attended school for 140 days in the preceding year) was to be paid out of the county or (in the case of corporate towns with more than 40,000 inhabitants) borough rates, in consideration of a certain degree of knowledge attained by the children of the school, such attainment to be ascertained by examiners (who were to be certificated teachers of at least seven years' standing), appointed by county and borough boards of education, for the appointment of which boards proper provisions were made. The combined grants were not to exceed the fees and subscriptions, or 15*s.* per child on the average attendance.

In order to entitle a school to these grants, it must have been registered at the office of the Privy Council, on the report of their inspector, as an elementary school for the education of the poor, and be certified by the inspector to be healthy, properly drained and ventilated, and supplied with offices, and to contain at least 8 ft. of superficial area for each child in average daily attendance.*

Its Advantages.

The advantages of this scheme are obvious. It did not disturb the constitution of the existing schools; it did not dictate the constitution of any future schools. It left the management in the same hands in which it found it—hands which, it was admitted, had wielded the powers intrusted to them zealously and with good effect. It demanded the co-operation, while it stimulated the energies, of voluntary effort. It did not touch the embarrassing religious question farther than by making a recommendation to which I suppose, though considerably twisted, is due the introduction of the Conscience Clause.‡

And Disadvantages.

But with these merits the scheme has some equally obvious defects. A county board of education is too remote from the spot required to be acted on, to supply with adequate force the element of "local interest." The double examination or inspection, the one general, the other special, is an unnecessary waste of time, money, labour. The proper functions of the Committee of Council and of the County Board seem to be inverted. It should rather be the business of the central, supervising power, through its independent officer, to ascertain and authenticate the quality of the education; the quality being certified good, it would be to the interest (liberally construed), of the local authorities to stimulate, by rewarding, the attendance of the children of the district at

* With the permission of the Commissioners, I reprint here the last of four letters on this subject, which appeared in the *Times* of April 16, 17, 18, and 20, 1867.

† Report, Vol. I., p. 543.

‡ Report, Vol. I., pp. 307, 308. In their concluding paragraph on this subject (the whole argument being well worth reading), they say, "In one of the leading principles on which "many of these bills were founded, that of calling forth local "action as an essential requisite for any national system, we "must express our agreement, but even this advantage would "be dearly bought if it prevented the intelligent management, "or injured the religious character, of schools, the support of "which has been both the merit and success of the present "system."—p. 308.

* *See* Report, Vol. I., pp. 544-6.

† "It sometimes happens," says the Commissioners, "that in "places too small to allow of the establishment of two schools, "the only one to which the children of the poor in those places "can resort, is placed by the managers under regulations which "render imperative the teaching of the Church Catechism to "all the scholars, and the attendance of all at church. In such "cases it may result that persons of other denominations are "precluded, unless at the sacrifice of their conscientious convictions, from availing themselves of educational advantages "for their children, furnished in part by public funds to which, "as taxpayers, they contribute. This is manifestly unjust "... If we are not prepared to recommend that the principle "laid down by the Legislature (Act 23d Vict. chap. 11.), for "the regulation of endowed schools, shall be extended to all "schools aided by public funds, it is not because we regard it "as indefensible on the grounds of justice. But, inasmuch as "the evidence before us goes to prove that, on the whole, the "practice of exclusion is not now very frequently enforced, "and that it is progressively giving place to a more liberal "management in this respect, we believe the evil may be safely "left to the curative influence of public opinion, and will not "necessitate a compulsory enactment. Should events prove "that we are mistaken, it may become the duty of the Committee of Council to consider whether the public fund placed "at their disposal in aid of popular education may not be administered in such a manner as will ensure to the children of "the poor in all places an opportunity of partaking of its benefits without exposing their parents to a violation of their "religious convictions." (*Report I. p.* 343.)

The twist that I consider the Conscience Clause to have given to this recommendation is, that whereas the recommendation believes that a compulsory enactment is not necessary, the Conscience Clause implies that it is. The Commissioners thought that intolerance was on the decline; the Council Office, by enforcing the Conscience Clause in all cases contemplated by them, seems to declare that it is on the increase. The Conscience Clause certainly is not "indefensible on the grounds of "justice," nor is it inconsistent with the principle of denominationalism, which denominationalism it in fact maintains. It is perfectly equitable, and it does not dilute or interfere with the religious teaching of a school; but it may, and in many cases probably will, introduce an element of disturbance into its working. It is one of those knots which theorists and systematizers love to tie, and which practical men, at the cost of a good deal of embarrasment, have to untie. It is important to remember that the Commissioners of 1861 did not consider a Conscience Clause *necessary*.

schools where a good education can be obtained. The local examiner of the county board, who is supposed to be of a lower social rank than the State inspector, is too likely, as has been found to be the case in the State of New York and in Upper Canada, to be unable to resist the pressure of local influences; and I doubt if a certificated master, even of seven years' standing, who may be presumed therefore to possess experience, would carry so much weight with teachers or be so acceptable to managers as the high-toned gentlemen, competent to look at questions from many sides, whom we have been accustomed to welcome in our schools.

The Scheme modified.

I do not say that these are fatal, but at any rate they are serious, objections; and if a scheme could be suggested which should embrace those advantages and be free from these defects, I think it would be entitled to be called a better scheme. It is such a scheme which, with some fear and trembling, I venture to propose.

Poor Law Union Districts, the Units of Area.

The local organization which I desire to use for the purposes of my scheme is that which the New Poor Law has given to the country in the shape of union districts (about 600 in number); and the recent change in the law which has extended the area of chargeability, in respect of the maintenance of the poor, from the parish to the union, will operate favourably in respect of my plan for the maintenance of the school. The area of action we require must be wide enough to exclude local prejudices; narrow enough to include local sympathy.

Local Board of Education.

Each of these districts has for its *corps d'administration* its board of elected and *ex-officio* guardians, and out of this body I propose to form my local committee or board of education, whose field of action would be the district comprised within the union. The relations between the Council on Education in Downing Street and the local board of education would be analogous to the relations existing between the Poor Law Board and the boards of guardians.

Functions of Central Office.

To the central office I reserve, absolutely and exclusively, the function of inspection, on the efficiency of which the success of the whole plan would turn, and the duty of paying out of the general taxation of the country the sum earned by the school, at the rate to be mentioned further on, on the results of an examination conducted by their inspector.*

* I relieve the Central Office, it will be seen presently, of all duty in relation to the building of schools, which I conceive to be emphatically and properly a local affair. I would maintain its existing relation to the normal or training schools, which I think had better be kept outside my present scheme, and left as they mostly are now, in the hands of the diocesan boards or the great religious societies. But I have always thought that it was a mistake to abandon the plan of granting Queen's scholarships, and that system might easily be revived with a very slight, if any, additional cost, and with the very best effect. Plainly some further attraction is wanted to fill our training schools, that is, to supply us with a competent body of teachers. With two or three of the training schools closed in consequence of of the late regulations, and several others not more than half filled, it seeme a paradox that the Council Office should insist upon the employment of a certificated teacher as a condition of the reception of its aid, while it at the same time does everything to discourage the breed. In its dealings with training schools, the revised code departed widely from the recommendations of the Commissioners of 1861.

But to return to the relations of the Central Office to schools under my scheme. Workhouse schools would be brought into the scheme; reformatory schools, and schools for special purposes, such as military and naval schools, left as they are. Ragged schools, if the new scheme operated, could, so far as I can see, put in no claim for exceptional assistance, and in fact would cease to form a separate class.

I should add that I suppose the Revised Code to be retained, except so far as it would be modified in detail by some of the features of the proposed scheme.

Local Board's relation to the schools financial merely.

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Some persons will throw up their hands at once at my scheme, at finding me mad enough, as they will think me, after recent revelations, to intrust the local interests of education to the tender mercies of a board of guardians. But if such impatient readers will bear with me a little longer, till I have fully developed my plan, they will find that I propose to give the local board no control at all over the constitution and management of the school, the one of which I suppose to already exist, or (in the case of new schools) to be likely to be framed after existing models; while for the other I shall still trust to voluntary effort, which, I am confident, when it is not asked to find all the money as well as all the labour, will always be forthcoming. The relations of the local board to the school will be financial simply. Their duties, instead of being left to their own discretion and conception of them, will be rigorously defined by law, and as they will have to pay the money whether they like it or not, they will at least have this motive prompting them to see that it is beneficially applied.

Local Board to be composed of elected and ex-officio Guardians.

Besides, I propose that this local board or committee (I care not by which name it is called), shall be composed of elected and *ex-officio* guardians, in definite proportions, according to the number of each class in the particular union district; and the *ex-officio* guardians are almost universally gentlemen of standing in the neighbourhood, who would bring to the board a breadth of view and a liberality of sentiment that might be wanting in its other members.

Functions of Local Board.

To this local board, thus constituted, which I will assume to consist of 12 members and a chairman, elected out of the whole body of guardians, three retiring by seniority every year, I would commit the duty of paying out of a rate, levied with the poor rate of the union district, and to be called the school rate, a certain annual sum towards the maintenance of each registered school in the district, calculated on the average daily attendance of the children therein.

Proportions of Central Grant and Local Rate.

The grant paid out of the general taxation might be 2*s.* 6*d.* for each pass in the several subjects of reading, writing, and ciphering, or 7*s.* 6*d.* for each child who satisfies the inspector in all; the same sum, 7*s.* 6*d.*, might be paid out of the local rate for every child in daily attendance at the school. The balance of expenditure, ranging from 10*s.* to 15*s.* per child, would have to be provided out of the school fees and voluntary contributions. As endowments were certainly intended by their founders to be a benefit to the neighbourhood in which they planted them, I think they ought to be dealt with on the principles of the Revised Code (Art. 93), to the relief of the local rate and local subscriptions, and only in case of a surplus to affect the amount of central aid.*

* I may say once for all that the figures in this exposition are all of them open to modification. They are the principles and leading features of the scheme on which I desire to fix the reader's mind. It might be thought, consistently with a view set forth in the body of this report, that the proportion of a school's income derivable from the central, should be greater than that from the local, source. If so, instead of two equal payments of 7*s.* 6*d.*, the Committee of Council might grant 3*s.* instead of 2*s.* 6*d.* on each pass, and the local payment for attendance might be reduced to 6*s.*; and considering how much property escapes local rating, this might perhaps be a fairer distribution of the burden. I would rather deal with the question in this way than attempt, as they do in the United States and Canada, to rate personal property for local purposes, an attempt which leads to frequent fraud, and gives rise to much dissatisfaction.

I think that all endowed schools should be required by law to submit to inspection, and to lay before the inspector at his visit a properly vouched statement of accounts.

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Efficiency of the Scheme depends on the Inspector.

I have said that the success—the economical and efficient working—of this plan would largely, and indeed principally, depend upon the inspector. I believe that the success of most practical organizations ultimately depends upon the competency, integrity, governing or arranging power, of some one man. Who, then, is to be our inspector? and what are to be his duties?

Inspector to be appointed by Central Office. County Committee of Education.

The inspector is to be the servant of the central office, and responsible to it. This secures his independence. And yet, that he may not be indifferent to the wholesome stimulus or restraint of local feelings and opinions, I would have a county committee of education, elected by the Court of Quarter Sessions,* to whom, equally with his more direct superiors, the inspector should make his periodical report, and through whom any complaint of neglect of duty or misconduct on his part, when made either by school managers or local boards, having been duly examined and substantiated, should pass, accompanied with such comments as might be thought desirable, to the central office. Such an intermediate body would protect both the inspector and the schools; the inspector from petty carping and frivolous charges; the schools from anything like serious injustice or culpable abuse of power; while to representations, proceeding from such a body, no doubt, at head quarters all proper attention would be paid.

Present force of Inspectors capable of better Distribution.

As to the type of inspector which I should desire to see, I can conceive no improvement (*exceptis excipiendis*) on the class of gentlemen with whom we have been accustomed to deal. But I think the force is capable of a very much better organization. By confining the inspection simply to the secular subjects of instruction (except on the direct request of the managers), we might get rid of that clumsy and expensive arrangement which brings two or three inspectors on the same errand into the same neighbourhood.†

By limiting each inspector's district to a single county, we can economise his travelling power, while we extend his influence by requiring him to visit every parish and every registered school.‡

Every Parish to be visited for Inspection.

For it is an essential part of my plan that every parish should be visited in order that every labouring man's child in England may have within his reach a fairly efficient school. If the inspector finds a parish either without a school or with insufficient school accommodation, or with a school, by reason of the absence of local effort, inadequately maintained, he shall immediately report that fact to the local board.

Mode of improving the Supply of Education where defective.

If voluntary effort, after due representation made and reasonable time allowed, is still unable or unwilling to undertake the task, the Board shall have power, *and shall be required*, to levy a special rate on that parish for the building or enlarging of the school—the cost of such building or enlargement not to exceed a certain fixed sum per child, calculated on the number of children likely to be in average daily attendance; or, where a school is inadequately maintained, and the voluntary subscriptions and school pence do not amount to 10*s.* per child on the average daily attendance, then the Board may *and shall* levy a rate on the property in that parish to make up the deficiency, allowing, however, voluntary subscribers to the funds of the school to deduct from their proportion of the rate the amount of their subscription.*

Certificate in Teacher not to be required.

I would abolish the requirement of a certificate in the teacher as the condition of a school's receipt of aid either from the central office or from the local board; but the inspector shall be required to satisfy himself that the methods of teaching are sound, and the discipline effective; and a failure in either of these two points shall render the school liable to a proportionate diminution in the amount of aid from both sources that it would be otherwise entitled to receive. In order to test the modes of teaching, the inspector shall always require the principal teacher to give a lesson to a class in his presence on some easy subject, selected without previous notice by him.

Inspector's Duties in relation to Accounts and Payments of Grants.

The accounts of the school vouched by the managers in a simple intelligible form (which shall be the same for all schools) shall be presented to the inspector at his visit, and audited by him. The register also shall be examined and verified; and the inspector, besides his report to the central office, shall report to the local board twice a year, in a simple tabular form, embracing all the schools within the union-district which he has examined within the previous six months, the information requisite to enable them to make their grants to the respective schools. The grants, whether central or local, should be paid to all schools on the same days—say on the 15th of July and the 15th of January, according as their inspection falls either in the first or second half-yearly division of the year. On the same principle, the school year of the register

* Though elected by the Quarter Sessions, I do not mean that the county committee on education should consist solely of magistrates. It might include the bishop, the archdeacons, the cathedral clergy,—any person who from position or experience was likely to add influence or consideration to the body.

† The religious instruction of the school may safely be left in the hands of its managers; and in the case of Church of England schools the inspection of them in this matter can be handed over to the diocesan officer, or the Government inspector can examine their condition at the option of the managers. I would leave the point open and free.

‡ It would not be necessary that all inspectors should work alike, or all be paid alike. It would perhaps be better to have grades of salary that there might be opportunities of promotion. One inspector, I imagine, will be found equal to a county of the size of Berks, with its (about) 180,000 inhabitants, 200 parishes, and 350 schools. If not, he must be supplemented by an assistant, who, if there were not sufficient demand for his services in one, could work under two inspectors, half the year under each, in two adjacent counties. Counties like Middlesex, York, Lancaster, Devon, Norfolk, Kent, where either the population is very dense or the area very wide, would require several inspectors, who might each take his own district.

With such a disposition of the force, considerably more than five schools (which, I believe, is the present requirement) could be inspected in a week. It is important to limit the inspector to the county, by reason of his connexion with the Committee on Education of the Court of Quarter Sessions. In some cases, as in my own, the union district includes parishes in more than one county. The district should then be considered as belonging to that county in which the union-workhouse stands. I calculate that 25,000 schools, which must be about our present number, would require 100 inspectors; and I see no chance within any limit of time about which we need concern ourselves, of the force requiring to be increased beyond 150. At an average salary of 500*l.*, with 253*l.* for travelling and hotel expenses, the annual cost of 100 inspectors would be 75,000*l.*; of 150, would not exceed 120,000*l.* The inspection of training schools might be left to two inspectors-general; and though the local inspectors, as now, might preside at the annual examinations for admission and certificates, the revising and marking of the papers might be the work of examiners in the central office. Inspectors, after a certain period of service, should have a claim to pensions; or, if clergymen, might be provided for out of the ecclesiastical patronage of the Crown or of the Chancellor, which is at present distributed on no very defensible principle.

* It should be quite lawful for a small parish adjoining a larger, or for two small parishes together, to combine to support a common or central school. Also, as the parochial area of chargeability has been abolished, children may be allowed to attend any school that is most convenient to them within the union. In cases where the locality of their homes suggested it, an arrangement (such as prevails in Massachusetts and Canada) might easily be made for their attending school in an adjoining union. When a building rate has to be levied, it might be thrown, as for many other parochial purposes, over a fixed period of years, the money required being borrowed on the security of the rates in the meantime.

of every school should terminate either on the 30th of June or the 31st of December. Simple, uniform regulations of this kind would save much trouble and much circumlocution in preparing accounts, making reports, and paying grants.*

Estimate of the probable Amount of the local Rate-in-aid.

I have made an estimate of the probable cost of the local rate-in-aid in the union in which I myself reside, and which may be taken as a fair sample of a purely agricultural district; the estimate being founded on figures furnished me by my friend, the chairman of the board of guardians.

The union of Bradfield, mainly in the county of Berks, but extending also into the counties of Oxford and Southampton, contains 29 parishes, which are represented at the board by 30 elected and 18 *ex-officio* guardians. Out of these 48 gentlemen my local board of education would be formed. The aggregate population of the parishes composing the union is 15,771; the aggregate rateable value of the property liable to the poor-rate within the union is 99,116*l.* Of this population, at the rate of one in seven at school, there would be 2,253 children enrolled in the school-registers: at the ordinary rate of 75 per cent. on the enrolment, there would be 1,690 in average daily attendance; 1,690 seven and sixpences give 633*l.*, and this sum would be produced by a rate on the property within the union of about three halfpence in the pound. If the local contribution were reduced to 5*s.* per child, a penny rate would satisfy the requirements of the case. The police rate levied on the union last year was 1,144*l.*; I don't think that little more than half that sum can be considered extravagant to encourage education, which is, in effect, to diminish pauperism and crime, and almost to supersede policemen.

With brief remarks on two further important points this long letter will come to an end.

Provision in the Scheme for Liberty of Conscience.

Such a scheme, I shall be told, will necessitate a Conscience Clause, and break down our present system of denominationalism, and with it the only chance there is of maintaining the religious character of our schools. It certainly will not break down denominationalism, for it is constructed expressly to take and deal with each school just as it finds it. Nor need it necessitate a conscience clause, at least not a conscience clause to which anyone who recognizes the right of parents to direct the religious training of their children, ought reasonably to object. My own principal dislike to the Conscience Clause in any of the manifold shapes into which it has as yet been tortured, is that while exempting children from the religious instruction of one school, it takes no security from the parents that they shall receive any religious instruction at all. It seems to me that a simpler, and quite as effective a remedy for imagined intolerance on the part of school managers as the so-called Conscience Clause is likely to be, would be that parents really aggrieved in this matter should have a right of petition or complaint to the local board; and that this board, having satisfied themselves that there was no other suitable school within reach of such children, and having received from the parents a guarantee that the children should regularly attend a Sunday school and a place of worship somewhere, might be empowered to require from the school managers that they should be exempted from the religious teaching of which their parents disapproved, or from attendance at a mode of worship to which they could not conscientiously conform.†

Some excellent persons will be frightened even at this concession to what they deem a vicious principle. For my own part, I cannot see that the principle is vicious; nor have I the least idea that the concession will be either largely or vexatiously used. There are circumstances in which the introduction of "the thin end of the wedge" is really threatening; there are other circumstances in which it creates needless alarm.

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Compulsory School Attendance.

The other point upon which I ought, perhaps, to say one word is the point of compulsory education. Before people press that remedy of our admitted evils very strongly, they should at least read carefully what Mr. Pattison and Mr. Matthew Arnold have said of the effects of the compulsory systemy in Germany and French Switzerland. To the public spirit of the people, and not to legislative enactments, each of these gentlemen attributes the flourishing condition of German and Swiss education. "The schooling," says Mr. Pattison, "is compulsory only in name." Mr. Arnold doubts whether the Swiss law is ever "really executed at all;" and adds that though primary instruction is most prosperous in Canton Vaud, "the "making it compulsory by law has not added one iota "to its prosperity."* In the New England States the compulsory law is notoriously a dead letter on the statute book. Where the schools are full, and that is by no means everywhere, they are filled solely by moral influences. "Truancy and absenteeism," where they exist, snap their fingers at the law.

Such, I expect, would be the effects of compulsory legislation otherwise than where the children can be reached in masses, as by the Factory Acts, here. Who is to execute it? who to denounce the truants? who to say to the labouring man, with his wages of 10*s.* or 12*s.* a week, "You shall forego the earnings of your "child's labour; you must send him to school."

School Attendance should be made a Condition of out-door Relief.

I certainly think that it ought to be made a condition of out-door relief that the children of such paupers (say under the age of 10 years), should be sent to school, and the guardians in such cases should pay the school fees. But I cannot see my way to any practical scheme,—and an impracticable scheme would only do harm,—of general compulsory education. The feeling of the country is not ripe for it; the social circumstances of the people are unfavourable to it. If one could be framed and worked so as to secure the end at which we all desire to aim, no one would rejoice at it more than I. But my experience is that where there are good schools, compulsion is unnecessary; and where there are bad schools, my conviction is that it would fail. Whether adopted or not, it in no way affects the working of my scheme.

Objections to the Scheme answered.

1. *The Objection that it would not suit Towns.*

My scheme, both at the time it was put forth and subsequently, had and has had to run the gauntlet of criticism. Mr. Bruce, introducing his bill in the last session of Parliament, while admitting that the plan might suit the case of rural populations, thought that my field of vision had been limited to the "sunny slopes of Berkshire," and that I had not contemplated the case of thickly peopled towns. I confess that, in framing my scheme, naturally from my own position, rural schools were uppermost in my mind; but I venture

* Evening schools, *mutatis mutandis*, might be aided on the same principle, though not necessarily at the same rates, as day schools. The necessity of their organic connexion with the day school should be abolished. They require encouragement in every way.

† I am quite aware that a stern logician, unterrified by practical consequences, may easily drive me into a corner, and accuse me of inconsistency and faltering in dealing with my own principles. I uphold the parent's right in one sentence, I shall be told, and ignore it in the next. I confess that in practical matters I do not seek perfect logical consistency. Nor, indeed, is the parents' right absolute; it is limited by their duties to the society of which they are members. If, as in the modern philosophic mode of putting the point, in a *civilized* country, parents have no right to allow their children to grow up in the barbarism of *ignorance*, neither in a *Christian* country have they the right to allow them to grow up in the barbarism of *irreligion*. My plan, while it liberates, also directs, the conscience.

* *See* Commissioners' Report (1861), vol i. pp. 193–5.

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to think that the machinery, in its principles at any rate, if not in every detail, would be found applicable to any district, whether in town or country, maintaining its own poor.

2. *The Objection that it would throw the Schools into the Hands of the Rate-payers.*

Another more formidable objection has been, that any scheme of a local rate, however carefully guarded, would really throw the whole fortunes of the school into the hands of the rate-payers, which in many localities would be to lower, instead of raising, its present standard of efficiency. I do not see that any such result could follow from my scheme. The rate-payers could only act upon the school through the local board; and the local board's relations to the school are financial merely. I have been told that they would not be content with this position; that if they paid money, they would demand control. I doubt if many boards will be actuated by sufficient educational zeal, even to care about nominally having the control; I am sure that very few would like the trouble of exercising it. Nor are the payment of money and the power of control always correlative. Rate-payers pay money to the county constabulary, county bridges, gaols, asylums, without retaining any control over its expenditure.

3. *The Objection that it would crush voluntary effort.*

Others have objected that the principle of voluntaryism and the principle of a rate cannot stand together. But the principle of voluntaryism has stood for 30 years by the side of the principle of grants paid out of the general taxation of the country, and because the amount of this grant is to be cut in two, and half or two-thirds of it is to come from a central, and the other half or one-third is to come from a local source, I do not see why the knell of voluntaryism needs be sounded.

4. *The Objection that it would issue in Secularism.*

A final objection has been, that such a scheme must issue in secular education. With provision for liberty of conscience such as I have suggested I cannot discern the necessity. I do not pretend to see far into the womb of the future, and events move quickly. If the general mind of the country changes in respect of the advantages of denominationalism, we may expect secular education, not before. And I hope, before the mind of the nation is finally made up on the point, there will be some one of more authority than I to tell them what they will lose by the change, as well as what they will gain. They will gain theoretic simplicity of system; they will facilitate the administration of a bureau; but they will impair the influence and lose the co-operation of the clergy, the only class of men that at present are really forward in the work; and they will forfeit for the schools those vigorous efforts of religious zeal which originally created, and still maintain, things as they are.

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MEDICAL AND SANITARY EVIDENCE,

1. *W. H. Vipan, Esq., M.R.C.S.*, practising at Uxbridge, Middlesex, but examined at Ingoldisthorpe, Norfolk, where he was on a visit.

Has known this neighbourhood for 10 years. Is surgeon to the Royal Elthorne Militia (5th Middlesex), and also examines recruits for the line. Probably examines in the course of the year 200 recruits for the militia and at least 100 for the line. Finds the most prevalent diseases and malformations in recruits from agricultural districts to be flat feet, varicose veins, knock-knees, lateral curvature of the spine, hypertrophy of the heart, and rheumatism. Attributes most of these to the early age at which the men, when boys, went to work beyond their strength, or to the number of hours they have been kept on their legs at one time in heavy boots; or, in the case of curvature of the spine, to their having attempted to lift weights to which their strength was not equal. Is sure that a boy of eight or 10 years of age, supported by the imperfect nourishment which is all that an agricultural labourer can procure, ought not to be put to more than six continuous hours' labour in the day; at 12 he might be equal to eight hours labour. If four hours are considered a sufficiently long beat for a military sentinel, well fed and well clothed, 10 or 12 hours crow-keeping, which is commonly said not to be exhaustive work, must be excessive for a boy of 10 or 12 years of age. The circulation becomes impeded, and upon the proper maintenance of the circulation depend the growth and physical development of the boy. Observes a want of muscular development in the agricultural labourer; he has no calves to his legs, and no development of the biceps muscle of the arm. When a man is born with a (physically) strong heart, which will propel the blood forcibly throughout the frame, the ill results are less obvious; but if the action of the heart is feeble, and the circulation of the blood defective, the physical development is correspondingly imperfect, and would suffer from anything like prematurely exhausting work. Hence the prevalence of chilblains, varicose veins, cardiac dropsy. To expose a boy of 10 or 12 years of age for 12 hours a day to the cutting easterly winds that prevail in this part of the country in March, April, May, and June, must not only be detrimental to his physical growth, but is nearly sure to develope the seeds of any disease that may be latent in his constitution. Against the asserted healthiness of outdoor employment, as compared with work in a confined factory, must be set off the inadequate clothing and nutriment with which that outdoor work is commonly done. The 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* a week, earned by a boy of nine or 10 years of age, is perfectly inadequate to supply him with a sufficient amount of food to counterbalance the exhaustion produced by exposure and work, while his clothing is frequently so thin that in severe weather the proper circulation of the blood is impossible.

On physical grounds, again, the employment of girls under 16 in field labour is most objectionable. Exposure to cold and wet at the age when the female constitution is peculiarly susceptible of derangement is likely to lay the foundation of many serious diseases. Hard work, like wheat-tying or turnip-drawing, especially the latter, when the ground is at all hard, must be very mischievous to women in any stage of pregnancy, and is likely to produce miscarriage or abortion. (Sept. 18, 1867.)

2. *W. H. Borham, Esq., M.D.*, practising in Halstead and its neighbourhood (Essex). Has been here five years. As a beginner, his practice lies chiefly among the poor, the benefit clubs, and the farmers. Is medical officer of 11 clubs. Knows the neighbouring villages very well. Has seen worse cottages in other counties, but considers that about one cottage out of every three, though not absolutely uninhabitable, is yet in such a dilapidated condition as to be very unfavourable to the health of the inmates, and, as a fact, generates a great quantity of rheumatic disease. Considers that sanitary legislation, when left to be carried out by a local board, is certain to be so much affected by local influences and personal interests as really to evacuate all the purposes of the Act. Thinks that no beneficial results can be expected till independent inspection is introduced into the system. Has seen in his own practice that the overcrowding of cottages is productive of the most deplorable and disgusting results. There is nothing like sufficient cottage accommodation in Halstead; believes that if 40 new cottages were built to-morrow, they would be immediately occupied. Thinks that if a company were formed for the purpose, who could procure land at a reasonable price, cottages could be built of a proper size and description so as to pay a clear five per cent. on the outlay.

With regard to the physical results of the employment of children of tender years in field work, thinks that no boy under 10, or even 12, is really fit to encounter the vicissitudes of our variable climate, which he must have to go through if in regular employ. Eight hours a day is as long a time as any boy of 10 ought to be employed. If kept longer on his legs

the cartilages of the joints become disorganized, and produce stunted growth, curvature of the spine, and often that scrofulous diathesis which prevails to such an extent among the English poor. The lads suffer lamentably from chilblains in the winter, even in this district where, speaking generally, they are better clad than in others which he has seen. Thinks at the present prices of farm produce the labourer is underpaid. A farmer told him two days ago that he should consider himself doing well if he got 15*l.* a load for his wheat, which he is now selling at from 17*l.* to 17*l.* 10*s.* Why should not part of this difference go into the pocket of the labourer? Thinks that an absolute prohibition of boys under 10 years of age going to work in the fields would produce very great hardship in the case where, with a large young family, there was nothing but the father's earnings coming in. The only remedy that he can see in such cases is an increase of the farm labourer's wages. Can see no other way of solving the problem but by a compulsory system of education, accompanied by an increased rate of wages. (Oct. 16, 1867.)

[I read the above evidence of Dr. Borham to Mr. Proctor, surgeon, of Witham (Essex), one of the medical officers of the Witham Union (Oct. 22), and also to Mr. Matthews, one of the medical officers of the Horsham Union, Sussex (Oct. 30), and each of those gentlemen expressed their entire concurrence in the same, as far as it related to the physical ill effects of field labour, when long-continued, on children of tender years, and also as regards the evil of overcrowding and deficient accommodation in cottages.]

3. *W. Batley, Esq.*, of Chichester, surgeon to the Sussex Light Infantry Militia. No regimental records have been kept since 1860, when the regiment was disembodied. In 1860, of 304 men inspected only seven were rejected; but the serjeant only brings to the surgeon such men as he has examined and thinks likely to pass. He is not prepared to draw any conclusion unfavourable to the health of the agricultural labourer from what he has seen; but most of his recruits come from Brighton and the towns. Finds the regular hours, exercise, and dietary in the militia have a wonderfully improving influence on the constitution of the recruits. A special evil is found to emerge during the period for which the militia are called together for training. At such times the low beerhouse keepers entice the men into their houses by the attraction of two or three loose women; the young men frequently get diseased in consequence. Flat feet and cramped toes are two of the commonest causes of the rejection of recruits. Their walk is deficient in springiness, and hence there is no development of the calf of the leg. About half the regiment probably would come from agricultural districts; finds the men, when he examines them on coming up for their yearly training, very defective in personal cleanliness. No record has been kept of the amount of education possessed by the recruits, but is under the distinct impression that a very large proportion of them cannot read or write. Regrets to see the early age at which young lads begin to smoke, and the extent to which the practice is carried. Excessive smoking, particularly in the period of growth, lowers the tone of the nervous and muscular systems, and is likely to lay the foundation of heart disease. Instead of being depressed, while growth is going on, the system requires to be sustained. Smoking lowers the nervous power of the body, prevents the proper assimilation of food, and thereby deteriorates the quality of the blood. The heart is thereby deprived of its supply of blood of a sufficiently stimulating quality. It endeavours to make up for want of power by rapidity of beat; this has a tendency to produce palpitations and functional derangement; and this, in many cases, issues in organic disease. (Nov. 20, 1867.)

4. —— *Cattle, Esq.*, surgeon, practising at Newent (Gloucestershire). Speaks of the accidents that are constantly occurring in consequence of young boys being put in charge of horses. A boy perhaps starts with his waggon and team, to fetch a load of coal from the Forest of Dean, soon after midnight, to save the turnpike gates; does not return till 4 or 5 o'clock on the next afternoon; what with weariness, want of food, or perhaps too much cider on an empty stomach, he falls off the shaft and the wheel goes over him. Two cases of the kind have lately happened; in one, the wheel went over the boy and killed him; in the other, a leg had to be amputated. Another case mentioned, of exhaustion, in which the same boy was sent four or five times in the week to Gloucester and back, a distance of 11 miles each way, after manure. The boys suffer from excoriated feet, chilblains, &c.; and must, or at least do, work, whether they are fit to do so or not. Cases of incest of the most horrible description, between fathers and daughters, brothers and sisters, are not at all of infrequent occurrence, in consequence of the crowded way in which the people are obliged to sleep in the cottages.* Mr. Cattle took me a drive one afternoon through his district and showed me some of the worst of these dens; some of them, such as the parish cottages of Taynton, ought to be condemned as utterly unfit for human habitation; and speaking generally, anything more deplorable than the way in which large masses of the population in the neighbourhood of Newent,—in Kilcote, Gorsley, Linton, and on Glass House Hill,—are housed cannot be conceived. The state of their homes tells upon the whole physical condition of the people. Many of them never wash; the flannel undervest is perhaps only taken off when it is worn out. Their dietary is correspondingly low — many families have nothing but bread from one week's end to another. Girls suffer a good deal from pulling, topping, and tailing turnips; they get wet up to their knees. (Jan. 29, 1868.)

5. *Mr. Samuel Clarke*, sanitary inspector for the city of Norwich.—Has had 20 years' experience in this capacity in rural and urban districts. Knows the whole county (Norfolk). Was specially engaged about three years ago by a local journal to report on the state of the cottages occupied by the labouring poor, and prosecuted the inquiry in all parts of the country, extending over a period of four months. The results were published in the Norfolk News, and portions of them in the London Times. Is of decided opinion that at this moment, the majority of cottages in the county occupied by the rural poor are of such a construction as is incompatible with their occupants growing up in habits of common decency—let alone morality. It is quite common, so that instances, if necessary, might be given to any extent, to find any number of persons, from 4 to 10 or even more, of both sexes and of all ages, married and single, sleeping indiscriminately together, without any partition or curtain, in a single chamber. Cases have been known of a grown-up brother and sister, and of a mother and grown-up son, occupying the same bed. People do not attempt to disguise these facts, and generally regret them, but say "What can we do?" The common lodging-houses in the city of Norwich, as regards ventilation and provisions for decency, though filled with mendicants and tramps of the lowest class, are patterns of comfort compared with many of the homes of the agricultural poor. Many of these miserable homes are the property, not of small speculators, but of the large landowners. Improvement in the cottages of the poor is imperatively demanded, and, though advancing, is advancing far too slowly. The condition of the homes of the poor more than neutralizes all the efforts that are made to elevate them socially or morally. Before any considerable improvement can be expected in this respect, the inspection of the sanitary arrangements, &c. of the cottages in each Union district must be entrusted to some officer (like the excise man), independent of the local authorities, empowered and required to take legal proceedings in any

* Mr. Barton, of Long Stratton, Norfolk, one of the medical officers of the Depwade Union, declared to me, in conversation, that a similar state of things existed in his district, and attributed its existence to the same cause, the over-crowding of their homes.

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case where the laws of health or decency are manifestly violated. The powers given by the present Sanitary Acts, and the general force of public opinion are far too weak to prevent, or even largely to mitigate, the evils that exist. The water supply (to take one instance) is frequently very defective, and there are no provisions in the Acts for enforcing its improvement. The privy accommodation is also generally defective, and many cottages would have none, were it not fixed up by the occupants. In fact, it is impossible to use too strong language in describing the condition of many of the cottages, considered as habitations of human beings in a civilised country. (July 20, 1867.)

[I could have multiplied these statements to any extent; but as the above opinions are given by gentlemen thoroughly competent, from their position and experience, to pronounce them, and embrace all the main medical and sanitary features of the question, as well as are, on the whole, remarkably harmonious, and entirely independent, I considered it unnecessary to add to their number.]

6. Report made by A. V. Dennis, Esq., M.R.C.S., to the Burnham District Sanitary Committee.

Burnham,
September 21st, 1866.

Gentlemen,

I have visited every cottage in Burnham Thorpe, and have made the following memoranda respecting the worst cases of overcrowding:—

1. Mary Futter. One lower and one upper room. In the former she sleeps with two children and a sick son aged 22. In the upper room are five children, the eldest a boy of 16.

2. Charles Kemp. He has one upper room. He and his wife and four children sleep in it.

3. Thomas Futter. He has two upper rooms (together 12 feet square). In one two young men aged 25 and 23, and in the other the father, his wife, and five children.—These young men and two children have had low fever.

4. David King. He has but one upper room. He, his wife, and infant sleep below. Seven children, including a boy of 16 and a girl of 15, in the bedroom.

5. William Grint. One bedroom. In it sleep himself, wife, and five children,—three boys aged 20, 14, and 5, and two girls aged 12 and 9.

6. George Howell. Two small upper rooms, in which seven persons sleep, including two young men aged 23 and 20.

7. James Stitch. One upper room. He, his wife, and infant sleep in the lower room, and five children in the upper room.

8. Robert Futter. One upper room, in which sleep six children. Two persons in the lower room.

9. Jacob Batterby, with his wife and six children, two of them girls above 15, sleep in their only bedroom.

10. Thomas Dunn. One upper room. In it sleep himself, his wife, three grown-up daughters, and one grown-up son.

11. William Greeves. One bedroom. Ten persons sleep in it,—himself, his wife, and eight children. The woman told me that her husband was obliged to open the window frequently during the night.—One child has had low fever.

12. Robert Hewell. He has one bedroom, and sleeps in it with his wife and five children.

Now there can be no doubt that in all these cases sufficient air cannot be contained in the rooms for so many beings. In almost all the cases the children are blanched and unhealthy-looking; and although I do not think that such a state of things is certain to produce fever, I am sure that when the atmosphere is as it were charged with it, it is more likely to attack some one in those cottages than where a purer air is breathed. I have never found Burnham Thorpe an unhealthy place in respect to fevers of any kind; on the contrary, it has been often remarked that whatever epidemics, as scarlet fever, small pox, or measles, existed in Burnham or Creake, or any of the neighbouring villages, it rarely spread with any severity in Burnham Thorpe. But the diseases most common and most fatal there are those depending upon strumous or scrofulous constitutions; and there can be no question that these, if not really produced, are intensely aggravated by the want of good and pure air. There probably is something in the situation of the village,—low, damp, undrained, between two ranges of hills; and another evil may exist in the frequent and repeated intermarriages of the people; but I think that more blame may be ascribed to the want of cleanliness and the overcrowding in their dwellings of so many of them than to any other cause.

On the score of morality I need say nothing; but it is terrible, young men and girls sleeping in the same room. Can there be a doubt that this is the first cause of the complete absence of all modesty which is so lamentably common among girls of the labouring class?

I have only to add that the people see the evil themselves, both as regards the morality and the healthiness of their children, and they say,—But, sir, what can we do?

I am, gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,
A. V. Dennis.

7. Cottage Accommodation in the Parishes in the Union of Swaffham, County of Norfolk, summarized from Returns made by the Relieving Officers, by order of Mr. Edmund Oldfield, Chairman of the Board of Guardians, Dec. 31, 1867.

[The returns in question are too voluminous to print in detail. They contain a tabulated statement for each parish in the union, of the number of cottages, the names of the owners and occupiers of each, the number of each family, the number of bedrooms in each cottage, and a space for the relieving officer's remarks. I have summarized these results into two tables, corresponding with the two districts into which the union is divided. The facts remarked upon in the notes are derived either from the figures in the returns or the relieving officers' "remarks," or information which I obtained myself in the several parishes or at my different meetings. I believe that both the figures and the facts are as accurately stated as statistics, dealing with such shifting materials, ever can be.]

Mr. George's District.—18 Parishes.

No.	Parish.	Acreage.	Cottage Population.	No. of Cottages with			Owners of Cottages.
				One Bedroom.	Two Bedrooms	Three Bedrooms	
1	Beechamwell	2,995	183	9	33	19	—— Fielden, Esq.
2	Buckenham Tofts.	654	50	1	3	7	Lord Ashburton.
3	Caldecote -	673	30	0	5	0	Sir H. Bedingfield, Bart.
4	Cockleycley -	4,012	203	2	30	15	T. R. Buckworth, Esq.
5	Colveston -	861	44	0	4	4	T. T. Amherst, Esq.
6	Didlington -	1,854	46	3	5	4	T. T. Amherst, Esq.
7	Foulden - -	3,394	393	15	46	18	T. T. Amherst, Esq. Edmund Oldfield, Esq., and others.
8	Gooderstone -	2,785	377	20	60	6	An open parish, with 15 or 20 proprietors.
9	Hillborough -	3,101	252	22	26	5	J. R. Mills, Esq.
10	Ickburgh -	1,599	136	2	17	11	Lord Ashburton.
11	Langford -	1,306	56	0	0	10	Lord Ashburton.
12	Narborough -	3,376	261	21	29	8	Five or six proprietors.
13	Narford - -	2,377	92	7	14	1	Andrew Fountaine, Esq.
14	Newton - -	1,062	52	2	9	0	Three proprietors.
15	Oxborough -	2,519	248	9	24	19	Sir H. Bedingfield, Bart.
16	Shingham -	975	52	4	6	0	—— Fielden, Esq.
17	Southacre -	2,292	52	4	7	0	Andrew Fountaine Esq.
18	Swaffham -	7,550	1,609	132	265	30	Various.

Notes.

No. 1.—Two of the single-chambered cottages in Beechamwell, occupied in one case by a family of four (W. Evett's), in the other by a family of five (R. Barratt's), are described as having "very small rooms."

No. 2.—Of the seven cottages set down in column 7 two have four bedrooms each. At meeting (No. 47)

it was stated that only "two of the cottages in Buckenham Tofts are occupied by labourers." The acreage would require 13, at the rate of two cottages to the 100 acres, which on the light land in this part of the union is considered an adequate supply.

No. 3.—At my meeting, No. 49, I was informed that at "Caldecote there is not a sufficiency of resident labour or of cottages." At the rate above mentioned, there ought to be 13 instead of five. As an illustration of the effect of the change of the Law of Settlement on the rates paid in close parishes, "Mr. Henry Oldfield" (the occupier of the land at Caldecote), under the old system paid 1*l.* a quarter; he now pays 9*l.* a quarter." The rate for the union in 1867 was 2*s.* in the 1*l.*

No. 4.—There does not appear to be any gross case of crowding in this parish. In each of the single-chambered cottages there only reside two people. To show how hard it is sometimes to sort people, one of the cottages in col. 7, which has four bedrooms (Buck's), is only occupied by two people. There are, meanwhile, families six, seven, and eight in number, occupying cottages with only two chambers.

No. 5.—The four three-chambered cottages are new. The cottages are, I believe, all occupied by labourers; but eight are manifestly too few for 860 acres of land; double the number would not be too many. A family of four (Webster's) occupies a cottage with three chambers; a family of six (Bonde's) occupies one with only two.

No. 6.—One of the cottages in column 7 (the school-house), has five chambers. Of these 12 cottages only two are occupied by agricultural labourers. The tenants of the rest are all dependents of the squire's; his man cook, his gas maker, his groom, two of his carpenters, his gardener, and two of his gamekeepers. One cottage is occupied by a widow. In only one of the three single-chambered cottages is there a family, and that only a family of three.

No. 7.—There appear to be some bad instances of crowding in this parish. In the double-chambered cottages are families of eight, nine, and 10 people; in the single-chambered cottages families of six, seven, and eight. One of the latter character with seven occupants, a family by the name of Darsley, is described as a "house not fit to live in." In two others, with five and seven occupants respectively, the single chamber is called "a very small room." Mr. Oldfield owns 22 cottages, of which one has four chambers, 16 have three, and five have two. Some of Mr. Oldfield's cottage tenants have very large families; in one case there are nine, in another 11, in another 12, in another 13. They all occupy three-chambered cottages; the family of 11 (James Howard's) are in a cottage with four chambers. How can families of this size be decently housed with less?

No. 8. There are three empty cottages in this parish. Three "town houses,"—occupied happily, in two cases, by only one person; in the other case, by two,—have no bedroom. There seem to be cases of overcrowding. One family of eight persons (Mary Bassett's) live in a cottage with only one bedroom; there is another case of seven, and two cases of six. On the other hand, there are three instances of cottages with two bedrooms—Tuft's, Whalebelly's, and Clarke's—occupied by single tenants. Gooderstone is an open parish, which serves the purposes of some of the surrounding close ones. At my meeting, No. 49, I was told that "if everybody living in Gooderstone "worked in Gooderstone there would be a considerable surplus of labour. There are men living in "Gooderstone who walk five miles a day to their "work."

No. 9. In the return from this parish (No. 57) it is stated that "the accommodation of the greater part "of the people is quite inadequate to their numbers; "the bedrooms are overcrowded, with no proper separation of the sexes." It will be observed that there is a very large proportion of single-chambered cottages. Several of these have four and five people sleeping in them; one has six; one has seven, and one, described by the relieving officer as "a very "small room," has 11! One cottage is empty.

No. 10. The worst cases of crowding here appear to be in the case of two double-chambered cottages, occupied respectively by eight and ten persons. If these could be "sorted" into some of the three-chambered houses, where sometimes there are only three people, it would be an improvement. One cottage is empty.

No. 11. Of the 10 cottages in column 7 three have four chambers. There is no crowding here, but 10 cottages are not more than half the number required for 1,300 acres.

No. 12. In my meeting No. 51, it is reported that "the cottages chiefly belong to the landowners. The "condition of the majority is good, very superior to "most parishes, but there are six or seven inferior "ones. They are not well distributed in relation to "the farms, nor are the farms adequately supplied "with cottages; one farm of 800 acres has only two "cottages; another of 320 has only two also, and in "one of these last, which has no upper story and only "two rooms on the ground floor, each only 10 feet by "7 feet in size, there were 13 people lodging during "the late harvest." In the relieving officer's return there are two single-chambered cottages occupied severally by six and seven people, and in one cottage (M. Bell's), where there is said to be only a "*very* "*small room to live in,*" *and no bedchamber at all*, there reside eight persons.

No. 13. There does not appear to be any serious case of overcrowding here, though in one (J. Palmer's) five persons sleep in one bedroom. The cottages are said to be in good order, and regularly inspected by the proprietor's agent. (*Notes of Meeting, No.* 51. But there is reported to be a deficiency of labour in the parish, and 2,400 acres would require 48 cottages instead of 22.

No. 14. The two single-chambered cottages are occupied by four and five persons respectively. Two cottages belonging to the same proprietor, are reported by the relieving officer, "not fit to live in." The supply of cottages is not more than half up to the proper mark, and the parish has to depend for its labour upon Castleacre.

No. 15. There is some discrepancy, which I cannot reconcile, between the figures of the relieving officer and those given me at my meeting, No. 49. Mr. George makes 52 cottages, Mr. Thurtell only 38. Probably the account of the difference is, that the one reckons all the cottages, many of which would be occupied by persons connected with the hall; the other only computes those occupied by agricultural labourers. Anyhow, there is reported to be a deficiency of cottages; some new ones have been recently built, but many also have been pulled down.

No. 16. The description given of the cottages in this parish, at my Meeting No. 50, is, "There is a "deficiency of cottages; the older ones are of a bad "description, dilapidated, and many of them crowded. "They are built of clay lump, and the rent is the same "as at Beechamwell (belonging to the same proprietor), "though the cottages and gardens are both inferior." The size of the families occupying the four single-chambered cottages is respectively four, six, eight, and nine persons.

No. 17. Both cottage and labour supply in this parish is deficient. Labour is imported from Castleacre, about a mile distant. A family of six persons (Reynold's) have only "one very small bedroom." From 35 to 40 cottages would, I suppose, be none too many for the wants of this parish, at the rate of two to the 100 acres, unless there is a good deal of waste land.

No. 18. There are 55 empty cottages in Swaffham. The small proportion of those occupied that have three bedrooms, and the large number that have only one, must excite attention. The relieving officer's return shows a lamentable number of cases of overcrowding. Several of the single-chambered cottages are occupied by six, seven, eight, and nine persons, and in one case, where the sleeping room is said to be small,

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there are herded 10 persons. The cottages also are badly distributed. The parish extends over an area of upwards of 7,500 acres, yet not more than 25 cottages are said to be outlying. (*See Notes of Meeting, No.* 52.)

MR. WALKER'S DISTRICT.—15 PARISHES.

No.	Parish.	Acreage.	Cottage Population.	No. of Cottages with One Bedroom.	Two Bedrooms	Three Bedrooms	Owners of Cottages.
1	Ashill -	2,990	571	28	80	17	Various.
2	Bodney - -	2,614	98	1	1	16	Lord Ashburton.
3	Bradenham, East.	2,329	251	4	50	2	16 or 17 proprietors.
4	Bradenham, West.	1,682	205	13	33	0	15 or 16 proprietors.
5	Cressingham, Great.	2,396	427	34	47	5	Several proprietors.
6	Cressingham, Little.	1,826	180	3	31	4	J. R. Mills, Esq.
7	Holme Hale -	2,598	304	25	45	7	Various proprietors.
8	Houghton -	601	38	2	7	0	E. A. Applewhaite, Esq.
9	Necton - -	3,799	620	43	84	21	Many proprietors.
10	Pickenham, North.	1,610	216	13	36	5	Several owners.
11	Pickenham, South.	1,767	107	10	16	1	E. A. Applewhaite, Esq.
12	Saham Toney	3,946	941	41	145	42	A number of owners mostly small.
13	Sporle - -	4,180	609	42	93	10	A great many small owners. Lord Walsingham.
14	Stanford -	2,607	134	2	18	6	Thos. Barton and J. R. Mills, Esqs.
15	Threxton -	1,059	50	0	8	4	

NOTES.

A feature in Mr. Walker's district is the large number of unoccupied cottages. In Ashill, 5; in East Bradenham, 5; in West Bradenham, 4; in Great Cressingham, 1; in Holme Hale, 4; in Necton, 14; in North Pickenham, 7; in Saham Toney, 11; in Sporle, 19. 70 vacant cottages in all.

No. 1.—The relieving officer reports many of the cottages in Ashill to be out of repair, and it is evident from his figures that many are overcrowded. There are families of seven, eight, nine and ten people with only one bedroom to occupy. One case (Christmas Palmer's) is specially signalized as a "bad" one.

No. 2.—The cottages here are evidently good, and as evidently insufficient. It is reported at my meeting, No. 46, that there may be in the parish 500 acres of uncultivated land; but, even so, there would be a demand for 40 cottages instead of 18. One of the cottages in column 7 has four bedrooms.

No. 3.—The small proportion of three-chambered cottages will be observed. Some of those with two chambers have nine and ten persons living in them. The owners are generally persons of small means.

No. 4.—The cottage supply is sufficient, and the cottages themselves are reported to be in decent order. Three of those with one chamber are occupied by two families of six each, and one of seven, while, *per contra*, some of those with three bedrooms have only three, four and five persons occupying them; and one cottage with five chambers has only three inmates (widow Chaplin's). It appears to be the occupier's own property.

No. 5.—It will be seen from the figures that the cottage accommodation in Great Cressingham is bad. The generality of the cottages are described (in *Notes of Meeting, No.* 46,) "to be in a bad condition in "respect of repair;" the overcrowding is less than it was 10 years ago, owing to a decrease of 50 in the number of the population. Some bad cases, however, are mentioned by the relieving officer; one where 11 people, several of whom are over 16 years of age, sleep in two chambers; another (John Belverstone's) where 10 people, five of whom are over 16, sleep "all in one small room!" Five, six and seven inmates are common numbers to find in the single-chambered cottages.

No. 6.—There are cases of over-crowding here. One is mentioned by Mr. Walker in which six persons, three of whom are over 16 years, occupy one "very small" bedroom. There is a deficient proportion of three-chambered cottages.

No. 7.—Several considerable families live in the single-chambered cottages; one family of five persons, four of six, two of seven, and one of eight. At my meeting, No. 45, the cottages were described as being "not generally in good condition." There is a very small proportion with three chambers.

No. 9.—The state of things in Necton, as I saw with my own eyes, and as appears from the relieving officer's return, is very bad. There is a very large number of single-chambered cottages, and numerous tenements are shockingly out of repair. Many of the rooms are described by the relieving officer as "very small;" three cottages are reported as "so dilapidated as not to be fit for habitation;" of four more it is said, "these four cottages are all in a bad state "of repair, and the bedrooms are quite unfit to sleep "in;" and of the single-chambered cottages eight are occupied by five, three by six, and two by seven inmates. Even where there is nominally more than one chamber the rector appends a note to the return to the effect, that "often there is no door between the "bedrooms, and in some cases the partition is not "worth calling a division."

No. 10.—Some of the single-chambered cottages have five, six, and seven inmates. Four cottages with three bedrooms have only two inmates each, and one with four bedrooms has only four. There needs some "sorting" at North Pickenham.

No. 11.—There are six, seven, and in one case nine, people living in cottages with a single bedroom. In two of the double-chambered houses there are also nine and ten persons.

No. 12.—Some of the cottages at Saham Toney were described at my meeting, No. 45, as being "as bad as there are anywhere." The relieving officer does not signalize any special cases either of dilapidation or over-crowding. The single-chambered houses are less crowded than is sometimes found elsewhere. I only observe two bad cases; one where there are seven inmates, the other where there are nine. In this last case (William Drew's) the officer remarks, "This family is very dirty, and much "neglected by their parents."

No. 13.—Every eye will be struck with the small number of cottages with three chambers in this large parish. The medical officer (Mr. Thomas), at my meeting, No. 48, reported the cottages on the whole as "in good repair, but with insufficient accommoda-"tion for the families." Of the single-chambered houses I observe four have six inmates, two have seven, and one has nine. Saint Katherine's Hospital, in London, owns 2,100 acres of land in the parish, but is only credited in the relieving officer's return with the ownership of three cottages. It ought to have ten times the number.

No. 14.—Of the 2,600 acres in Stanford only about 1,800 are under cultivation. The supply of cottages is hardly equal to this, and I observe in the return that in five of the cottages there are lodgers. The largest families are generally in the largest cottages; but in one case (Hancock's) there is a cottage with three bedrooms and only three inmates, while there are two single-chambered cottages with four and five persons each.

No. 15.—At Threxton, again, 12 cottages are insufficient for 1,000 acres, and a deficiency of labour is felt, the extra supply being drawn from Saham Toney, Watton, and Cressingham. Of the six cottages belonging to Mr. Barton four have three chambers. The worst case of crowding is that of a family of eight in a tenement with only two bedrooms.

EVIDENCE ACCOMPANYING MR. HENLEY'S REPORT.

APPENDIX A.—CORRESPONDENCE AND PAPERS.

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6. Letter from Mr. W. Wightman as to bastardy returns.
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8. Letter from Mr. George Brumell, enclosing resolution of the Morpeth Board of Guardians.
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Raby Castle, Darlington,
November 22, 1867.

SIR,

IN reply to your letter of the 20th I beg to say I am glad to have the opportunity of giving my opinion on the subjects referred to.

For labourers' cottages, generally, a good kitchen, scullery, and pantry on the ground floor, and two bedrooms over, are sufficient. The husband or man and wife prefer sleeping down stairs; they feel it more convenient, and in winter warmer. If three bedrooms are made they are quite unable to furnish them, so that it seems a waste of money to provide so many rooms. I should say (from experience) not 10 out of 100 could furnish three bedrooms. It was very common in this and the adjoining counties, and the custom prevails to some extent yet, not to ceil the kitchens; the boards and joists were drest, and kept clean, the object being twofold, first to save fuel, and second to have the bedrooms always aired. I do not advocate this plan, but where fuel is a long way to cart and very expensive there was a considerable saving. I think the Inclosure Commissioners would act prudently in allowing new work to be placed on existing walls, providing they are strong and good, and that their inspector should certify them to be so. It really is a waste of time and money to remove a building when it can be readily adapted to or used as a portion of that to be built.

With regard to the bearing powers of timber I think, and I am confirmed in my conclusions by 30 years' experience, that the walls are needlessly loaded with timber by your scantlings. Just let me give an instance. Cottage for M. Dowson, Teesdale, bearing 15 ft., bedroom joists 10 by $2\frac{1}{2}$, trimmers 10 by 3, 14 inches centre and centre, or $11\frac{1}{2}$ apart. What has this room to contain? a bed, drawers, and a few chairs, while its floor is strong enough for a public room. Joists 8 by $2\frac{1}{2}$, trimmers 8 by 3, and 16 inches c., &c., are ample. Ground joists are unnecessarily close, so are the spare, but I do not like the construction of their roofs; the mode of securing the purlines by chocks ▱ and nails is very loose; what is termed cogging is by far the firmest and strongest, and I would alter the scantlings of the rafters, making them stronger; shorten the bearings of the purlines, and make them lighter. As timber will naturally give or sag, I would make my ridges deep in preference to being thick.

I have remonstrated with Mr. Headlam on these matters, but he of course could not interfere, and as it is probable that a large farmhouse may be built on this estate next spring (I have given two sketches to our agents), I should be glad if some alteration could be made, or it will add very materially, and I might say needlessly, to its cost. I shall be very glad to furnish any information in my power, and

Am, &c.

J. J. Henley, Esq. JAS. WOODWARD.

Weetwood Hall,
Wooler.

THE powers of this Act (27 & 28 Vict. c. 114.) have been largely taken advantage of in this district for the erection of farm-buildings, and to a smaller extent for cottages and dwelling houses.

A much larger amount would be taken for buildings and cottages if the Inclosure Commissioners would relax the conditions under which they at present grant applications.

One restriction, that no old material or walls, however good they may be, shall be used in the construction of any buildings so sanctioned, adds so very materially to the expense in many instances, that the

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proprietor has been debarred from taking advantage of the Act, and as a consequence many buildings are patched up, or run up in an unsatisfactory manner.

Were the Commissioners to relax this rule, and be satisfied with the report and supervision of their inspector (or an architect employed by them, if thought necessary), that all the old materials intended to be used were sound and good, and fitted for the purpose intended, sufficient security would be guaranteed, and many would be enabled to take advantage of those powers of borrowing which the cost now prevents their doing.

Regarding cottages. The requirements of the Commissioners, that each cottage shall be provided with three sleeping rooms in addition to living rooms, does not work well, and adds so materially to the cost as to prevent money being taken for cottages, or induces the parties taking it so to cut down the size of the rooms (no minimum size being specified), that they are quite unfit for a family to live in; and, even thus reduced, these cottages are found to cost 150*l.* and upwards, whereas a proprietor expending his own money can erect excellent cottages, more suited indeed to the district, at a cost from 100*l.* to 120*l.*, including offices; these contain large living room, a kitchen capable of receiving if required the old box beds still in use in the border counties, with two other rooms, dairy, scullery, &c., and outside court-house and pig-house, with privy and ashpit to each pair of cottages. These cottages, capable of receiving the furniture and beds at present in use by the cottagers, are found to be more suitable, are quite as healthy, and are preferred by the cottagers.

I annex sketches showing the arrangements and cost of some cottages erected upon this plan.

31st August 1867. P. G. Bolam.

Remarks on the erection of farm-houses, buildings, and cottages, with reference to the requirements of the Inclosure Commissioners.

During an experience of some years in designing and superintending the erection of farm-houses, buildings, and labourers' cottages, in cases where they have been erected with money advanced by the landowner, as well as by money advanced by the Lands Improvement Company with the sanction of the Inclosure Commissioners, I have often heard expressions of regret both from the landowners and their agents that more buildings could not be erected and enlarged by borrowing money from the Lands Improvement Company, owing to the restrictions in the conditions of the Inclosure Commissioners, by not allowing alterations and repairs to an existing building, but only allowing grants for entire new buildings or portions of buildings. I will, therefore, endeavour to point out from my own experience, and also endeavour to show that repairs and alterations to existing houses and buildings may be done in such a substantial manner as to make them almost equally as good and valuable as if entirely new. Also that more cottages might be built with borrowed money if the conditions were relaxed, as well as that some alterations might be allowed in the description and size of the materials; and in doing this it may be well to observe that the landowner or his agent would only be asking of the Commissioners to grant that which they have always been ready and willing to do in the outlay of their own money.

In farm-houses it is sometimes necessary that they should be enlarged, and the existing part put in proper repair, the old portion when repaired being perhaps as substantial and as likely to last as long as the new part, and certainly much longer than the time allowed by the Inclosure Commissioners for the repayment of the borrowed money, yet, as it is under the head of repairs, money is not allowed to be advanced by the Lands Improvement Company.

A case of this kind has occurred at Kilham on the estate of the Earl of Tankerville, where almost an entire new house is being erected under my superintendence. It was found necessary to enlarge this house to a considerable extent, and on making a survey I found the four outside walls were perfectly sound and good, in fact, the house being of modern erection, they were as good as new, and as good as could be built; the roof is of Memel timber, having only been put on a few years ago, but all the interior partitions, joisting, &c., was of Scotch timber, completely decayed with dry rot, which had consequently infected all the interior woodwork and fittings. It was thus found necessary to gut the whole of the interior, leaving nothing but the four main walls and roof standing, which, as I have already stated, were perfectly sound and good as new. The interior is now being renewed in the same substantial manner, and with the same materials as the new portions, and as substantial as required by the Commissioners, so that when the work is completed it will be equal to a new house, at the same time saving the landowner the expense of building the four main walls and putting on the main roof.

Another case is that of the farmhouse at Dunston Square on the same estate. New rooms have been built on to the front part of the old house making an addition of a substantial nature, the walls and roofs of the old part of the house being perfectly sound; the interior has been remodelled and made almost equal to new at a cost of 300*l.* or 400*l.* less than what would have been required in the erection of an entire new house.

In other houses it has been found necessary to add an additional story to the whole or portion of a house, where the existing walls and foundations are perfectly sound and good, as well as the interior fittings; in the additional story, the floors and probably the roof and all interior fittings are entirely new, thus making the whole almost equal to a new house.

The same with farm buildings. In some cases it has been found necessary to heighten buildings for the purpose of having a new granary or upper barn, the old walls and foundations being perfectly good and substantial and of sufficient thickness to carry another story,—perhaps all that may be left of the old building is the walls; the roof, joisting and flooring, doors, windows, &c., being entirely new, thus making the building as substantial and good as if entirely new but at a much less cost.

A case, applicable to the above, occurred at Castle Heaton on the Earl of Tankerville's estate. A substantial old building required the timbers renewing, the walls being thick, solid, and good and perhaps stronger than new on account of their greater thickness. The roof, floors, doors, and windows, were renewed in a substantial manner and the walls properly pointed, and on completion made the whole as substantial as possible, at a cost of less than one half of what it would have taken for the erection of a new building.

Other cases I have met where stables, byres, &c., have been good and substantial as far as regards the walls and roof, but required to be fit up with new stall fittings, racks, mangers, &c., thus making them perfectly complete, substantial, and good.

I would here call the attention of the Commissioners to the method of fitting up the stalls, &c., of stables. In making them entirely of wood the upper rails of the partition is often bitten by the horses and the bottom rail kicked by them; thus, to my knowledge, sometimes destroying them in a very short time after completion. I have lately adopted a plan, to have metal posts and top and bottom rail made to be easily screwed and fixed together and the rails grooved to receive the 2½ inch battens; the cost of the metal work being about 27*s.* or 28*s.* for each stall, which is only 5*s.* or 6*s.* more than if they were made entirely of wood, but no doubt cheaper in the end, as there is no comparison as to the time they will last. In byres also I invariably fit up the partitions with large stones on edge about five feet square and about four inches thick, which are more substantial and lasting than wood, it being well known that wood partitions in byres soon go to decay.

In other cases it may occur that an existing building which may be good and substantial, but badly arranged, may be improved in its arrangement by taking down walls or partitions and extending the size of the building. Some parts perhaps may require the walls raised and part may require new roofing, or other substantial repairs, and when completed is found to be a convenient and substantial building, at a small cost.

The same may be said of labourers' cottages. In some cases where cottages are good and well built, but with insufficient accommodation for a large family, the walls might be raised for rooms above, making everything substantial and good, thus obtaining the accommodation required by the Inclosure Commissioners without being at the expense of an entire new cottage; or in other cases where cottages are substantial and good three or four cottages by taking down and rearranging some of the partitions may be converted into two good cottages with ample accommodation. For instance, say three cottages having each one room 16 ft. square, may be converted into two good cottages by dividing the centre cottage with a partition, thus making a living-room 16 by 16 and bedroom 16 by 8 down stairs, and if more accommodation is still required, then by raising the walls a good bedroom and loft can be obtained in the upper story. In other cases where cottages are deficient in accommodation, a scullery or washhouse with pantry and coal-house, &c., may be built on at the back, with perhaps a bedroom above, thus affording ample requirements for the family.

It may be well to observe that in the county of Northumberland, where the labourers are now generally being provided with good cottages, that the requirements of the Inclosure Commissioners in compelling the arrangement of three bedrooms in each cottage is considered more than what is necessary, but that two bedrooms is amply sufficient; for it is well known that agricultural labourers in this district, so far as regards the labourer and his wife, will insist on sleeping in the living room, in fact, they would consider it an unkindness and hardship if they were not allowed to do so, consequently there might be some difficulty in getting them to live in cottages where they could not, and on this account the farmer might have some difficulty in hiring them, therefore according to this custom two bedrooms are amply sufficient.

I may refer to the plan of cottages now in course of erection at Doddington on the estate of the Earl of Tankerville which have been designed as an improved or model cottage for the estate. On the ground floor is a living room 16 by 16 arranged to have a bed for the labourer and his wife, adjoining is a bedroom 16 by 10 for one sex which may be used as well for a sitting room in cases of sickness. Above the living room is a bedroom for the other sex 16 ft. by 12 ft. 6 in. and adjoining is a loft 16 by 10 which may be used for keeping bacon, meal, and other stores; behind is a scullery, dairy, and coal-house, and at some convenient distance the necessary offices. The elevations are also neat, having slightly arched doors and windows and projecting dormer windows, which gives effect to their appearance; they are being erected in a good substantial manner as well as being light and airy at a cost of about 150*l.* for each cottage with ample accommodation for the separation of the sexes.

With regard to the sizes of the materials, some of the scantlings specified by the Commissioners are not what are generally used in this district, and some of them are found very inconvenient; for instance, joisting and roofing timbers $8\frac{1}{2}$ by $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. require to be cut out of timber, whereas deals 9 by 3 in. would answer the same purpose and be drier and better; also slate laths are required 2 in. by $\frac{3}{4}$ in., whereas if they were allowed about $1\frac{3}{4}$ by $\frac{3}{4}$ in. they could be cut out of battens which would cost less and be amply strong, as it is the general custom here to use them $1\frac{1}{2}$ by $\frac{3}{4}$ in. and $1\frac{1}{4}$ by $\frac{5}{8}$ in. Other sizes might also be left to the judgment of the landower's architect, keeping in view that they are substantial and good as much for the benefit of the landowner as for the Inclosure Commissioners.

In the carrying out of these suggested additions, alterations, and repairs, it is only necessary to add that the surveyor or architect of the landowner would not have entirely the power of certifying as to the substantiality of an old building, but that the Inclosure Commissioners' surveyor would also have the power to object to any building which really appeared to him insufficient to advise them to grant a loan for the completion of an important alteration or addition.

In conclusion I may state that these remarks might be extended to greater length, but I consider them sufficient to show that the subject is worthy of being taken into consideration by the Inclosure Commissioners, and I beg to submit that they are cases, on account of the saving of expense where money may be advantageously advanced by the Lands Improvement Company with the sanction of the Inclosure Commissioners as well as to the advantage of the landowner requiring their assistance.

J. Watson, Architect.

Newcastle-on-Tyne, January 1868.

Howick Grange, Bilton,
Northumberland, Nov. 16, 1867.

Sir,

Business of various kinds has prevented me from stating to you before this my opinion as to how the requirements of the Inclosure Commissioners in the building of cottages under advances by the various Lands Companies prevented owners of property from availing themselves of the companies' powers in consequence of the expense of the plans and specifications required by the Commissioners. This was one of the points you asked for information upon at the meeting of the board of guardians at Alnwick at which you were present.

The Commissioners insist on "three bedrooms in "each cottage, but where many cottages are to be "built, some with two bedrooms for labourers without "families will be allowed." Such cottages cannot be built under 160*l.* each, and as we have, in some cases, as many as 12 or 14 cottages upon one farm, you will see what a sum would be sunk supposing that new ones were required and these conditions complied with. As regards the requirements of the farm servants themselves, it is very rare indeed that the three bedrooms would be occupied. Few have the furniture to make so many rooms comfortable, and the expense of firing would be much increased. What a labourer without a family can do with two bedrooms, except let them out to lodgers, I cannot imagine. Some years ago I endeavoured to build some cottages on the Commissioners' plans; having after some hesitation agreed to the numerous bedrooms, I was then told that a supply of water must be brought to such houses, as this was an impossibility I was obliged to build them on my own plans.

Cottages ought to be built to meet the wants of the occupiers and no more, and I don't think I am going too far in saying that, in fully one-half the cases of farm servants in this county one bed room would be all that would be required, for, as I daresay you saw for yourself when you were here, that the parents almost invariably use the kitchen and will continue to do so no matter how many bedrooms you provide them. Sometimes a mother and son or a newly married couple may be engaged for a year. No allowance is made for such cases by the Commissioners. You must have their number of bedrooms and they would remain unoccupied. I am sure if these points were not insisted upon in all cases so stringently as they appear to me to be many more cottages would have been built under the Lands Companies powers than have been, and many land agents have told me the same thing. In my own case it certainly would have been so.

I am, &c.

J. J. Henley, Esq. J. Craster.

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Eglingham Vicarage, Alnwick,
December 16, 1867.

My dear Mr. Henley,

It gives me sincere pleasure to comply with your request, to write to you upon some of the subjects of our conversations which we had during your inquiry about the "employment and education of children" in North Northumberland.

With regard to our schools, I feel confident that you found them sufficient in *quantity*, and generally in *quality* also for the requirements of our people.

The advance which has been made in our educational institutions, both in our towns and in our country parishes, during the last 20 years has been everything that we could desire, and the little which remains to be done will in a few years be accomplished.

The demand for education combining religious training with real and sound primary instruction is universal, and the supply has kept pace with the demand.

In our towns of Morpeth, Alnwick, Berwick-upon-Tweed, and Wooler, you will have found ample school accommodation already provided, and in each parish in this archdeaconry, with scarcely an exception, laborious efforts have been made, and are well sustained, to bring within the reach of every family of our scattered population a good education.

You will have had better opportunity than I possess of accurately ascertaining how far the demand for the early employment of young persons interferes with their education, but I am led to conclude that the parents being all most anxious to have their children educated, make self-denying efforts to accomplish this object, and that whenever they are able they send their children to school. You will also have observed in some of our country parishes that great lads and girls have returned to the day school for the few weeks in the year when they are not required for agricultural labour. This system of availing themselves of our schools, whenever they are able, does not, however, fall in with the rules for attendance set forth in the Revised Code, and our country schools lose their capitation grant for some of these elder children. It might be well for the Committee of Council on education to modify their rules so as to encourage school managers to receive these elder lads and girls, that they may complete their education at our day schools at the season when their freedom from employment in farm work will allow them to attend.

You must have observed that the whole population of North Northumberland are a very intelligent, thoughtful, and calculating race, and know well what is really for their own and their children's advantage, and when compared with the agricultural labourers of some of the southern counties, the Northumbrians possess *brains* of a very superior order; we see this in their homes, in our schools, and everywhere around us.

All that we really require is, that our country schools be raised in their educating power by some relaxation in the requirements of the Committee of Council on Education, so as to allow schools not having certificated teachers, nor yet accommodation equal to the present requirements of the Revised Code, to obtain two-thirds or even one-half of the capitation grant on passing their children in the several standards set forth in the Revised Code. This would at once give all the schools in the country the advantages of Government inspection and aid, and school managers would gradually be led to adopt the suggestions of the inspectors with regard to better organization, and as vacancies occurred would appoint certificated teachers, and then their schools would become entitled to the whole grant.

I think it right to add, that the whole population of this archdeaconry are determined to have religious teaching for their children, and that during the 12 years I was Vicar of Berwick-upon-Tweed I had not one single objection made to me as to the teaching of the church in the National schools of that parish, wherein 600 children received their education. There is, as you know, a large Presbyterian element in our population, and while I lived in Berwick I annually visited the parents of the children of our National schools, with the special object of talking with them about the education of their children, and yet never has one objection to our Church teaching reached me. The same feeling animates the people of this parish, which is 45 miles in its boundaries, and contains 2,000 inhabitants. We are now building National schools, and at a meeting of the working men they declared that it was their earnest wish that these schools should be so founded that they might always remain under the guidance and teaching of the clergyman of the parish, and upwards of 100 of the heads of families of the working classes subscribed, some one and some two days' wages, towards the building fund of these Eglingham National schools.

Although you found our agricultural population comfortable, intelligent, and domestic, yet you have not failed to observe our sad failure in one most important matter of morals. I need hardly state that I refer to the number of illegitimate children; some years ago I obtained a tabular statement of the percentage of illegitimate children in each county in England, and I found that the evil was greatest in Cumberland, and that North Northumberland came second. The cause was not at first apparent, but I have since ascertained that Cumberland presented the greatest length of "border" and north Northumberland the next greatest, and that secular marriages would be contracted without any previous notice at any time of the day or night along the whole Scottish border, I trace therefore the high rate of illegitimate children to the complete breaking down of the religious sanction of marriage in the mind of the people from generation to generation. Happily the English population cannot avail themselves of the Scotch law of marriage since the passing of the 19th and 20th of Victoria, c. 96., which requires one of the parties about to be married to have resided in Scotland the 21 days immediately preceding the marriage.

But I am afraid that the legislative sanction of a secular marriage at the register office may cause a somewhat similar deterioration of moral feeling throughout the country.

If there is any other point upon which you think that I can give you any information of value, pray let me have the pleasure of receiving a note from you.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) Geo. Hans Hamilton.

J. J. Henley, Esq.

Glendale Union, Wooler,
November 26, 1867.

Dear Sir,

As it is creditable, and partly of a redeeming character to set against the prevalence of illegitimacy amongst our labouring population, I think it only fair to tell you that several of the mothers are afterwards married to the fathers of their children; for instance, Mr. Carr, from recollection, marked 10 in his list enclosed who were so married after the birth of the child, and there might be others that had escaped his memory. I think fully one-fifth of the whole would be afterwards married.

I have made the returns about the schools as perfect as is possible.

I am, &c.
J. J. Henley, Esq. (Signed) Wm. Wightman.

Kirknewton Vicarage, Wooler,
January 21, 1868.

Dear Mr. Henley,

I have replied to the questions respecting the employment of children, young persons, and women in agriculture to the best of my ability as far as my very extensive parish is concerned. I wish, however, to add a few remarks upon some points, which contrast very unfavourably with the systems and customs of other parts of England, the system here being so totally different. First, with regard to the employ-

ment of females, it would be very desirable if their work could be limited, and not be constant throughout the year, so as to allow them more time for fitting themselves for domestic duties; but as long as the present system of letting the farms by competition for a term of years prevails, combined with the increased rate of wages, so long will the farmer provide himself with as much female labour as he can obtain, the wages for women, though good, being so much less than those for men. That most objectionable system called the bondage system (by which the hind was compelled to hire and keep a woman worker) has been nominally given up, but it virtually prevails, and will probably do so as long as the custom of hiring labour by the year continues.

Another most objectionable point is to be found in the existence of what used to be termed bondage houses, which are inhabited by single women who work on the farm; this is a great cause of immorality.

II. The schools throughout this district are generally well attended; one good point is that those elder lads who find employment during the summer months mostly attend school during the winter. In the school immediately under my superintendence we have reduced the charges from 5*d.*, 4*d.*, and 3*d.* to 3*d.* and 2*d.* per week. During last summer the attendance was doubled. I am not prepared to say that such would be the invariable result in other districts.

The chief drawback to the progress of the children arises from the annual migrations of the people, so that many schools apparently make no improvement. This remark applies more especially to rural districts, where the population is widely scattered. It is disheartening work both to the clergyman and the teacher.

III. With regard to the cottages provided for the labouring class, the accommodation is sadly deficient; it is necessarily prejudicial to morality, and fosters in a sad degree that want of self-respect and of consciousness of responsibility which too generally prevails, and without which true morality cannot exist. The badness of the cottages is a frequent cause of change, the inhabitants removing merely for the sake of obtaining better accommodation, and increases to a great extent that evil custom of annual removal which seems now to be the rule of this district. The hinds are engaged by the year on certain days in the spring at the principal towns where the annual hirings are held, and are engaged too without any character from previous employers.

A very serious evil connected with the insufficient accommodation exists when contagious or infectious diseases or fevers break out; few, if any, of the inhabitants escaping. The illness frequently extends to the neighbouring families, from the fact that there is no separate room where the sick person might be placed, and the discomfort, not to say danger, in cases of fever, &c., when a death occurs, may be easily imagined.

It has been objected against increasing the accommodation by providing chambers upstairs, that in those few houses where upper rooms exist the inhabitants will not use them; but it must be remembered that to effect any change among the lower orders is necessarily a work of time, and such objection in no way removes the landlord's responsibility for allowing the existing evil state of things to continue; besides, it must be remembered (and this is an argument urged by the working classes themselves) that they are obliged to adapt their furniture to the class of cottage that prevails, and to have as little as they can do with on account of the annual flittings to which they are subjected, either from their own wish for change or at the caprice of their employers. This necessarily prevents their taking any interest in the places they inhabit, and is a great check to any improvement in a moral or even a social point of view.

I am convinced of this, that the tendency of the present state of things is to a worse condition, and that no improvement can be looked for till the system of free labour is established, a suitable class of house built, provided with out-houses, gardens, proper water supply, drainage, and such like necessaries and comforts, to give the labouring man an interest in his place of residence, and to make him feel that he is a responsible being, a fact which under the existing state of things he *does not*, nay, *cannot* realize.

All these things strike me forcibly from having lived in other parts of England previous to my coming to the north, while others who have always lived in this district do not seem to be aware of these serious evils. There are other points, however, which the present inquiry does not embrace, though to a certain extent connected with it; questions for the landed proprietors to consider, such as the letting farms by competition, leading to what has been aptly termed "commercial farming," &c., but perhaps this may be considered to be beyond my province.

With regard to the present inquiry, however, I shall be very glad if I can be of any further service.

Trusting the inquiries of the Commission may be productive of good results,

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) P. G. McDouall.

Dear Sir, Morpeth, December 5, 1867.

I cannot ascertain your address, and consequently I am obliged to send the resolution passed at a recent meeting of the above board, and which is copied on the other side, to you at the office of the Commissioners.

The resolution was passed at a tolerably large meeting of the guardians, and was, I think, unanimous.

Believe me, &c.
J. J. Henley, Esq., (Signed) Geo. Brumell.
Assistant Commissioner.

(enclosure.)

Resolutions of Morpeth Board of Guardians.

December 5, 1867.

"That in the opinion of this meeting no legislative interference is required in this union for the better regulation of agricultural labourers, for as a rule, with rare exceptions, women are only employed in the summer months from 7 in the morning till 6 in the evening, and in winter from 8 in the morning till 4 in the afternoon, with ample allowance of time for rest and meals during the day; and that in this union the age at which children are to be employed may safely be left to the discretion of their parents."

Ford Rectory, Coldstream,
My dear Sir, January 23, 1868.

I am sorry I have been so long in replying to your letter. The following information I have from Lady Waterford's bailiff. The cottagers in Ford, with one or two exceptions day labourers, have from one to two acres of land each at 2*l.* an acre (formerly 50*s.*), free of poor rate, not bound to any particular rotation, crop as they like, mostly corn and green crops, potatoes and turnips, for they all have the privilege of a cow's grass on Ford Common. Cultivated by plough hired at 8*s.* per day. Spade work would not pay, as they have 14*s.* a week wages.

The cottagers at Crookham (on Ford estate), about 10 of them, have plots of half an acre to an acre at 2*l.* 10*s.* (formerly at 3*l.*) cropped and worked in same way, free of poor rate, better land for potatoes and turnips; the latter ate on the land by sheep. These have no cows. I suppose they as well as the Ford men must find it pay.

The women do all the hoeing and summer light work on the land.

I hope the above will be of some use to you.

In haste,
Yours very truly,
T. Knight.

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Mr. Henley.

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ALLOTMENT SYSTEM at Ewart Park, Northumberland.

The allotment system has been carried on successfully for the last 14 years. Each allotment consists of one-fourth of an acre, and is to let for the sum of 26*s.* yearly. For the first three years after the introduction of the system each allotment was cropped with wheat, the average crop being 12 bushels.

For the last 11 years, however, they have been cropped with potatoes, the crop when raised averaging three tons. The abundant crops thus raised is a strong argument in favour of spade husbandry, which in the cultivation of the aforesaid allotments is strictly enforced. The workmen on the estate, we may here add, have the privilege of attending to their portions every Saturday, which the respected and kind hearted landlord, Sir Horace St. Paul, Bart., has kindly given as a half-holiday these last 14 years. Neither has he confined the occupancy of the allotments to people residing on his estate, so that many tradesmen in the neighbourhood eagerly avail themselves of the boon.

The rental may to some appear high, but it may at the same time be stated that the adjoining meadows are frequently let from 5 to 6 guineas per acre annually.

JNO. BRUCE,
Gardener.

Ewart Park,
February 9, 1868.

CORRESPONDENCE as to HIRING FAIRS.

DEAR ——— August 24, 1867.

I ONLY got home last night after a week's absence or would have replied to your letter sooner. I don't think I told you of any one in Yorkshire who has collected statistics about statutes, but I know of a man who takes some interest in the matter, and if I can learn anything of value I will write you word. In our part of the West Riding there is very little of it, but in the East and I think some part of the North Riding it is in full force. I am confident that the immorality caused by it is far greater than by the gang system as *practised about here.* A large proportion of the illegitimate children date from the statutes. The objections to it as at present practised are I think amongst others:

1. That the system of men and women standing in the street to be hired is a degrading one. They are judged of by their points like horses, and character is seldom, if ever, taken into account or even inquired about.

2. That it creates a kind of vagrant population, who lose all home ties and as a general rule never remain more than one year in the same place.

3. That it increases very much the difficulty of education, as after they come to a fresh place it is some weeks probably before the clergyman or school authority can get hold of them (if indeed they are ever able to do so), and they never can have the same influence they have with ordinary parishioners.

4. That it is a decided discouragement to landowners in building (as I contend they ought to do) sufficient homes to contain the population necessary to the ordinary work of each parish, as if hired servants can be got from large villages and small towns, fewer cottages are necessary.

I should like to see statutes abolished, and in place of them,

(*a.*) Register offices to be established (perhaps licensed) as is now commonly done for household servants.

(*b.*) Hirings to be legal, made at any time of year, and on any day.

(*c.*) No hiring to be legal or enforced by justices except it be made in writing and in some form to be established by law.

(*d.*) Such form to be accompanied by a certificate of character from preceding master or masters.

(*e.*) None to be able to hire themselves out who could not read and write, or who could not produce a certificate to show they had attended regularly at school for a time to be fixed.

I think the effect of some such regulations as these would be in the long run that men would not have the same temptation to change; that they would continue where they were if they had no real cause of complaint, and that farmers would hire only when a servant left them, and not change their whole establishments regularly on a particular day in the year.

I would let them hire for six, nine, or 12 months, or perhaps even longer if thought desirable, but the service to continue for a month after the hired term unless a previous month's notice was given; and after the term to go on from month to month until notice was given. I think the effect of this would be that men who had nothing just to complain of would remain on indefinitely.

Believe me, &c.

Embleton, Chat Hill,
Sept. 29, 1867.

DEAR SIR,

I ENCLOSE your letter and beg to offer a few remarks on Mr. ———'s suggestions. I think them impracticable, and, although doubtless well meant, they are harsh and arbitrary towards the labourer: following the letters of the paragraphs, I would say:—

(*a.*) That register offices in Alnwick have not conduced to long periods of domestic service, as the high fees charged by the persons who keep these offices make it their interest to persuade each servant to get her fellow servants entered on the books, and the same result would probably follow in the case of register offices for farm labourers. The fees charged on each hiring at the Alnwick registers are 1*s.* on taking the name, and 2*s.* 6*d.* on the hiring, being 7*s.* in all, as both mistress and maid pay alike.

(*b.*) Every hiring is *at present* legal for *any period* and *at any time*, if made in writing and signed by master and servant.

(*c.*) I am not aware that any hiring can be enforced for more than a fortnight, or for the period of harvest, unless in writing, and even that I think doubtful.

(*d.*) Unless landlords and farmers are also compelled to produce certificates of character this is one-sided legislation, and totally unnecessary, as no employer is *obliged* to hire any one unless he thinks his character unobjectionable.

(*e.*) This I think the most objectionable of all Mr. ———'s propositions, it appears to me very cruel and heartless to refuse employment to a hungry ill-clad boy or girl merely because they cannot read or write.

General Remarks.—Whether hired in the market or otherwise, farm labourers will and *must* be judged as to their physical powers to fulfil their engagement before any reasonable man would engage them for a year's work, and this holds good in every case, be it a lady engaging a housemaid, a gentleman a groom, a baron a gamekeeper, or a farmer a labourer. I see nothing the legislature can do in the matter of hiring except to place, as done under Lord Elcho's Act, employer and employed, on the same footing, and to afford every opportunity of cheap and speedy justice to master and man alike. The hiring or statutes are a great nuisance to the farmer, not from the circumstance of people being hired, but from the numbers of persons who make a holiday of it, and direct the attention of those seeking places from the serious business of the day. The mere fact of standing in the market place is a matter of mere taste, and so long as farmers prefer to transact their own proper business in a great measure on the street of the market town, instead of in the Corn Exchange, there can be no hardships in their labourers doing the same in ne

weather, in wet weather the Corn Exchange should be thrown open to them, especially to the women and children.

I remain,
Yours very truly,
J. J. Henley, Esq. THOMAS RODGER.

Old Bewick, Alnwick,
MY DEAR MR. HENLEY, September 25, 1867.

I AGREE to a certain extent with Mr. ———'s remarks. I think he assumes more "immorality" as the result of the *statute hirings* than they deserve, though there can be no doubt that they in common with all promiscuous gatherings afford temptation and facilities to the *viciously inclined*. No. 1. The evil here is, I think, exaggerated, and perhaps in a great measure fanciful. No. 2. I think the tendency of the *annual* hiring system is to keep alive a *fancy* for changes, which might never arise, in many men, if that fashion did not exist. No. 3. The *effect* is certainly such as Mr. ——— describes, but the cause is the *moving about* system itself. No. 4. This notion does not apply here. (*a.*) I doubt the practicability of this plan. (*b.*), (*c.*), (*d.*) might be made useful if they can be enforced. (*e.*) Difficult to enforce, and if done, rather harsh. Practically, I think, that if we could induce our men to continue their engagements until either of the parties gave a notice (say three months') of his desire to void it and so get rid of the annual *palaver* at the end of February, many of them would never think of changing, and this would virtually put an end to the *hiring meetings* to which many go, merely for the purpose of seeing their friends.

Believe me,
Yours most truly,
J. C. LANGLANDS.

Cawsey Park,
DEAR SIR, Oct. 11, 1867.

YOU are wishful to know my opinion of the influence of public hirings upon the character of the agricultural labourers in this part of the county. I do not think there is any greater liberty given to them for immorality of conduct by attending such places, as allowing them a holiday to go to flower shows, races, or any such amusements, neither can I attribute it to be the cause of the constant changes of families from one master to adother. I have upwards of 30 families employed upon my several farms, and many of whom have now been with me nearly 30 years, viz., G. S. 18 years, W. J. 22, J. D. 14, R. B. 10, G. C. 8, and so on.

I remain,
Dear sir, truly,
JOHN HOGG.

Rock, Alnwick,
DEAR MR. HENLEY, October 4, 1867.

I AM only acquainted with the system of statute hirings as it is practised in Northumberland, and several of the remarks in Mr. ———'s letter can hardly be considered applicable to our country. The system is not faultless, no doubt; great numbers of young people of both sexes cannot probably be brought together even for a day without risk of mischief; and in this, as in so many other cases, young people (and their parents, who are as much interested in their well doing as themselves) must depend for their safety on their own good principles. But I had better take Mr. ———'s (1st) observations on the present system, and (2ndly) suggestions for alteration in the system, seriatim.

Obs. 1. "The system of standing about in the "streets to be hired is a degrading one," &c. To outsiders and persons who are not engaged in the business of the day it appears, no doubt, very much so, but *very little so* to those really concerned; if people have to find each other out they must meet, and if they are really intent upon making what is a *very* important arrangement indeed for both parties for a year to come, they are not likely to be thinking of degradation; the farmers or hirers are upon the street as well as the labourers Nevertheless, if such a place as the Corn Exchange in Alnwick could be got *and would hold them all*, it might be a pleasanter arrangement, especially in wet weather, but I don't suppose they would ever *stay* there. As to the question of taking or omitting to take "characters," I will answer it under suggestion (*d.*).

Obs. 2. "That it creates a kind of vagrant popu-"lation." I hardly know what this means. The movement of a household from one part of a district to another (they can rarely move further than the farmers' carts can conveniently *flit* them and their goods in a day) can surely never lead to anything that can justly be called "a vagrant population." *Home goes with them*, their household gods are all most carefully conveyed along with them. The power of limiting their agreement strictly to a year, and of the changing if they please without any reason assigned, is at the foundation of the independence and respectability of our north country peasantry.

Obs. 3. "That it increases very much the difficulty "of education," &c. This points to a state of things with which we are but partially acquainted here, in which parents are presumed to be careless about the education of their children, or unwilling to take advantage of opportunities offered for it. But as a matter of fact, the facilities for the education of the children commonly enter into the choice of a situation in the case of a hind or engaged labourer in this country, and though they will often send their children great distances to school, they will not as a general rule submit to their growing up in ignorance. It is only in exceptional cases that the clergyman has to interfere, and generally where he himself has brought the school into a state satisfactory to *himself* but *not* so satisfactory to the parents.

Obs. 4. "That it is a decided discouragement to "landowners in building houses," &c. I am really and truly unable to understand what is meant here. It must allude to a kind of hiring with which I am not acquainted. When we go to hire labourers we can hire *no more than* we have *cottages to house*. The cottages must be standing ready for the man and his family when he comes to enter upon his engagement. Is it possible that in any part of Yorkshire there is such a thing as hiring *by the day* like the labourers in the parable? And that they can hire them in the town and get the labourer to come out daily into the country and *agree to do so for a year together?* At all events, I don't see how the publicity of the hiring can have anything to do with it.

Then as to the suggestions.

Suggestion (*a.*) "Register offices to be established," &c. It would be rash, in speaking of an arrangement so entirely new as applied to farm servants, to venture to say positively how it might act. But it strikes me that practically the register office would afford nothing more than a list of the names of those who wished to be hired, and the addresses of their present masters. The inquiry into character would then have to commence, as it does in the case of domestic servants, and before the character to be obtained would be of any value it would be necessary to ascertain the character of the master who is to give it; we all know how unreliable are a great proportion of the characters given, even by people of position and general good conduct in the world, and it would be impossible, in the case supposed, to allow the mere wording of a character to go for anything without a good knowledge of the person who wrote it. You would have to sift the history of the individual to be engaged from his own lips just as you have at present.

Suggestion (*b.*) "Hirings to be legal, made at any time," &c. Speaking of Northumberland, the reason that agreements must be made with hinds and

APP. A.

Northumberland.

Mr. Henley.

b.

other yearly servants from May day to May day, or (if agreeable to both parties) from May day to November, is that the occupation of a house usually forms part of the agreement, and it is the general custom to quit houses only at May day and November. It would be exceedingly inconvenient to have flittings going on at all times or at any time in the year. Once a year is generally thought quite enough. But if a man chooses to hire himself to a master to work for him for any number of weeks or months, *independently of any question of housing*, it will be quite a lawful agreement and can be enforced by the magistrates, provided the man engages to give his whole time to the master, and so really becomes *his servant* for the time. (This will not apply to piece work.)

(*c.*) A great proportion of the yearly agreements in Northumberland are made with the assistance of printed forms, which are quite accurate enough for all practicable purposes; and they very much assist in the adjudication of disputed cases, though the magistrates do not insist upon their production, when the evidence is satisfactory without them. I don't see that anything would be gained by having the form settled by law, and it would probably lead to much inconvenience, the agreements being so various.

(*d.*) The certificate of character obtained for such a purpose would be of so little value that it would be hardly worth while to require it. Referring back to the first objection, that under the present system "character is seldom, if ever, taken into account," my own steward, who is a man considerably above the average both of principle and intelligence, tells me, and is quite confident, that he can ascertain more of the truth by questioning and examining the members of a family to be engaged, than by simply taking the character of a master. We certainly have, in the course of years got together an uncommonly steady and diligent set of men, and the steward scarcely ever makes a mistake in choosing and hiring people.

(*e.*) I can hardly suppose that Mr. —— is serious in proposing that a man who might be so unfortunate as not to be able to read and write should be thereby disqualified from earning his living by agricultural industry or the better position in it. What else is he likely to be able to do?

Mr. —— appears to think that all the engaged labourers change every year. But that is not the case, they have a right to go at the year's end without assigning any reason if they like to do so; and we, on our side, have a right to give them their liberty as we call it, in the same way. But I have two or three families that have been with me 20 years. I parted with one family last May day which had been with me 23 years. Still the agreement has been renewed in all these cases every year, with consideration of their interests and mine, and the alteration of prices and circumstances, so that we kept together because it has been our mutual interest to do so; but families of course grow up and go off, and in the course of time there come to be no workers left.

People can hire for six months now if both parties are agreeable, even with a cottage. They would flit in November. Nine months would bring them to a bad time for changing, viz. Christmas. I cannot think there could be anything gained by that. Twelve months is the usual time now. I don't see what would be gained by the other suggestions, viz., that of going on from month to month until notice is given. Surely a house could never be supplied to them on such uncertain terms as those. People can stay in their places as long as they can agree, if the places suit. The power of changing on both sides is the greatest possible safeguard against rough or unfair behaviour on either side.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) R. W. Bosanquet.

J. J. Henley, Esq.
Commission on the Employment of Children, &c.

Summary of Suggestions as to the Amount of Winter School Attendance that might be required of Children working out in Summer.

			Days.
The Schoolmaster of Crookham	-	suggests	81
" Old Bewicke	-	"	80
" Mindrim -	-	"	96
" Lilburn -	-	"	76
" Wooler -	-	"	75
" Doddington	-	"	115
			Weeks.
" Milfield -	-	"	18
" Chatton -	-	"	17
			School Attendances.
The Rev. Mr. King, of Carham, suggests		-	150

Summary and Particulars from Minute Book of all Offences and Cases disposed of by Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace acting for the Petty Sessional Division of Glendale Ward in the County of Northumberland, from the 1st day of January to 31st December 1866.

Nature of Offence.	Convictions.	Cases dismissed or compromised.	Committals.	Observations, &c.
Bastardy applications.	25 orders made.	4 orders refused and 3 complaints abandoned.	- -	None of the orders made were for more than 2*s.* per week, and this amount has only been allowed since January 1866. 1*s.* 6*d.* per week hitherto for many years only allowed.
Bastardy monies, nonpayment of.	21 warrants issued.	No committal.	- -	The woman frequently has to take out four warrants at the end of 13 weeks against the same man, when the monies are paid generally on apprehension.
Drunk and indecent conduct in public.	12 convictions.	2 dismissed.	1 committal.	Summonses taken out by superintendent of police, and penalties inflicted ranging from 2*l.* to 1*s.* and costs.
Common assaults	5 convictions.	8 dismissed, 2 withdrawn.	No committal.	The penalties were all below 10*s.* and costs.
Game trespass -	1 conviction.	2 withdrawn.	- -	2*l.* penalty.
Setting snares or traps.	5 convictions.	4 withdrawn.	- -	2*l.* penalty to 5*s.*
Using dog and ferrets.	- -	4 withdrawn.	—	—
Suspected person found on highway.	1 conviction.	- -	- -	3*l.* commitment unexecuted.
Illegal fishing in private water.	3 convictions.	- -	- -	2*l.* penalty and under.
Wrongful driving on turnpike.	5 convictions.	- -	- -	Ditto.
Owner of cattle suffering same to stray on highway.	10 convictions.	2 summonses withdrawn.	—	—
Cattle plague, driving without permit.	1 conviction.	2 dismissed.	- -	5*l.* penalty.
Cruelty to animal.	2 convictions.	- -	- -	One penalty 5*l.*; other 1*s.* and costs.
Factory Acts; child employed unlawfully.	2 convictions.	- -	- -	Penalty 1*l.* in each and costs.
Paupers refractory, tearing up clothes, &c.	7 convictions.	- -	Committals 7, for various terms.	—
Wilful and malicious injury.	2 convictions.	4 dismissed.	1 committal.	—
Alehouse keeper permitting drunkenness.	1 conviction.		- -	Penalty 2*l.* and costs.
Servants in husbandry misbehaving.	- -	2 dismissed.	—	—
Nonpayment of highway dues.	2 orders made.	—	—	—
Non-repair of highway.	2 orders made.	—	—	—
Criminal Justice Act.	1 conviction.	1 dismissed.	—	—
Misdemeanor -	1 conviction.	—	—	—

Weights and measures are inspected only once in four years.
The Justice meetings are held at Wooler on the first Tuesday in every month.

John Thompson,
Clerk to Justices.

RETURN by WILLIAM DICKSON, Esq., Clerk of the Peace for the County of Northumberland, of all CASES of CHILD MURDER and CONCEALMENT of BIRTH tried in that County during the Five Years 1863 to 1867 inclusive.

Date of Trial.	Name.	Concealment of Birth.	Child Murder.	Verdict.	Sentence.
1863.					
Feb. 26	I. H. jun.	1	—	Not guilty	—
"	T. H.	1	—	Do.	—
"	I. H. sen.	1	—	Do.	—
July 25	J. R.	1	—	Guilty	9 cal. mos. h. l.
"	A. O.	—	1	Not guilty	—
"	A. R. (town)	1	—	Guilty	12 cal. mos. h. l.
1865.					
Feb. 28	J. P.	1	—	Do.	4 cal. mos. h. l.
"	E. B.	1	—	Do.	4 cal. mos. h. l.
July 15	M. I. (town)	1	—	Do.	3 cal. mos. h. l.
"	E. M.	1	—	Do.	8 cal. mos. h. l.
"	I. S.	1	—	Not guilty	—
"	T. C. H.	1	—	Guilty	2 cal. mos. h. l.
1866.					
July 14	E. D.	1	—	Not guilty	—
"	M. G.	1	—	Guilty	3 cal. mos. h. l.
1867.					
Feb. 22	E. L.	1	—	Do.	2 cal. mos. h. l.
"	A. R.	1	—	Not guilty	—
July 18	J. M.	1	—	Do.	—
Total for 5 years		16	1	9 guilty. 8 not guilty.	

All agricultural but the two marked "town."

WM. DICKSON,
Clerk of the Peace for
Northumberland.

Alnwick, Dec. 24, 1867.

PAPER showing the CHARGES, &c., at CHATTON SCHOOLS.

CHATTON SCHOOLS.—Commencing the first week in July 1865. The Charges for Scholars at these Schools will be henceforth as follows:—

Masters' School.

Subjects taught.

1st Class. 5*d.* per week.
- Scripture, Reading.
- Writing.
- Dictation on Paper.
- Arithmetic—Compound and higher Rules.
- Mensuration, Land Surveying, and Geometry.
- (Geography, Grammar, and Music).

2nd Class. 4*d.* per week.
- Scripture, Reading.
- Writing, Dictation on Slates.
- Arithmetic—Simple Rules and Compound Tables.
- (Music).

3rd Class. 3*d.* per week.
- Scripture, Reading.
- Writing.
- Arithmetic — Addition, and Subtraction and Multiplication Tables.
- (Music).

Mistresses' School.

1st Class. 2*d.* per week.
- Scripture, Reading—Monosyllables.
- Writing on Slate.
- Arithmetic — Addition and Subtraction as far as 10.
- (Music).

2nd Class. (INFANTS) 1*d.* per week.
- Scripture.
- Letters, Little Words.
- First steps in Writing and Counting.
- (Music).

N.B.—The third child in a family will be free.

MATT. BURRELL, Vicar.

Glendale Union, 9th Week of Michaelmas Quarter.

Officers.	Districts.	Resident Paupers. Males.	Females.	Children.	Total.	Non-resident Paupers. Males.	Females.	Children.	Total.	Gross Total.	Amount of Out-Relief. £	s.	d.
Alexander Craig	Ford	42	130	34	206	13	43	43	99	305	27	14	0
Thomas Carr	Wooler	42	122	52	216	18	52	30	100	316	26	14	6
Totals		84	252	86	422	31	95	73	199	621	54	8	6

WM. WIGHTMAN, Clerk.

August 24, 1867.

STATEMENT by MR. GEORGE LAING, Cornhill, Northumberland, Nov. 5, 1867.

In this district ploughmen's wages are generally as under for a year:—

42 bushels of oats;
24 " barley;
12 " beans or peas;
3 " wheat;
5*l.* cash.;

1,200 yards potato drill; cow's grass and a quarter of an acre of turnips; cottage and garden rent free; coals carted from the colliery free.

Should he have one or more sons, ploughmen, living with him, their wages are 30*l.* and 1,200 yards of potato drill, or 34*l.* each.

His daughters are engaged at 1*s.* per day when employed; except in harvest, when their wage is 3*s.* per day.

The men's wages are upheld all the year round, whether they are ill or well.

Almost all the married men have a cow. When they have not we allow them 8*l.* for her keep.

STATEMENT as to Hinds' conditions, Rock, Alnwick, 1867.

House and garden free; coals carted free; 500 yards of potatoe ground prepared in the field; money 6*l.* 10*s.*; cow on pasture in summer, 1½ tons of hay, with straw for winter;

Wheat, 12 bushels;
Beans or peas, 8 bushels;
Barley, 33 bushels;
Oats, 33 bushels;

Women's wage 1*s.* per day all the year, except harvest, one month or 24 days, at 2*s.* per day.

COPY of Agreement, Castleheaton.

A.B. agrees to serve C.D. from 12th May 1866 to 12th May 1867, as (so-and-so), on the following conditions; to receive,

6 bolls of oats;
4 " barley;
2 " beans and peas;
1 " wheat;
Cash 6*l.*;

Cow grazed in summer and keep in winter; 1,200 yards potatoes. 1*s.* per day for field-worker, summer and winter, and 3*s.* per day during harvest; coals carted free to house.

Note.—If in money entirely, 14*s.* per week for ploughmen, 15*s.* extra men, with house and perquisites the same.

Cow considered equal to 10*l.*
Potatoes equal to 4*l.*
Cottage and coals carted equal to 4*l.* 10*s.*

APP. A.

Northumberland.

Mr. Henley.

b.

Alnwick, 1856.

I M.R. hereby agree to serve A.B. as servant in husbandry from 13th May 1856 to 13th May 1857, on the following conditions :

House rent free. Coals led.
Cow on pasture in summer.
Straw, and one ton of hay for winter.
Cow to be kept in between 12th November and 12th May.
To be allowed to keep a pig shut up.
Wheat, 6 new bolls.
Barley, 4 old bolls.
Oats, 6 old bolls.
Peas and beans, 2 old bolls.
4*l.*, stint money.

1,000 yards of potato ground prepared for me in the field. I am to find a sufficient woman worker at 10*d.* per day in summer and 8*d.* per day in winter ; 1*s.* 6*d.* per day during harvest, 20 days.

HINDS' conditions of hiring (Mr. George Rea, Middleton).

I A.B. agree to serve C.D. in the capacity of a hind from 12th May 1866 to 12th May 1867 on the following conditions :

6 bolls of oats.
4½ bolls of barley.
1½ bolls of pease.
1 boll of wheat.

One cow kept, getting 4 cwt. of oil cake in winter. 5*l.* in money ; 1,000 yards of potatoes ; half a stone of cast wool.

House free, } These two were the conditions for
Coals led, } a worker.

Women workers to have 1*s.* in summer and 10*d.* in winter. 3*s.* for 20 days in harvest.

Note.—The old boll is six bushels. [The new boll is two bushels.] A stone of wool is 24 pounds.

STATEMENT by MR. DODS, of Anick Grainge, Chairman of Hexham Board of Guardians.

Hinds' payments 16*s.* a week. House with garden free. Coals led.

6 bushels of wheat.
4 bushels light corn, barley.
80 stone potatoes,

and a 10th of an acre planted ; to find a woman worker.

STATEMENT by MR. GOWANS, draper and postmaster, Wooler, as to value of corn wages.

	£	s.	d.
Cow	8	0	0
House	3	0	0
Coals	1	5	0
Potatoes	4	0	0
Oats	6	0	0
Barley	4	16	0
Peas	3	0	0
Wheat	2	0	0
Stint money	5	0	0
	37	1	0

APP. B.

APPENDIX B.—EVIDENCE.

GLENDALE UNION.—NORTHUMBERLAND.

LIST OF WITNESSES.

Nos.
1. Dr. R. Walker, Medical Officer, Wooler.
2. Mr. Brown, Surgeon, Wooler.
3. Dr. W. Robertson, Glanton.
4. Dr. M. T. Turnbull, Glendale and Berwick Unions.
5. Mr. T. Carr, Relieving Officer, Wooler.
6. Mr. P. Baker, Overseer to the Poor, Lowick.
7. Mr. A. Craig, Relieving Officer and Registrar of the Ford District.
8. Lowick National School.
9. Mr. Horace St. Paul Armstrong, Master of the Church of England School, Wooler.
10. Mr. Duncan, English Presbyterian Schoolmaster, Wooler.
11. Mr. J. Cairns, National Schoolmaster, Doddington.
12. Mr. W. L. Read, Church of England Schoolmaster, Mindrim.
13. Mr. Huey, Schoolmaster, Milfield.
14. Ford School.
15. Mr. G. Douglas, Old Bewick, Church of England Schoolmaster.
16. Wark School.
17. Crookham School, a Presbyterian Master.
18. Mr. Frazer, Crookham, National Schoolmaster.
19. Branxton National School.
20. Mr. T. Runciman, Steward to Mr. Borthwick, Kilham.
21. Mr. G. Lumsden, Steward to Mr. C. Rea, Doddington.
22. Mr. J. Grey, Steward to Mr. Chartres, Glendale.
23. Mr. J. Hall, Steward to Mr. Langlands, Old Bewick.

Nos.
24. Mr. J. Rutherford, Steward to Mr. Henderson, Lowick.
25. Mr. Hardy, Innkeeper and Farmer, Wooler.
26. Mr. C. Rea, Farmer, Doddington.
27. Mr. J. Wilson, Joiner, Chatton.
28. Mr. R. Duncombe, Shepherd, Yeavering.
29. Mr. T. Tait, Shepherd, Paston.
30. Emma Bell, Mindrim.
31. Anne Mills, Wife of a Hind, Carham.
32. Mrs. Gibson, Wife of a Hind, Chatton.
33. Isabella Young, Wife a Hind, Humbleton.
34. Mary Johnson, Wife of Mr. Morrison's Steward, New Bewick.
35. Mrs. Nesbit, Wife of Mr. Hall's Shepherd, New Town, Chillingham.
36. Mrs. Henderson, Branton.
37. Mrs. Anderson, Ilderton.
38. Mrs. Maclean, Wife of a Shepherd, Lanton.
39. Mrs. Ewart, Wife of a Hind, Lanton.
40. Mrs. Telfer, Lanton.
41. M. M., Lanton.
42. Mrs. Whitelow, Lanton.
43. Mr. George Bowmaker, Clerk to Mr. Grey, Milfield Hill.
44. Mr. W. Wightman, Clerk to the Board of Guardians, Manager of the Wooler Bank, and Superintendent Registrar.
45. Anne Younger, Wife of a Spademan, Brandon.
46. Mrs. Buck, Wife of an Agricultural Blacksmith.
47. Mr. Gowans, Shopkeeper and Postmaster, Wooler.
48. Mr. McNatty, Shoemaker, Wooler.

GLENDALE UNION, 1867.

1. *Dr. R. Walker*, of Wooler, one of the medical officers of the Glendale Union.—Has resided at Wooler for three years and a half; does not consider that the field work of children in this district is injurious to their health. He thinks also that with regard to the women working in the fields it does not in any way affect their health or constitution, but considers that the absence of the mother of a family from her home is predjudicial to the comfort and happiness of that family. This only occurs in certain cases. The cottages are deficient in this district in respect of space, ventilation, and sanitary arrangements. He has attended many cases of typhoid fever which he attributes to the situation of the cottages, the deficient drainage, the overcrowding of the building, the bad ventilation, and want of cleanliness on the part of the inmates. In one cottage at his first visit, there were dead bodies in the two box beds. The other bed contained two children ill with fever; five other children were also suffering from fever, and lying on a shake down on the floor. The father, mother, and the father's mother were in the same room, divided only by the box beds. Dr. Walker considers that, on the whole, the women and children engaged in agriculture are as healthy a class as he meets with. The great consumption of coffee and tea by the women, to the exclusion of porridge, &c., he believes to be injurious to them.

2. *Mr. Brown*, surgeon, Wooler.—Has lived and practised in Wooler for 36 years. The women working in the fields in this district are very healthy, and not so subject to the usual female complaints as household servants. He does not consider that the hours of work affect them. He has never known children to be injured by field work, on the contrary their health is improved by it. They seldom go to work for regular hiring before the age of 14 or 15; in this neighbourhood there is no necessity for limiting the hours of work. The children sometimes go out for light work in summer as early as 10 years of age. Mr. Brown does not consider that a law limiting the commencement of work to 10 years of age would press hardly on the means of families in this district, as the children's labour before that is not of much worth. He thinks that women should not be allowed to go with horses drawing carts or harrows, as he has known of accidents happening from this cause. He cannot say the dust of barn work injuriously affects the health of women. He has had no medical cases with regard to them, but some instances with men. There is great desire amongst the poor in this district to educate their children, and they are not deterred by their want of means. The cottages built in this district are for the most part too small. The chief room has not sufficient space, and in cases of fever, the people were better off in the old cottages than in the new; the ventilation was better and consequently recovery was more frequent. The food of the working class in this neighbourhood from the variety of their diet is very wholesome; it consists principally of milk, different kinds of vegetables, cheese, butter, bacon, very rarely butchers' meat, oatmeal and wheat whole meal. They invariably provide a hot meal for dinner. Looking back to the time he came into the neighbourhood, the labouring classes appear to him in about the same state physically and morally.

3. *Dr. W. Robertson*, Glanton, a medical officer of the Glendale and Alnwick Unions.—Has known the district for 20 years. No work to which the women are put is injurious to their health; but the employment of driving carts in the fields and on the roads is not suitable for them. Dr. Robertson considers the hours of work to be rather long and perhaps too great a demand upon their physical powers. The work of the children is not so hard as to be injurious to their health, but for the sake of their education he would gladly delay the commencement of labour. He does not consider that there is any call for interference as to hours or description of labour, and believes this may be left to the sense of the people themselves. There is an improvement in the cottages though some still remain in a bad state, overcrowded, with too few apartments, which is decidedly prejudicial to the health of the inmates. On entering the cottages in the morning, they are most offensive. The sanitary arrangements very defective, drainage bad, ventilation unprovided, privy accommodation often wanting, and the latter as well as the pigsties in many cases too near the house. Looking at the district, the agricultural classes are the most healthy. With regard to food, the giving up of milk and meal, and substituting coffee, is bad for the stamina of labourers. There is more dyspepsia than there should be. Diseases attributable to intemperance are very rare among the agricultural labouring class. Education is still defective, far from what it ought to be, but there is some progress towards improvement.

4. *Dr. M. T. Turnbull*, a medical officer of the Glendale and Berwick-on-Tweed Unions, resides at Coldstream, but has practised in this union, besides that of Berwick-on-Tweed, since 1845. The condition of the working classes on both sides of the Tweed is very good, there is no difference between them; the women are not put to any work which is injurious, nor are the children. Driving carts he considers dangerous. The education is superior in Scotland to England; the masters are better. The school attendance south of the Tweed, is not affected by distance or want of means. The cottages newly built are sufficient. The change of diet is injurious, substituting weak tea for oatmeal and milk. Girls working in the fields are more immoral than those in service; the bad conversation there tends much to this result.

5. *Mr. Thomas Carr*, of Wooler, has been relieving officer of the Wooler district of the Glendale Union for 20 years, and has lived in Wooler all his life. The boys and girls go out to field work in summer at about 13 years of age, weeding and cleaning the land and hoeing the turnips. They work from 6 to 6; have 24 minutes rest at 10 o'clock, 2 hours at mid-day, and 20 minutes at 4 o'clock; they also help at harvest by tying the bands and putting the corn together. They earn about 6*d.* to 8*d.* a day for weeding and hoeing, and from 1*s.* to 2*s.* a day at harvest work. He has never known any work prejudicial to their health. The hours of the women's work are the same as those of the children; they clean the land, gather stones, hoe turnips, shear, spread dung, root and shawe the turnips, and work with the threshing machine. Mr. Carr does not believe that working in the field is injurious to them in any way, either with regard to health or morals. The bondage system still exists in the district, but is unpopular with the hinds; the presence of a stranger in the house, if they have to hire the bondager, is much disliked. The result of this is, that Irish women are more frequently hired as bondagers than formerly, in consequence of the difficulty of getting the English to serve, and hinds with large families are much sought after by the farmers. He does not find there is more immorality among the bondagers than among women employed in domestic service. The wages at this time are as good as 18*s.* a week; the labouring class use much more groceries than formerly, and usually have coffee sent out to them for breakfast. There are sufficient cottages as to numbers in this district; the people mostly live on the ground floors, (though they have upstairs rooms,) as they find it warmer, but they divide the ground-floor room by partitions. A good deal has been done of late years in building and repairing cottages. The Union Chargeability Act has at present had no effect in this neighbourhood. He does not know of any instance in this district where the children of a family have not been sent to school. Sometimes in cases of distress school fees are paid by the Board of Guardians; children are then sent to the nearest school. The women prefer field work, and on the whole make more economical wives than those who have been in service.

APP. B.

Northumberland. (Glendale.)

Mr. Henley.

b.

Looking back for 30 or 40 years, Mr. Carr considers the labourers better off and better informed than formerly, but no change as to their labour. No restriction is required in this district for limiting the hours in the work of women or children; they never go further than a mile to their work and their health is not affected by it, neither does the education of the children suffer, as they go to school in winter.

6. *Mr. Patrick Baker* is overseer to the poor of the parish of Lowick, and has known it all his life.—The cottages are very bad, generally with one room and mostly bad thatch, very few necessaries. The women and children who work in the fields are in good health and not injured by work; there is some employment not suitable for women, such as leading horses and carts. Hinds are paid mostly in corn wages; he considers that money would be better, but it would take some time to accustom them to it. The present system obliges them to have six months credit, and they are at the mercy of people who go about with carts and barter things with them for their corn; they part with corn for coffee and other things which do them no good. The hinds generally are an honest and sober people, but he considers that women's work in the fields degrades them, except the harvest and perhaps the turnip work. He thinks the people are not so well educated as formerly because they go to work earlier, and seldom remain after 14 or 15 at school. They used to be at winter school till 20 years of age and went to farm work after that. He refers to day schools though there were evening schools. School attendance is not affected by distance as much as by means. The education afforded at the schools is good enough.

7. *Mr. Andrew Craig*, relieving officer and registrar of the Ford district, Glendale Union.—Has known this country all his life, and was schoolmaster at Milfield for 10½ years before he held his present office. The women have been employed in the same sort of work ever since he has known the district. The only change has been in the condition of service, the bondage system being now done away with. That was considered to be given up in the interest of the hind, not of the bondager. He does not think that any work to which the women and children are put is physically injurious to them; nor are their hours too long comparing them with town women and children; they are far superior in strength and health. The children usually go to work in summer at 12 or 13 years of age. There may be some few exceptions, and younger children may go, but rarely; a great many return to school in the winter up to 17 and 18 years of age. He does not think that many parents are prevented from sending their children to school either from inability to pay school fees or the want of proper clothes. As a general rule denominational teaching does not interfere with school attendance in this part of the country. The district is pretty well supplied with schools, both as to situation and teaching; very few children exceed three miles in distance from school, of that they do not complain, and keep up their attendance in winter, except in very coarse weather. Of the three modes pointed out by the Factory Acts in the Commissioners' circular, the latter mode, No. 3 (10 & 11 Vict. c. 70, ss. 2, 3, 26.), that is, the winter attendance would best suit an agricultural population. Mr. Craig is positive that the other modes would not answer; either the half or alternate days would make children restless and inattentive. They lose of course a great deal of instruction in the summer by their absence, but they soon "come at it" again in the winter, and evening schools are not sufficiently appreciated in this neighbourhood. "When I had "a day school of 160 I could hardly raise 14 for "an evening school." A limit to 10 years of age for the commencement of children's work would materially affect those characters who could least bear it, as the very poorest with large families push out the eldest child to help the younger. It is an advantage to the family that the girls should remain at home at field work, as the parents receive the money to keep them, and if they go out to service nothing comes home.

8. *Lowick National School.*—Fees 2*d.* a week; no extras; under Government inspection. An annual subscription of 35*l.* The catechism not enforced; the majority of the children Presbyterians. The master considers that the summer work puts the children back quite six weeks. Most of the children come to school without knowing their letters, and they lose half a year by it.

9. *Mr. Horace St. Paul Armstrong* is master of the Church of England school at Wooler.—This school is principally supported by Sir Horace St. Paul, Bart., in addition to the school fees which are 2*d.* a head per week, and a few at 3*d.* The average numbers are returned in the Commissioners' circular. No objection is ever made to denominational teaching; the great proportion are the children of dissenters. Some attend the Church of England Sunday school, but they are quite at liberty to attend their own. The boys on an average leave the school to work in the summer at 10 years of age; they usually return in the winter from November to about the 1st of April, and remain at school till 12 or 13. The average attendance at school in the winter of those who work in the summer is about 75 days. The girls begin work at the same ages as the boys, but their attendance during the winter is not so good, owing to the weather and employment in household work. They, of course, lose a great deal of instruction in the working season, and their conduct on their return is much rougher. The regular hinds send their children more to school in the winter than parents who live in the town; they are more anxious about their children's education. School attendance is not materially affected by distance; the greatest is three miles. Some are kept away by the difficulty of paying the necessary fees when the parents are not employed, and some from want of proper clothing. Mr. Armstrong considers that the winter attendance at school would best suit this district. The parishes are so intermixed that an exact estimate of the proportion of school attendance to the population cannot be formed. The cottages in this parish are very bad, very much overcrowded, and, in many instances, unfit for habitation; and in this town (Wooler) there is very great want of good cottage accommodation for the working classes, which, in many cases, compels overcrowding, whole families living and sleeping in the same room. In connection with the Church of England school there is no evening class. Hiring fairs are the cause of great evil to women.

10. *Mr. Duncan*, English Presbyterian schoolmaster, Wooler.—His school is self-supporting, and the average attendance 105. There are some shopkeepers' children, but the rest are agricultural. The highest fees are 9*s.* a quarter for Latin, but if the condition of the parents is poor the children are taught Latin and French without extra charge; the highest English fee is from 2*s.* to 4*s.* a quarter. The children remain at school till they are at least 10 years of age, and some as long as 14. They then go out for summer work, returning to school in the winter. Their attendance is not affected by their poverty, nor is it by the distance from the school, or by the weather more than those children living in the town; at three miles' distance they attend as punctually as town children. At this time there are four boys in his school learning Latin; one the son of a gamekeeper, another the son of a shepherd, the third the son of a skinner of sheep, and the fourth the son of the widow of a railway porter. Two others learn French and Euclid; one of these is a shepherd's son, the other a hind's. This shows the anxiety of the parents for education. The third method pointed out by the Factory Acts in the Commissioners' circular, *i. e.*, school attendance during the winter months, is the only one applicable to an agricultural district. The children are thrown back about six weeks when they return to school in winter

from the summer work. As regards evening schools the work with the horses between 6 and 8 in the winter prevents their attendance.

11. *Mr. Cairns*, master of the Doddington National School.—Has been schoolmaster since 1852. The attendance in summer is about 80, and in winter 100. The girls go out to work about 12 years old during the summer half year, that is for seven months; rather more than half this number come back to school in the winter. When they return they have of course lost much of their instruction, though in the summer they attend the Sunday school very well. Boys leave school on an average at 11 years of age; they remain out like the girls, and two-thirds come back to the school in the winter. He considers, as a schoolmaster, that under the Factory Acts the winter attendance would be the best. The children pay 3*d.*, 4*d.*, and 5*d.* fees. The want of means does not detain the children from school, nor does denominational teaching. About seven-eighths of this school are Presbyterians; they all learn the Church catechism, and a large proportion go to his Sunday school. He has tried night schools, but the people did not avail themselves of them; a penny a night was paid for the school. As a rule the people of this district are eager to take advantage of the instruction offered to them. Parts of the parish are so distant and nearer to other schools that it is difficult to make up a return of the attendance. The children remain at the school till 14 years of age.

[The average attendance of children, upwards of 13, who attend school in winter and work in fields in the summer is 16 for 115 days.—J. Cairns.]

12. *Mr. William L. Read*, master of the Church of England school, Mindrim, Carham.—This school is supported by subscriptions and Government grant. The average attendance, 50 in summer and 96 in winter. The children who attend in summer are from 6 to 9 years of age; those in winter up to 15. The poverty of parents often compels them to take their children from school and send them to the fields. The fees are 2*s.* 6*d.*, 3*s.* 6*d.*, and 4*s.* 6*d.* a quarter, not paid in advance, and there is no trouble in collecting them. Ninety-six days would be about a fair winter attendance for boys working in the summer; a good many come to school without knowing their letters, some as old as 10 years of age; on an average they go from school to work at 10½. All the children but the master's own are Presbyterians; he teaches no catechism; no Scripture class book, only the Bible. There have never been any objections to this school on the score of religious teaching. The children come here three and four miles; the attendance is not much affected by distance, except in very severe weather. The clergyman of the parish attends the school. The third methods pointed out by the extracts from the Factory Act would be the only practicable one in the district; it is the one they partly carry out for themselves. Mr. Read does not consider a limit of 10 years old for work would be too hard on the poor. The girls are taught sewing in school time. The evening school is badly attended and hardly pays; it could not be maintained but for the Government grants. When the children return to school after the summer work, they are no worse as regards conduct, but of course have lost a good deal of instruction.

13. *Mr. Huey*, master of Milfield school.—The children read the Bible and questions are asked, but any particular doctrine is avoided. As a general rule they learn the shorter catechism; they are taught the kind of catechism that their parents wish for, and we judge this by the books they bring with them; 99 out of 100 are Presbyterians. The school fees are 3*d.*, 4*d.*, 5*d.*, and 6*d.*, according to attainments; no difference is made from the position of the parents. The children will usually reach an average of 5*d.* at 12 years old. The fees are usually paid half yearly, not in advance; when there are three pupils in one family they get a privilege in the payment. Not many are kept away on account of want of means. The school is self-supporting as far as the payment of the master is concerned. Pupils pay for the fires in winter and their books; but lights and repairs of the school-house are paid by private means. Some children come as far as three miles and a half to school; three miles is not too great a distance to walk to school, in fact the children are the better for it. The children lose quite six months if they come to school without knowing their letters; this is the chief thing wanting. Of the three modes pointed out by the Factory Acts, the latter one (*see* 10 & 11 Vict. c. 70. s. 2, 3, 26) of a winter attendance would be the best, in fact it is the only one that could work in this agricultural district. The conduct of the children is not affected by working in the fields; but they lose about six weeks' instruction by their summer absence, having forgotten so much of what they have learnt.

The following statements are correct so far as can be ascertained.

Thirty-five was the number of children who worked in the fields last summer and attended school during the winter. Of this number 22 were boys (8 below and 14 above 12 years of age), and 13 girls (3 below and 10 above 12 years).

The subjoined gives the average weekly attendance of these respective divisions during the winter:—

Boys.		Girls.	
Under 12.	Above 12.	Under 12.	Above 12.
Weeks. 18·4	Weeks. 18·5	Weeks. 15·3	Weeks. 16·2

This year 20 have left school to work in the fields for the first time. Of this number 11 are boys (7 below 12 years of age and 4 above it), and 9 are girls (5 below and 4 above 12 years of age).

Below are the averages of last winter's attendance.

Boys.		Girls.	
Below 12.	Above 12.	Below 12.	Above 12.
Weeks. 24·7	Weeks. 25·25	Weeks. 21·8	Weeks. 22·5

14. *Ford School* is under Government inspection. It is called a "Church of England" and "Presbyterian School;" built by Lady Waterford, and supported by her beyond the fees and Government grant. The Church catechism is taught and enforced; only one child left on account of this; about three-fourths are Presbyterians. There is no other school within two miles. The fees are 1*d.* under 7 years of age, and 3*d.* after.

15. *Mr. George Douglas*, master of Old Bewicke Church of England school.—Teaches the Church catechism, and to this no objection is made; nearly all the parents are dissenters; the children come to the Sunday school. Denominational teaching does not in any way interfere with attendance. Three miles is the outside distance that children come; they do not mind that, and want of means does not affect their attendance. The children usually go to work at 11 or 12, and come back in the winter till they are 14. The average attendance of those who work in the summer and come to school in winter would be about 80 days; from about Martinmas to Christmas they return to school. The third mode pointed out in the Factory Acts (10 & 11 Vict. c. 70. s. 2, 3, 26) is the only one parents would submit to. The children lose quite six weeks by the summer work; it requires this time to put them into the same places they had before going out to work. The children pay a trifle for coals, which are led for them.

APP. B.

Northumberland. (Glendale.)

Mr. Henley.

b.

16. *Wark School.* — In this school the children read the Bible and learn the shorter catechism. When there is a Roman Catholic he is taught the shorter catechism and reads the Bible. The Church of England children who attend only learn portions of Scripture. The reason of this was not their objecting to learn the shorter catechism, but because they brought no catechism book. The fees are 2*s.* 6*d.*, reading; 3*s.* 6*d.*, reading and writing; 4*s.*, reading, writing, and arithmetic; 5*s.*, grammar; 6*s.* 6*d.*, mathematics; 10*s.*, Latin. Children sometimes go to work at 10, but usually about 11 years of age. They come again in winter till they are 14. They come three or four miles to school. The attendance here is affected by want of means. There was an evening school but it was not successful.

17. *Crookham School.* — A Presbyterian school under Government inspection. The fees are 4*d.*, 3*d.*, and 2*d.* a week. A Roman Catholic came to the school and read the Bible, but did not learn the shorter catechism by the wish of his father. This school adjoins the National school.

18. *Crookham National School.*—Mr. Frazer, the master, says that a Roman Catholic child is in the school, and learns the Church catechism. This child left in consequence, but returned again. The majority in the school are Presbyterians. No other objection has been ever made to religious teaching. The fees are 2*d.* and 3*d.* a week.

19. *Branxton Parish National School.*—There are about 45 children in this school. The master does not press the Church catechism if parents object. Nearly all the children are dissenters. Perhaps half a dozen may have objected to the Church catechism. The fees are 3*s.*, 3*s.* 6*d.*, and 4*s.* a quarter.

20. *Mr. Thomas Runciman*, Kilham, is steward to Mr. Borthwick.—As a general rule no children go out to work before 12 or 13 years of age. This applies to boys and girls. Their time of work is nine and half hours in the fields; 10 hours out, 6 in. He has never seen any work hard upon women or children, no particular labour presses on them. Women very rarely go with the horses. Want of proper clothes or money has never to his knowledge detained children from school. There are great complaints of this school. It is not under any sort of clergyman; believes it self-supporting. The cottages in this place are comfortable. No boy or girl in his opinion should be employed in field work before 13 years of age. In some cases it might press hard on the parents, but before that age it is injurious to the children. For their condition in life the children in this district are sufficiently educated.

21. *Mr. George Lumsden*, steward to Mr. Charles Rea, Doddington.—The youngest boy now working on this farm is 9 years of age. He is weeding potatoes. The next three are about 2 years older. They are hoeing and working amongst the hay; the youngest girl is about 11. Children work with the women and a man looks after them, as far as possible good order is kept. They leave the village to go to work at quarter before 6 in the morning, having breakfasted before they start. They generally carry something out with them, and they have about 15 minutes at 9 o'clock, working on till quarter past 11, when they break off for two hours and a quarter; then continue to work till 6. In the harvest time they have 20 minutes in the forenoon, and 15 minutes in the afternoon. Boys begin with quickening, herding, hoeing, raking at harvest, and when about 15 years of age, lead horses in the turnip-gathering season. Girls work the same as boys, except going with horses. Women work at quickening, spreading manure, sowing artificial manure, hoeing, hay making, helping at harvest, working with thrashing machine, rooting and shawing turnips, helping to fill turnip and manure carts in the winter. After harvest the children will be done with. He has never known any injury to be done to either women or children by field work.

22. *Mr. Jeremiah Grey*, steward to Mr. Chartres, Glendale.—Says that the work in this country is not too hard for either women or children. The children seldom go out to work in the fields in summer before 12 or 13 years of age. To prevent their working before 10 years of age would not generally affect the poor; in some cases it might do so when there is a large family of young children. The elder one is sent out to very light work to help the younger ones to school. He never knew poverty prevent children being sent to school. No one keeps their children away on account of anything taught in religion. There are plenty of cottages in this neighbourhood.

23. *Mr. John Hall* is steward to Mr. Langlands, Old Bewicke, and has been so for 30 years, and lived with him for 44 years.—Boys first begin to work picking quickens and doing other light work. They then go on to driving the carts as turnip dickeys. He began in that way 44 years ago. The work is the same now for women and children as it was then; easier if anything, as the machine helps a good deal in the harvest. He has never known any one injured by field work. A limit to 10 years of age as the commencement of children's work would hurt no one here. Women very rarely go with horses, and he would not force them to do it on any account. Those who can do it like it best, as it is easier than other work. Field work does not make women immoral at all. The constant moving of the families of hinds is a bad thing, as he has often read,—

"An oft removed family,
And an oft removed tree,
Never thrive so well as
Those that settled be."

"That's true." If any women did what was wrong they would not stay here long; things have got much cheaper for working people. He remembers the time when they could not afford to buy salt for curing their bacon, it was so dear. John Hall's regular school instruction ended at 13½ years of age. He attended night school for 6 or 7 years afterwards.

24. *Mr. John Rutherford* is steward to Mr. Henderson, Lowick, and has been so since the 26th May 1867. —He came from the north of the county, where he had been 11 years as steward. He has had as many as 16 women employed under him; about two women go to a pair of horses. When first he began as steward women had 10*d.* a day for the winter quarter, and 1*s.* for the other three quarters. They always had 3*s.* a day for harvest. They have now 14*d.* a day all the year, and 3*l.* as an allowance for harvest; and during that time they have porridge and milk in the morning, and bread and beer at dinner time, given to them. In this present place women's wages are smaller than where he came from. They are 1*s.* the year round, and 3*s.* at harvest; no extra food given. Women work nine hours a day at hoeing turnips, weeding corn, picking stones, rooting and shawing turnips, turning manure heaps, loading dung carts, spreading dung and lime, sowing artificials, forking corn and hay, barn work, cutting turnips, and wheeling and carting them out for the sheep. Mr. Rutherford does not consider any of this work unsuitable for women provided the overseer use them as they ought to be used. The children do the light work according as they are able. Corn wages are the most valuable on the best and earliest land. There would be a difference of 4*s.* or 5*s.* a boll between this and Tweedside. On a bad year you cannot estimate the difference, as the harvest there is earlier, and you have a better chance of a season. He prefers money wages, as making the labourer more independent of the season. Hinds do not go much to the butcher's shop, they cannot afford it.

Mr. Rutherford was educated in Scotland, but as one of a large family was taken away at nine years old. He put himself back to school at 21, having saved money to keep himself for 12 months. He went to a day school and an evening school every day. The teachers in this part of the country are good enough if parents look to their children.

25. *Mr. Hardy*, innkeeper and farmer, Wooler.—Occupies land in Wooler parish; employs women, young persons, and children on his farm. The children

usually commence work in the summer at 10 years of age, in rare instances at 9. Their first work is keeping birds off the corn and weeding; after this, turnip hoeing. They pick stones off the grass in the spring, but the weaker ones are not employed in this work. They generally like working in the fields, and he has never known any injury arise from this kind of labour. The hours of work are from 6 to 6; 15 minutes for breakfast in the field; two hours for dinner, and 10 minutes at 4 o'clock. They are always under the orders of a steward, by whom good discipline is kept. The women work the same hours as the children; their work is picking stones, pulling quickens (couch grass), spreading the dung in the drills, hoeing turnips, shearing at harvest, helping at the threshing machines, rooting and shawing turnips. They earn about 1*s.* a day, and 3*s.* a day at harvest time. Field work is not injurious to women, in fact some of them come out for a change. Nine out of 10 women prefer field work to domestic service; and as regards their morals, they are as good as any other women. Cottages are much improving in this district. Hinds' earnings at this time are about 36*l.* a year. Mr. Hardy pays most of his labourers in money. They have which they prefer, and all take money but one. He thinks they are better off with corn payments; no doubt they suffer in bad harvests and during the potato disease, but then the master must come to some agreement with them. Residing near Wooler, he draws all the labour on his farm from it.

A List of Young Persons and Children employed on Mr. Hardy's Farm, showing the Ages and Earnings.

—	Ages.	Earnings.
Mary Gordon	16	10*d.* a day.
Elsie Gordon	14	10*d.* "
Sarah Rutherford	14	10*d.* "
Jane Machaughty	13	8*d.* "
Anne Machaughty	12	6*d.* "
Alice Inglis	14	8*d.* "
John Inglis	9	6*d.* "
James Inglis	12	10*d.* "
Thomas Bruton	12	9*d.* "

26. *Mr. Charles Rea*, Doddington. — Occupies a large farm, and considers the want of proper cottages a very great evil; also the hiring fairs, which lead to great immorality. The women who work together in large numbers on this farm are kept in order by an overseer, and no bad language is permitted as far as it can be checked. The most trying work for the women is that of the barn, on account of the dust. Families do not shift much here, as nine or 10 have been in his employment since he came here 13 or 14 years ago. He would be inclined to say that 10 years of age is early enough for a boy to begin work. Mr. Rae considers that the change in the labourers' diet is very injurious, coffee and tea having been brought into constant use instead of porridge. The working classes are, in his opinion, in this district a very honest race.

27. *Mr. John Wilson*, joiner, of Chatton parish.—Believes that children seldom go out to work in this parish before 10 years old. Does not think the work injurious beyond keeping them from school. He ought to know this, as he drove a pair of horses before he was 10 years of age. It is 45 years ago now. "He was a deal more the better for the night "school." If he could begin again, he would rather remain at school till he was 17 or 18. There is no reason to complain of schools or education in this place, but in the district there is a good deal of ignorance; it is greatly lessened of late years. The allotment system in this parish is good, so far as to keep the people who have them contented and settled. There are about four acres to each allotment, and supposed to keep a cow. The women work at filling manure, driving manure carts, harrowing (though not commonly), hoeing turnips, tying up in harvest, working in hayfield, forking hay, and corn pitching, rooting and shawing turnips, and helping to load the carts. The expense of school, both as regards fees and clothes, presses on the poor. The Scotch system would be better as regards schools, as all the gentlemen of the county employ Scotch agents from their education. He has a very decided objection to the bondage, as it is too hard on the hinds when they have to hire.

28. *Mr. Robert Duncombe*, shepherd, Yeavering.—Says that very few children in the district go out before 10 years of age. He does not think that preventing them from going to work before that age would press upon the poor. The field work here is not too long for women or children. In some places the attendance at the schools is affected by the distance. The children have to go 3½ miles to school, which is too far. Few parents are prevented by want of means from sending their children to school, and religious teaching does not interfere.

29. *Mr. Thomas Tait*, shepherd, Paston.—Is now over 70 years of age; has known the district and lived in it all his life. Working in the fields is very healthy for women. He has known many of them leave the towns for the country work, to recover their health. They work in the fields here from 9 to 10 hours, that is, from 6 to 6; 20 minutes for breakfast and 2½ hours for dinner. This counts from when they "knock off" work to when they come back again. Women are employed both summer and winter. They begin in January top dressing turnips, barn work, stone gathering, preparing land for turnips by picking quickens and weeds, loading manure carts, sowing artificials of all kinds of stuffs, hoeing and singling turnips, working at the hay, shearing but never tying up, raking at harvest, and assisting at filling turnip carts. The women here do not work to hurt them; in some places they do. They ought not to go with horses. Children only do light summer work. "Some people "keep their bairns from school because they cannot "pay. School in winter, work in summer, is what "ought to be. Boys and girls should go out to work "at 10 years of age. The latter end of April to the "fore part of May is the time that children come out "to work upon the land. They do not go back to "school till the potatoes are taken up. Them as "as can afford keep their bairns at school till May to "finish their quarter. Most people wish to make "their bairns as good scholars as they can afford; "any way it is a duty."

"The ground floor cottages are the most convenient. "How is the mother to cook the dinner and look after "a sick bairn when it is upstairs; she is always on "the stairs. Some people would say that the upstairs "rooms are more healthy. They would nae say so if "they would try them here in the cold of the winter."

30. *Emma Bell*, of Mindrim.—Has seven children; they went out to work at 10 years old. The eldest was a boy, and he went to school again in the winter till he was 12; that is for two winters, and he went again for a quarter. He goes to night school. "What "would the poor do if they had seven or eight children "and could not send the eldest to work to help the "youngers, to pay for school and shoes; they could "nae do." They should not be allowed to work before 10 years of age; they are not fit for it. Some may have been stopped from sending their children to school from want of money, but more from carelessness. She thinks the night school does a deal of good.

31. *Anne Mills*, wife of a hind, Downham farm, Carham parish.—Has 10 children. No child should leave school for work before going on to 12; most of her children were educated in the Presbyterian school. She is sure they learnt double what they do in them English schools, where they teach no questions. Some catechisms should be taught; you cannot tie them down to the book without some questions to teach them. Schooling is worth nothing without religion. She is herself a Presbyterian, but would prefer the English catechism sooner than none. Work in the summer makes a wee bit gain to keep

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them at school in the winter. Has lost three cows running, cannot afford to buy another, the house feels very dry without one. Does not object to any kind of field work for women and children.

32. *Mrs. Gibson*, wife of John Gibson, hind, Amerside Law, Chatton parish.—"The women are too "sair wrought when they have not enough of people "to work on the farm." Working in the wet is what hurts women, many are hurt by it. My daughter sitting here has never been well since; some women cannot stand it. The most who work out are healthy. Her boy went to school at 5, and when he was 11 he did not like school any longer. He wanted to go to work, so let him go to cure him; he soon tired of it and went to school again. He was 15 before he gave up winter school. Mrs. Gibson has had nine children, but never found any difficulty in paying for school. No child should work out before 12; and then to school again in winter till 14 or 15. She likes the catechism taught; she does not care which if it is a scriptural one, and would not like a school where they did not teach any religion. She once sent her boy to a school where they taught no catechism, and did not like that at all; in consequence she had to teach him herself. How could he go to the minister if he did not know his questions? Mrs. Gibson is paid in corn and money; that is best, a family without potatoes is in a bad way. She has never been pinched for food or clothes in her life. The work is hard but her family is well off. She has known two families next door earning the same money; the one saved enough to buy the cottage, the other could not live. "It was all drink, so there is the "difference."

33. *Isabella Young*, Humbleton, wife of a hind.—Has two children at school and one girl at work The latter is 10, nearly 11; next month is her birthday (August). She has been at work two months or more. The work does not hurt her. She went out to work because they could not afford to keep her at school any longer. Isabella Young has five children, so sends the eldest to work in order that the younger may attend school. The youngest comes off best for "schooling" in a family, as the "sair "fight is before any go to work." Her girl will go to school again in the autumn and winter. Many keep their children from school for want of money for school fees and clothes. No child should be allowed to work before 10 years of age. She believes you will not find any working people who will say that children should go out before that age. She has to go to work herself in order to send her children to school, but would rather pay for a good school than send them to a bad one for nothing. Mrs. Young says that payment in meal is much the best; she has tried money and piece-work and all ways, but the meal is the best.

34. *Mary Johnson*, wife of Mr. Morrison's steward, New Bewicke.—Has lived for 49 years in this place, and had a family of 11 children. Does not think children should go to work before 10 years of age. Her children went to summer work at 10 years old, and returned to school in the winter till 13. "Most "any body with a family has a sair fight and are glad "to get one out as soon as folk can. No very many "go out before 10 years old." She has never known any work injure either women or children.

35. *Mrs. Nesbit*, wife of the shepherd to Mr. Hall, New Town, Chillingham.—Says that this house looks new and good, but it is very damp and uncomfortable. There is only this room in which everything must be done; this is very confusing. She has two hired servants to keep, one a lad, another a girl. The former sleeps at the back of the box beds; the latter in the same room with the family. Her husband and the lad usually rise before the family, but at night the girl must undress with her husband in the room, and at times it is most distressing to be so crowded; during her illness it was dreadful. She thinks the women are sometimes "sair wrought." The shepherd's girl has to work at the turnip cutter, no matter what the weather is, for seven days a week; "that is a "disgrace to a Christian country." She has no water near her cottage, and it is hard work to carry it so far on her head.

36. *Mrs. Henderson*, Branton.—Her husband works "at his own hand." Her son is hind, and has the cottage. She has worked for many years before and after marriage. The work of women is sorer than it used to be,—longer hours and harder work. They now go out at 5.30 and return at 12.30. They have to go out again, when they are far from home, at 1.30, and sometimes not back again till 6.30. She kept her youngest children at school as long as she could. They were 12 years old before they went to work. They were seven years at school. The elder ones had to go out earlier, one as early as 9, but went again to school in the winter till he was 14 "I'll warrant." She thinks 10 a fair age to send children out to work. Her son the hind is on corn wages and keeps a cow. There are not better cottages than these in the county.

37. *Mrs. Anderson*, Ilderton.—Has seven children; her husband and four of them at work. She thinks at times women are too hardly worked in the barn and at harvest. That is the only work that oppresses women; it sorely tries them. They've too great spirit to give in. It does not so much hurt children. They have not the spirit to press themselves, and their work is easier. She came from the Tweed, and has had half her children taught in the Scotch school, but thinks the English the best. They are cheaper, too. That's not the only way they're better. [The Scotch school was 4*s.* a quarter, and the English 2*d.* a week.] The new sort of English masters are better. She has seen many of the poor who could not send their children to school, both from want of proper clothes and money to pay the fees. "Children ought to be at school till 12. Mine went "to work at 10. Necessity drives them out. We've "no bondagers now. I've slaved at harvest to earn "the bondager's money, and left the children without "clothes."

38. *Mrs. Maclean*, wife of a shepherd, Lanton.—Came here from the Morpeth district. The hours of work are longer here. At Widdrington the women need not be out before 7. She has to keep a bondager at 8*l.* for half a year. She will earn 1*s.* a day, and 2*s.* 6*d.* at harvest for 20 days. "We have only two rooms "for five children, maid servant, my husband, and "myself. The hired girl sleeps in the room we "occupy."

39. *Mrs. Ewart* is wife of a hind, Lanton.—She has seven living children, and two of them at work. Her mother lives with them. They are 10 in family. Some of her children began work at 9 years old in summer, and went to school in winter. Nine is early enough to begin work, "but ye ken when ye have "not the means ye maun send them awa' to work." Corn and money is better than money alone as wages for a family. She keeps a cow, and "that is a grand "thing." There is nothing but one room; the coals lie at the door. There are no out-door necessaries, but there is a pigsty and a place for the cow.

40. *Mrs. Telfer* has four children.—Her husband works "at his own hand" because he does not like the bondage, as he would then have a stranger to lodge in the house. He has 2*s.* 6*d.* a day summer and winter, but no work no pay; and he will have 1*l.* from his present master "if he bides over harvest." She rents her house of the farmer, and pays 3*l.* a year for it. It is a very poor place, only one room; no convenience of any kind.

41. *M. M.*, Lanton, has a sister, mother, and two brothers.—Her sister works out; the usual work turning dung heaps, and filling dung carts, with other farm work; forking corn is the exception. Women fight to drive the carts, but she never liked it herself. She has sown guano and spread lime which is not nice work. The barn work is the hardest for women. Her brother blows a horn at 4.30 every morning for

stables, and all start away, women, men, horses, and all at 5.30.

42. *Mrs. Whitelow*, Lanton, says that the schools in Scotland are far better and cheaper. She came from Scotland six years ago, but women work far harder in Scotland than they do here. Children begin work about the same age as in Scotland, between 10 and 11; that is to say, as soon as they can go into the fields to work.

43. *Mr. George Bowmaker*, clerk to Mr. Grey, of Milfield Hill.—His father was steward to Mr Grey. He was educated at the Milfield school from 5 to 13 years of age, and then went to farm work, attending winter school till 16, and evening classes till 19. All the school instruction he ever got was at the village school; all the people at Milfield could read and write. It must be a man's own fault if he has not education. People consider the fees very reasonable. The third way, *i.e.*, winter attendance, is the only practicable way; in the winter season wages are lower. A limit of 10 years would not press on the means of any families; any restriction of work which may be considered unsuitable to women would press hardly upon them.

44. *Mr. William Wightman*, clerk to the Board of Guardians, manager of the Wooler bank, and Superintendent Registrar.—Has been connected with the union ever since its formation in 1836, first, as relieving officer, and for the last 20 years as clerk. Women are largely employed in the fields, and their work has been much the same during this period, with the exception of turning dung heaps, driving carts, and forking corn; that was introduced about 15 years ago, and he does not consider such work suitable for women, but has never heard of any physical evil from it, as the women are a most healthy class. Children's work is not too hard, neither are they employed too young. They are never taken off the relief list till they are 12 years of age. The Board of Guardians pay school fees in cases of widows with children, and in a few instances where a man has been injured or in bad health. The parents select the school. The guardians merely look to attendance. The latter pay about 20*l.* to 25*l.* a year in fees. The average attendance of children is about four and a half days in the week. The school fees vary very much in the district, from 1*d.* to 5*d.* The schools are quite sufficient for the class of education required, and speaking generally, the district is pretty well supplied. Parents value education very much, and religious differences do not interfere with it. Any restriction upon the labour of women would be injurious to the district. Public opinion will cure any objectionable work, and as the children go back to school in winter, no interference is required as to their field work. Parents, as a rule, are able to send their children to school and submit to the burden cheerfully. Mr. Wightman considers that the working people hardly do enough for their parents in their old age, the latter not having had much opportunity of saving. Looking back for a number of years the people are better off both as to food and clothes, and their general conduct is as good as formerly. The cottages are much improved; a great deal remains to be done, requiring much judgment. The crowding has had a bad effect, and must break down the barriers of modesty.

45. *Anne Younger*, wife of a spademan to Mr. Atkinson, Brandon.—Thinks 10 "young enough" to go out to field work for children. The youngest child sent by her to work was 11. Her boy was kept seven years at school; that was from five to 12. His father has since schooled him at night with some of the other neighbours' children. She is inclined herself to work in the fields, and is never so healthy as when she is out. She was never put to any work that was unfit for a woman. The school is very near, but the water prevents the children attending in the winter. [There is no bridge.—J. J. H.] Sometimes the fees are heavy enough; at other times she can manage. She has seven children, two out, and her husband. Thinks corn wages best; anyway they suit her. Could not do without a cow.

46. *Mrs. Buck*, wife of an agricultural blacksmith.—Has had 14 children, twice twins, once three. She never sent a child to work before 11 years of age. Has now nine children. The triplets are at school. She does not think the limit of 10 would hurt anyone. No child ought to work out before that age. Mrs. Buck has brought up all her children without any help. [Excepting Her Majesty's bounty for the third.—J. J. H.] Her husband is always employed on Mr. George Rea's farm.

47. *Mr. Gowans*, shopkeeper and postmaster, Wooler.—Not more than six purely agricultural labourers have availed themselves of the Post Office Savings Bank since he has had the office, and not one has made use of the insurance. He finds, as a shopkeeper, that the hinds who are paid by corn conditions are more regular in their payments at his shop than those who receive money wages. He considers it would be for the advantage of tradesmen if the farmers would settle with their labourers quarterly instead of half-yearly. At the Wooler hiring fairs perhaps 200 families are engaged. It would not be possible by register offices to carry on the hirings, as the whole family must be brought together, and it is a matter of bargain between master and servant. No fixed sum could be named, as so much depends on the wages to be agreed upon by the different members of the hinds' families, both boys and girls, and the employer must see them to judge of their value. They would have to make probably several journeys to the register office, whereas it is now done in one week of fairs in the neighbourhood, and as for any excess of immorality they are not worse than any racecourse or other public meetings where the highest and lowest meet together. Nearly all the people hereabouts can write, but he has great difficulty as a postmaster in making out some of the directions of the letters; but it is improving. The younger write better than the older.

48. *Mr. McNatty*, shoemaker, Wooler.—Has had two girls working out this summer about 12 and 13 years of age. Has taken them now away from work, as the harn work is too hard for them. The pay is small and would not pay for their extra food and wear of clothes. It is better to keep them at home and give them less food. Has now 10 children; is himself very poor; worse off than a farm labourer; but no child of his should do any work before 10; they have no strength before that age. He was one of 14 children in Ireland, so had to do without education. Has never felt the want of it so much as lately, and will have his children educated.

APP. C.

North Northumberland.

Mr. Henley.

b.

APPENDIX C.—EVIDENCE.

NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND (*exclusive of Glendale Union*).

LIST OF WITNESSES.

Nos.
1. Mr. Brown, Surgeon, Medical Officer, Berwick-upon-Tweed Union.
2. Mr. John Paxton, Surgeon, Medical Officer, Berwick Union.
3. Dr. F. Cahill, Berwick.
4. Mr. Hunt, Surgeon, Medical Officer, Belford.
5. Dr. Dodd, Medical Officer, Rothbury.
6. Dr. Vardy, Rothbury.
7. Dr. Paton, Acting Medical Officer, Morpeth Union.
8. Dr. Brummel, Morpeth.
9. Mr. John Watson, Relieving Officer, Morpeth.
10. Mr. George Davidson, Relieving Officer, Alnwick.
11. Mr. Robert Downey, Relieving Officer, Alnwick.
12. Mr. Crosbie, Relieving Officer, Berwick.
13. Mr. Robert Graham, Relieving Officer and Registrar of the Rothbury Union.
14. Mr. Frank Dodds, Schoolmaster, Linbriggs.
15. Mr. Anthony Dagg, Shepherd, Linbriggs.
16. Mr. John F. Pugh, Second Master of the Endowed School at Rothbury.
17. Mr. Thomas Davison, Master of the Endowed Church of England School for Causey.
18. Mr. James Pringle, Steward to Mr. Cookson, Meldon, Morpeth.
19. Mr. Thomas Dunn, Steward to Mr. Davison, Tritlington.

Nos.
20. Mr. George Strong, Steward to Mr. Hogg, Causey Park.
21. Mr. James Brack, Steward to Mr. Atkinson, Angerton.
22. Mr. James Aitcheson, Steward to Mr. Bosanquet.
23. Mr. George Turnbull, Steward, Shandon Wood House Farm, Whittingham.
24. Mr. Robert Stephenson, Steward to Mr. Riddell, Felton.
25. Mr. Corry and Mr. Marshall, Owners and Occupiers at Bedlington.
26. Mr. Oliver, Gardener, Eslington Park, Alnwick.
27. Mr. Dickson, Blacksmith, Stamford.
28. Mr. John Wilson, Woodman to Mr. Lawson, Longhurst.
29. Mrs. Strong, Wife of William Strong, Stamford.
30. Jane Aitcheson, Wife of a Hind at Mr. Bolaim's, Felton.
31. Mrs. Shepherd, Wife of a Hind at Causey Park.
32. Mary Smith, Hired Bondager to Thomas Glass, Rock.
33. Mr. John Short, Felton.
34. A. B. Bamburgh.
35. Statement of one of the Women of a Public Gang working on a Farm.
36. Rev. Mr. Lowe, Roman Catholic Priest, Morpeth.

1. *Mr. Brown*, surgeon, medical officer to the Berwick-on-Tweed Union.—Is a farmer's son, bred on a farm, and thus well acquainted with all the conditions of people engaged on the land. He believes field work to be the most healthy employment to which women can be put. These are by far the finest women physically. Those who are engaged in domestic service, dressmaking, &c. &c., do not grow up so robust, and there is a great difference in the breadth of the chest. Driving carts is the only work which might be considered unbecoming to women, but no labour is injurious to them. The children usually go out to summer work at about 11 or 12 years of age. This is not too hard for them, and there is no restriction required to protect them or the women, but there is a class of women who go out from this town to work in the fields very different in character from the agricultural population. These are loose women and girls, who almost all smoke. Two miles is the outside of the distance they go from the towns. No young children are employed with them. There is one growing evil; the giving up cows of their own and taking so much to tea and coffee. Mr. Brown considers that anything tending to prevent field work among the women would be a national evil, as preventing the production and growth of a very fine race of people. The cottages are not so good as they ought to be; crowding tends to indelicacy. The use of box beds is very injurious. These are a sort of coffins for the living, and they are especially bad in disease. Looking at the town and country population, the latter are better housed, more healthy and infinitely superior in condition of life. They also pay their doctor's bills better than the town's people.

2. *Mr. John Paxton*, surgeon, one of medical officers of the Berwick Union, resides at Norham, where he has practised 30 years.—The women go out to work in the fields very extensively in this district and are a very healthy class. This work is very beneficial to them, though the barn work in the winter may at times subject them to colds. Driving carts, lifting heavy weights, carrying heavy loads is not suitable work for women and girls. The women are peculiarly free from the complaints usual to females from debility. Field work unfits them for domestic duties as wives and mothers. They are inferior in this respect to those who have been in domestic services, and the young women who are in the hinds' houses and away from their own families are not under proper supervision. Children are not sent out to work at too early an age, as far as their health is concerned. Looking at the resources of the people, they keep their children at school as long as they possibly can. The cottages have been much improved, but many bad ones remain; some are much crowded. The sanitary arrangements are fairly good, the board of guardians in this union having taken much trouble about them. With regard to this neighbourhood, Mr. Paxton does not consider any restriction upon the labour of women, young persons, or children at all necessary. The district is well supplied with schools, the teachers are good, generally certificated, and the parents are sufficiently aware of the value of education. The change of food of the working people is deteriorating their physical health and strength. The use of coffee, not free from adulteration, instead of oatmeal and barley bread is the chief cause. This alteration has taken place since groceries, such as coffee, tea, and sugar have become lower in price, and more attainable to the working classes. Beer is seldom used except at harvest, and butcher's meat very rarely. Corn wages are not so useful as formerly, as they are not consumed by the family. The want of proper supervision by the field steward over the language used is the great moral evil of field work. The condition of the people on both sides of the Tweed is much the same in every respect.

3. *Dr. F. Cahill*, has practised 21 years at Berwick-upon-Tweed, in both country and town, in Scotland and in England.—He does not consider that any work to which the women and children are put in the fields is physically injurious to to them. From his knowledge of the town and country population the women of the latter are far more healthy than the women of the former, and tenfold less affected by female complaints. He considers that their field work fits them to be good bearers of children, and that the strength of the population is kept up by them; that the surplus of the agricultural population who enter the large towns maintain the standard of health and strength by marriage with the inhabitants of towns. Open air exercise, the smell of fresh air, flowers, &c. conduce greatly to health, and keep up the stamina of women. There is a marked difference in the races north and south of the Tweed; the latter have the advantage, having more energy of character. The cottages are much improved, though in some places still very bad. The new bedrooms are too small; the front doors in many instances are built to the north instead of the south; the sanitary regulations as to privies, ashpits, pigsties, cow-sheds, are much neglected; and, in some instances, the position of the house is on a slope of a hill, on a lower level and on the same line as the outbuildings for cattle, where the straw is allowed to rot for many months, and the drainage from thence in some cases causes fever and other diseases. Box beds are very objectionable, and propagate fever after it has been originated by other causes. The food of the country people is of a healthy description, but the use of tea and coffee becoming more general is injurious. In conclusion, he has no hesitation in saying, after a long experience in this district, that the agricultural labourers are a most honest industrious class, with deep feelings of religion, and a high moral tone and bearing after they have arrived at the age of maturity.

4. *Mr. Hunt*, surgeon, medical officer of the Belford Union, has practised in the Belford district for 33 years.—He does not consider that field labour is in any one way injurious to women and children, but on the contrary rather conduces to health; their general health is above the average. The hours of work are long, and though it does not physically injure them, it must interfere with the comfort of the family. He does not think that women who "work out" are more immoral than any other class, but they do not become such tidy wives as those employed in domestic service. The great evil of the present day is the excessive smoking of the men, which must deteriorate the population, and tends to increase the desire for drinking. Corn payments in his opinion are the best for peasantry. Those who are on such conditions are most able to meet their engagements. He finds it so in his payments. The old cottages are bad and most of the new ones are inconveniently constructed. They are neither suited for health nor sickness. The small upstairs rooms are hot in summer and cold in winter. The most suitable construction is a ground floor, the mother then being able to look after her children in time of sickness, as well as carrying on her household duties. The overcrowded state of the old cottages is very great. On one farm he knows an instance of two unmarried women, who occupy a bondage house and have had several children. The labouring poor are as a body quite sufficiently educated. They can read the Bible, which is the guide post to heaven.

5. *Dr. Dodd*, medical officer of Rothbury Workhouse and Union.—Has known the district 20 years. The women work here from 6 to 6, with two hours for dinner, and a rest at 10 and 4. He cannot say that work is injurious to them. They are a strong, healthy class; but filling manure carts is unsuitable work. Children go to work pretty young, say at 9 or 10 years of age, but it has no bad physical effect upon them. In some parts of the district the cottages are very much crowded; only one room, all sexes and sometimes a stranger in them; cannot expect decency. The sanitary arrangements are good; they are well looked after by the inspector. There has been a great change in the last 20 years in the food of the people, with an increase of drinking. They have taken to tea and coffee three or four times a day, giving up porridge and milk, cheese, &c. There is an increase of dropsy.

6. *Dr. Vardy*, Rothbury.—There is no work too hard for women or children in this district, and the hours are not too long. They are a very healthy class, superior in physical strength to the town people. The sanitary arrangements of the cottages are well attended to; there is plenty of water. There has been no typhoid fever in the district for four years, and then it began in a house on the moors, and came to the village by relatives.

7. *Dr. Paton*, acting medical officer of the Morpeth Union.—Is of opinion that children do not go to work at too young an age for health; that neither they nor women are in any way injured by field work; that the women and children are more healthy than the town population. That the women are less subject to female complaints. He would not restrict any kind of work or the hours. The cottages in this district are as a rule sufficient where they have been recently erected. The sanitary arrangements are in some defective; the dung kept too near the house. The agricultural population is very sober. He does not believe there is much spirit drinking. The change from so much good oatmeal and milk to washy tea is an evil. He has a district of 16,000 acres. The bondage system prevails to a certain extent, but he cannot say that in his opinion it leads to immorality. Has never seen or experienced any evil from very young girls working out. The people are best off as a rule with money wages.

8. *Dr. Brummel*, 27 years in practice in Morpeth.—Would allow no child to be employed under 10 years of age. He thinks that filling dung carts is unsuitable, and in some instances physically injurious to women, especially those who are married; has such cases of married women being injured by straining (*prolapsus uteri*) from field work, but there are fewer ailments among the country population than even in a small town like this among the town people. Hours of work are not too long; eight hours of work are enough for women and children. Cottages still improve, but something remains to be done; as a general rule the sanitary arrangements are attended to. Does not think that there have been more illegitimate children out of cottages as bondagers than out of farm houses as hired servants to the farmer. It is undoubtedly bad when the hired bondager sleeps in the same room as the man who hires her. The condition of the people has much changed; they now live much better. The butchers' and the grocers' carts are constantly met upon the road.

9. *Mr. John Watson*, relieving officer, Morpeth Union.—Has been a relieving officer four years, and has lived all his life in Morpeth. His district is the town of Morpeth and the parishes north-west. They are purely agricultural, no mines or coals. The women and children in the country district are not put to any work unfitting or injurious to them. He is registrar of the district, and also registrar of marriage for the whole district. The agricultural population do not avail themselves of the office, but the mining population do so. He thinks that signing the marriage registrar is a fact in education that may be spoken from. They always induce them to sign. Children do not go out to work till they are 10 or 12 years of age. The schools in the district are ample and well attended, and well supported by the gentry. The cottages are good; the sanitary arrangements in the course of completion at the present time. He considers hinds' wages to be about 18*s*. a week, including everything. The cottages are not overcrowded in this district. It is very important to look to the staircase in cottages, as if this goes up from the sitting room it acts as a shaft to send vitiated air up; and in one very bad case of illness at Widdrington two boys, two

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girls, a servant girl, and a man all died of diptheria. It was attributable to this cause.

10. *Mr. George Davidson*, relieving officer, Alnwick. —Was formerly master of the Presbyterian school at Branton, and has had experience as occupier of a small farm. The condition of farm service is much the same in this district as at Branton, both as to hours and kind of work. Turning manure heaps may be considered unsuitable to women. They are put to it from the desire to employ them, otherwise they must remain idle. As a general rule it is questionable whether women should be permitted to drive carts on the country roads. The work of children is light at the commencement, but the hours are fully long. He began work before he was 9, as he was the second of nine children, but he got schooling in the winter, and got evening schooling for one season. It was a point of necessity to his parents to send him out so early to work. He worked two summers before he was 10. No boy or girl should work before 9. The children sent to school at a very early age did not generally gain advantage over those who were perhaps sent two years later, from the dislike often taken to their books. Children readily go two miles to school. Where there is management there ought to be no difficulty in paying fees. The cottages in this district are not sufficient, but some of those at Branton are as convenient as can be; one large kitchen, and a back kitchen and two bedrooms over. The bondage system is partly done away with but large families have the preference. Overcrowding prevails to a great extent in town and country.

11. *Mr. Robert Downey* has been relieving officer in Embleton district, Alnwick Union, for six months, and before that he was schoolmaster to the Church of England school at Rimington for 23 years. Women and children have been employed in the same manner ever since he knew the district, both as to hours and kind of labour; but wages are higher. Children usually go to work in summer from 10 to 12 years of age, and go again to school in winter up to 13 or 14. The children came long distances, full three miles, but now have a school nearer; the average distance would be one and a half mile. Fees, 3*s.*, 4*s.*, 5*s.* a quarter. Attendance not affected by want of means. Catechism not enforced; about one-third were dissenters. The school was supported by private charity with fees. Women work in the fields at hoeing, spreading dung, barn work, driving carts. Stooking corn is the exception, but is sometimes done. Hours are long enough, decidedly too long. Filling dung and driving carts are unsuitable occupations for women. The wages of a man are about 15*s.* or 16*s.* a week. Women's wages are about 1*s.* a day, and 2*s.* 6*d.* in harvest. Cottages are pretty good, and enough of them, but in some cases badly planned for a large family. The sanitary condition is good, as the guardians have looked to it. Hinds do not move much in this immediate district, but do so in the union. Two bedrooms, a large kitchen, and milk house, &c. would be sufficient for hinds' cottages. They are generally paid in corn, and mostly keep cows. In case of paupers he pays the school fees, and the parent selects the school. Is registrar of the district, and finds that many women when he takes their signature for registration of births often make their mark when asked to sign, consequent on the weakness and nervousness of their state of health.

12. *Mr. Crosbie*, relieving officer of the Berwick district, Berwick Union. Has been in this position for four years and a half, and known the district all his life. The labour to which the women are put in the fields does not hurt them beyond driving dung carts, which he does not think suitable to them. In very few instances women load dung carts or turn dung heaps. They cut turnips for the shepherds in the winter, which is hard work. Children seldom work before 12 years of age. This is for summer work, and then in the autumn they go back to school for the winter, and frequently for a second winter. Their work is not too hard nor their days too long. Mr. Crosbie is relieving officer for Berwick-on-Tweed, Tweedmouth, and the country parishes, and as between the two populations the country is by far the best off. They are much healthier and enjoy life more. The poor in the towns are in a miserable state as to houses and condition. The cottage accommodation in the country is improving, most of them have the necessary sanitary arrangements. The hinds are paid in kind and keep a cow, this is far better than money; when potatoes are bad, the farmers in general make the loss up to them. Hinds' wages, counting everything, are worth about 13*s.* or 14*s.* a week, but they are free from rises and falls and the shops. Women are getting 1*s.* a day and 2*s.* 8*d.* to 3*s.* for harvest. The bondage system is entirely done away with. The people shift as much as ever; a fancy for a horse, harness, or any trifle will set them moving. School education here is excellent, and the attendance is not affected by want of means. The teaching is rather superior on the north side of the Tweed; they have on the whole a rather advanced class of teacher. The fees are fully as high.

13. *Mr. Robert Graham*, relieving officer and registrar of the Rothbury Union.—Farmers in the district look more to the work of women than of men. The bondage system prevails. In several houses the bondager is in the same room with the family. Women work nine hours a day.

14. *Mr. Frank Dodds*, schoolmaster of Linbriggs, Rothbury Union.—This school is maintained by four people, one farmer and three shepherds. He is paid a salary by them, and the schoolroom belongs to Mr. Dagg the shepherd. Thirty-one children are attending at this time; some of the children come more than four miles. They pay for their own books. The children go to work at about 12 years of age. This applies to both boys and girls; the eldest worker now being about 13 or 14. Children come as early as 6 or 7 years of age to school; some know their letters. It takes about a month to teach them their letters. The school, if possible, is kept open all the winter. There is not a person, to my knowledge, in the district who cannot read and write. There are no fees. The schooling is paid by salary. The schoolmaster moves from house to house among the four people; 14 days for each scholar; getting board and lodging.

15. *Mr. Anthony Dagg*, shepherd of Linbriggs.—Has 11 children. About 20 years ago he hired a schoolmaster, and took his chance of getting other scholars. After a year or two he took his master and then two other shepherds into partnership in the school. He has lived on both sides of the border, and thinks, if anything, that the people on this side are better educated. He does not believe that any person in the district is not educated. He has never had a hired servant who could not write and read. He would most decidedly object to religion being excluded from school; that, he is certain, would be the opinion of the working people in this Highland of the Cheviots.

16. *Mr. John F. Pugh*, second master of the endowed school at Rothbury.—Came here from Shrewsbury grammar school nine years ago. He had an opportunity of forming a good opinion of the state of education among the labouring agricultural classes in Shropshire, and looking at them in comparison with the same class, the Shropshire people are the best educated. About a third of this school are agricultural, and the boys go to work about 11 and come back in winter till about 15 years of age. The boys would make about 130 days attendance during the winter six months; the boys on their return retain their knowledge fairly. The system of alternate days would be the best for their instruction, but he fears would not be applicable to an agricultural district. Some of the children come as far as three miles. It does not affect their attendance. They come in all weathers; sometimes through three feet of snow.

17. *Mr. Thomas Davison*, Causey Park Church of England School, Morpeth Union.—Has been

master eight years. It is an endowed school for Causey; 3*d.* and 6*d.* are the fees. Children come from 6 years of age, then go to work about 11; girls and boys about the same. They return in winter till they are 14. Not prevented from want of money. Those that go free attend the school as well as those that pay fees. He teaches the Church Catechism. Has no Presbyterian in the school. Does not enforce the Catechism, but teaches the shorter catechism if required. Cannot recollect any person up to 20 years of age who cannot read and write. The school is under no inspection. He has received no especial training for a schoolmaster.

18. *Mr. James Pringle*, steward to Mr. Cookson, Meldon Park, Morpeth Union.–The women do what is called the small work in this farm, and that is the case in this district generally, except where the farmers have come from the north. The hours are from home at 7 to 6 at night; a quarter of an hour at 10 and 4; one hour and a half at midday; go home in their hour, and return in the masters'. The children go to work in summer about 10, and generally go back to school in winter till perhaps 16 or 17. They do the same work as the women. He does not believe that any person on this farm is uneducated. One man did not sign his agreement, but that was because he preferred to make a mark. He is the only one since Mr. Pringle has been steward to Mr. Cookson who has not signed his name. He has been in the county all his life, and cannot of late years call to mind any person who has been prevented rising to a higher grade by want of education. The people hereabout are mostly on money wages. It would be, including everything, about 18*s.* a week. He has known many women complain of the work in the north, and be injured by carts, &c. &c.

19. *Mr. Thomas Dunn*, steward to Mr. Davison, at Tritlington, Morpeth Union.—Began life as a farm groom. Educated at a village school. Never has known any friends of his who have failed to get on from want of education. They always had a chance if they chose to use it. Children go to work from 10 to 12, then go back to winter school till 14 or so. Women's hours are from 6.15 a.m. to 6 p.m. Children work with women. Two hours for dinner, 15 minutes at 10 and at 4. They go and return in masters' hours. Women do all kinds of work that they can be set to.

20. *Mr. George Strong*, steward to Mr. Hogg, Causey Park, Morpeth Union.—He began working for Mr. Hogg 30 years ago at 9 years of age. Wrought out at first with the women, and went to school in the winter. His father was a hind. Then got on to driving carts. Went to regular work at 10, but picked up education at evening schools and at his own time. Became steward seven years since. If he began life again, would like two years more at school, now that he knows the need of it. Last year he was on money wages, and never till then knew the price of bread; but then had a difficulty in sending his boy to school. He has never found any difficulty about the distance from school. Hours of working, women from 6 to 12; two hours rest at 12, 15 minutes at 8, and the same at 4. The kinds of work are cleaning land, spreading manure, sowing artificial, hoeing turnips, haymaking, helping at harvest, rooting and strawing, thrashing. They do not work with horses. Children usually go out at 12 for summer work, and for regular work at 14. Boys ought to begin to work between 9 and 10; girls between 10 and 11; but then they ought to go to school in the winter till 12 years old, and then they learn twice as fast.

21. *Mr. James Brack*, steward to Mr. Atkinson, of Angerton, Morpeth Union.—Has lived in Northumberland all his life. Does not call to mind any of his friends who failed to rise in life from want of education. He began as a farm servant, and was so for 14 years. Does not believe that any family in this part has not received education. The people hereabouts are very well off; as well fed as the farmers. Their wages are from 16*s.* to 1*l.* a week. They eat a "vast of meat," but have changed their old habits; given up the meal and the cow, and taken to white meal and bread. The hinds' wives did not manage the cow when she was put on. Then they flew at the masters, so at last the cow was given up. The men here have 18*s.* every week, paid every fortnight. They pay for their houses 3*l.*, with leave to work out in hay and corn harvest. The men are better fed and better tailored than when he was young. The women work in this part from 7 to 6, with 20 minutes at 10, an hour and a half at midday, and 20 minutes at 4 o'clock. 1*s.* a day, about 2*s.* 6*d.* at harvest. They only do the small work here. In the north some of the work is not fit for women. Cleaning quicks, filling manure, forking hay, is not women's work. The children go to work at about 12 or 13; go again to school in winter, very often till May Day, till small work begins again. A limit of 10 would affect no one here. It would not do to put religious teaching out of the school. He does not remember to have hired any man who could not sign his agreement. All the men they now have can write as well as he can.

22. *Mr. James Aitcheson*, steward to Mr. Bosanquet, Alnwick Union.—Has lived all his life in Northumberland. His father was a steward before him, and he does not consider that many, if any, have been hindered from getting on in life from want of education. He could not mention one. All the stewards of his acquaintance but one, a Scotchman, are Northumberland men. None of the people on this farm under 40 but can read or write, and it is very rare at the hiring to find people who cannot read and write, though 20 years ago you might perhaps have done so. Looking at the circumstances of the parents, the amount of instruction required, and the learning of the boy and his business in after life, he thinks about 12 would be a fair age for summer work. They should go back to school for fully two years in the winter. There is a great striving here among the people to give their children a good education. Some children here go free, but that does not make parents slack in sending to school. Women's wages are 1*s.* a day, and 2*s.* in harvest time. The woman's retaining fee as bondager would be coals led, half the house, half the potatoes, and about 10 loads of coal.

23. *Mr. George Turnbull*, steward, Shandon Wood House Farm, Whittingham, Alnwick Union.—Women are employed in labour, weeding and spreading dung, and, though very seldom, filling dung carts. They do not fork corn at harvest, they occasionally drive harvest carts; they are not forced to do so. The youngest child now at work is about 14. He thinks children ought not to work before 12; his wife concurs. Those who have large families are forced to send their children out to pay for younger ones. Their wages are paid in corn and money. All work the bondage, but hinds' wages are increased.

24. *Mr. Robert Stephenson*, steward to Mr. Riddell, Felton, Alnwick Union.—Has lived with him since 1826. The hours of work in this district for women are from 7 in the morning to 6 at night; 15 minutes at 10, an hour for dinner at 12, and a short rest at 4. The long hours begin north of Alnwick; children work the same hours and kinds of work as women. Their regular work is cleaning land, spreading dung, sowing artificial manure, haymaking, turnip hoeing, shearing, rooting and strawing, barn work. It is not common to see women turning dung heaps, forking corn and hay, or driving carts. This comes from the north. Hinds are hired by the year, from 12th of May; single men are hired for 12 months or six months from the 12th of May. Hiring fairs are commonly held near the term. Women or children are not put to unreasonable work; the hours are reasonable; children are sent out to work in summer about 8 or 9 years of age, and go back to school at the back end of the year; they are not regularly employed, only

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by chance. In some cases, but not many, a limit of 10 would press on the poor. The difference between corn payments on good or bad land would be at least as great as below; and the keep of the cow must be added, as the profit would be greater to the hind on the good land:—

	£	s.	d.
Oats -	0	18	0
Barley - -	0	12	0
Wheat - -	0	12	0
Total	£2	2	0 extra.

25. *Mr. Corry* and *Mr. Marshall*, owners and occupiers of land at Bridlington, Morpeth Union, employ women from 8 in the morning to 6 p.m., with 1½ hour for dinner. They go home and return to work in their own hour. They consider that turning dung heaps and filling dung carts, as well as driving them, is unsuitable work for women and should not be allowed.

26. *Mr. Oliver.*—Has been gardener for 41 years at Eslington Park, Alnwick Union, to Lord Ravensworth, and in daily communication with hinds and farmers. The women are put to too hard work, such as filling carts and forking corn, it is too heavy for them, and their hours are too early, 6 is too soon to go out. Children's work is not too hard, neither do they go out at too young an age, as they go back to school in winter, because then there is no work for them; his boys went to work at 11, and all children ought to begin work at 10. He can always tell one who has been sent to work early as soon as he takes his tool in his hand. There are enough of schools in the district. The teaching is very good, all done by masters; the attendance is not affected by want of means, distance, or any religious teaching. They are taught all catechisms, the Church of England, the shorter, and the Roman Catholic. The cottages are improving, and he remembers when the hinds had to bring their windows and grates with them. The condition of the labourers is greatly improved; they have more corn and money, and their clothes and other things are cheaper. Plenty of hinds save money enough to take farms for themselves or for their children, they are also better educated, and as good workers as they ever were. The Presbyterians pay their own ministers and their seats are 1*s.* 6*d.* a head each quarter. The corn wages are most suitable for the working people; in bad harvests they have the best, and as to potatoes, if there is a blight the master allows them 4*l.* instead of 1,000 yards. The hinds' cows have fallen off very much lately. He thinks hiring fairs and dancing the chief causes of immorality, not the crowding of cottages. Mr. Oliver went to work 54 years ago at 10 years old and never went again to a day school, but attended the night school till he was 22. He kept bees as a boy and saved all his money to buy books. He considers the winter school attendance the only suitable mode for education in an agricultural district after children have begun work.

27. *Mr. Dickson*, blacksmith, Stamford, Alnwick Union.—Would for his part like to see children kept at school till 13. He does not remember any man kept down from want of education. He would prevent women working with carts, though his wife drives his cart to market every week, and is an excellent coachman. If the children are kept too long at school the mother of the family has to go into the fields. The fees are too heavy; 5*s.* or 6*s.* are too much. Working people have not much time in the week to teach their children religion. They are in bed often when work is over. So much cannot and will not be expected from them as from the rich. He would not like his children to go to a school where no religion was taught.

28. *Mr. John Wilson*, woodman to Mr. Lawson, Longhirst.—Has been working in this district for 40 years; has felt himself the want of education. The people now are much better educated than formerly. He would like to go to school for longer if he were to begin again. He went out to work at 9. Children should stay at school till they are 15, they can learn farm work after that.

29. *Mrs. Strong*, wife of William Strong, Stamford Farm, Embleton.—She, her husband, her son and his wife, a daughter working out, and two small girls live in this one room. The cow has been here till last May, but her husband made a byre. They have been here two years. The school fees are 4*s.*, 5*s.*, and 6*s.* at Embleton. There is a good schoolmaster.

30. *Jane Aitcheson*, wife of a hind at Mr. Bolaim's, Felton, Alnwick Union.—They have a cow kept, house free, coals led, potatoes planted, the seed being found by the master, also 11*s.* a week; women go out to work at 7, they must be on the ground at that time; they do all kinds of field work, including forking corn, filling dung carts, hoeing, &c. No work is too heavy, nor are they put to anything unreasonable. The hours of work are from 7 to 12, then one hour and a half for dinner, from work to work; 15 minutes for breakfast; 15 minutes at 4 o'clock. They go out at 6 in harvest time.

31. *Mrs. Shepherd*, wife of a hind at Causey Park.—Has had 12 children and had to send one of her children out to work at 9. To keep them quarter about at school and to work the bondage herself at that time. Awhile has felt the school fees heavily, has had four or five at school at a time and sore pinched for the fees. Many a time has said she would work her eyes off and on her knees, rather than the bairns should not go to school. It is all the poor can do for them. She likes corn wages best.

32. *Mary Smith*, aged 16, hired bondager to Thomas Glass, Rock South Farm.—[This girl cannot be classed as an agricultural labourer.—J. J. H.]—Was lately hired to take the place of a girl who was married. Her father is a driver at a coal pit. She went to work last year and to school before that. Does not go to Sunday school and does not know the name of the Saviour or who he is. Does not know who Adam was; does not know the name of Jesus Christ or who he was; never heard of the flood or the deluge; could not say what the Bible is; never heard of it. God made the world.

33. *Mr. John Short*, Felton, on a farm of Mr. Biddell's.—One sister and one cousin (two women) in his house, and for harvest his brother; all in one room.

34. *A. B. Bamburgh*, a bondage girl.—Found filling sea weed into a cart on the beach, and driving it home. She works from 6 to 6, with an hour and a half at 12 from work to work, 10 minutes at 10, and also at 4, in turnip hoeing. Considers shearing the hardest work.

35. *One of the women of a public gang working on a farm.*—A gang of 14 men and four women came from Peterhead, in Scotland, to Little Mill Station, under a contractor called Ingram. They agreed upon the price to be paid before leaving Scotland. The women were to be paid 1*l.* a week, and the men 1*l.* 10*s.*, 1*l.* 7*s.*, or 1*l.* 3*s.*, as agreed, but the contractor kept back 6*s.* 6*d.* each week for men and women's board overhead. They all slept in one loft. There was no division; men and women all together. They wouldna be allowed to do such things in Scotland. They would look very sair upon them when they came back if they knew all about it.

Another contractor, called Donkin, brought a gang at the same time. They separated from hers at the Christon Bank Station. She does not know how some of them will get back to Scotland as the men have drunk all the money away.

36. *Rev. Mr. Lowe*, Roman Catholic priest, Morpeth.—After 30 years' experience in Morpeth does not remember a single instance of any of the Irish girls who are so largely hired out as bondagers and farm servants having an illegitimate child. He thinks there should be some general supervision of all schools.

APPENDIX D.—EVIDENCE.

SOUTH NORTHUMBERLAND.

LIST OF WITNESSES.

Nos.
1. The Rev. Robert Powell, Rector of Bellingham.
2. The Rev. John Young, Presbyterian Minister, Bellingham.
3. The Rev. J. G. Flint, Roman Catholic Priest, Bellingham.
4. The Rev. Mr. Fiskin, United Presbyterian Minister, Stamfordham.
5. The Rev. John Fox, Master of the Endowed School, Stamfordham.
6. Mr. Charles Hedlock, Master of the Roman Catholic School, Stamfordham.
7. Mr. John Paxton, Master of the National School, Bellingham.
8. Mr. Thomson, Master of the Bellingham British School.
9. Mr. Joseph Bainbridge Fife, Surgeon, Newcastle.
10. Mr. Elliot, Surgeon, Bellingham.
11. Mr. McCabe, Surgeon, Matfen.
12. Mr. James Spraggon, Relieving Officer, Ponteland.
13. Mr. John Robson, Relieving Officer, Stamfordham District.
14. Mr. William Helnsley, Relieving Officer at Chollerton.
15. Mr. G. Dickenson, Relieving Officer, Allendale District.
16. Messrs. Thomas and James Aynsley, Relieving Officers, Bellingham.
17. Mr. John Hogg, Steward to Mr. Andrew Ridley, Lincoln Hill.
18. Mr. John Moore, Steward to Mr. Wilson, Shotley Bridge.
19. Mrs. Colbeck, Occupier of Wallwick Grange.
20. Mr. Robb, Draper at Hexham.
21. William Riddle, Kirk Harle.
22. Mr. John Thornton, Castleward.
23. John Thornton, Castleward.
24. Mr. Lumsden, Farmer, Shotton Cramlington.

1. The *Rev. Robert Powell*, rector of Bellingham, finds that the parents are very careless about their children's needle work. The payment of fees in a school gives a better tone to the parents and children; they think themselves superior to those who do not pay. Evening schools do not answer. He discouraged the master having them, finding his health failed, teaching night and day. The children remain at school till 14 or 15, and the attendance is fair. Some of the best attenders come three or four miles. That applies also to church attendance.

2. The *Rev. John Young*, Presbyterian minister, Bellingham, has lived 38 years in this place. The custom of putting the land down to grass has made many of the cottages useless, and they are going to decay. Women work from 8 o'clock to 6. The agricultural women make as good wives, and perhaps better, than any other class. They have learnt to put their hands to all sorts of work, both indoor and out. A few shepherds keep a schoolmaster on the hills among them; and they lately commissioned Mr. Young to procure for them Virgil, Horace, and Cæsar, to study Latin. Of these people, one family come 9 miles to church on foot; one is a woman, the rest are men. There is very little employment for boys, and they do not go out young. People in the district value education very much, and many old people who could themselves not read nor write have told Mr. Young that they have felt the loss, and to his knowledge have educated their children. Broken school time is of little value. In the winter the children come miles to school. Mr. Young is convinced that the inhabitants of this district would be most averse to dispense with Bible teaching. School attendance is not materially affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents. There is not much sewing taught. The cottages in the agricultural districts are not crowded so as to interfere with morality and decency. The hiring fairs have a great tendency to immorality; but he does not see his way to any remedy.

3. The *Rev. J. G. Flint*, Roman Catholic priest, Bellingham, insists upon the children returning to school on the wet days, when they cannot work. They are charged nothing for it, and by that means make a considerable number of attendances during the working season. The children go at a very early age to pick ironstone. They go by special train every morning.

4. The *Rev. Mr. Fiskin*, United Presbyterian minister, Stamfordham (Castleward Union), is desirous to raise the standard of teachers in elementary schools in this district, as educated men are always the most competent instructors, and better able to ground children in primary education. They are far below the Scotch schoolmasters. This is of the greatest consequence in the country, as the towns can help themselves; but the country is the feeder of the towns, and the people go there in the grossest ignorance. The people of this district are not so desirous for education as those in the north. They are not so firm or anxious for it as the Presbyterians. It would be, in Mr. Fiskin's opinion, a tremendous blunder for the State to exclude the Bible from the schools. It should be used as a text book, but not the only one, and the children be made to understand it; but no particular doctrine need be taught. There ought to be no difficulty in that respect. The hiring fairs are an abominable nuisance.

5. The *Rev. John Fox*, master of the endowed school, Stamfordham (Castleward Union), clergyman of the Church of England, has been master of the endowed school for 30 years. Advocates a National system of education, with as much religion as you can get; but if the religious difficulty is insuperable, then secular education. Well educated children are the best assistants to the monitor. He does not object to hiring fairs; in this locality they do not lead to much mischief.

6. *Mr. Chas. Hedlock*, master of the Roman Catholic school, Stamfordham (Castleward Union). — About three parts of the children are Roman Catholics. Neither Protestant nor Roman Catholic children are taught religion; nor are the Roman Catholic children taught any religion, except on Sunday. The fees are paid weekly; 2*d.* the labouring classes and 4*d.* the farmers. The fees are too low. The number in attendance are 40 to 50 in summer, 60 to 70 in winter. They come to school between 5 and 6 years of age; very rarely know their letters when they come. They lose three weeks on an average by not knowing their letters. It would take three months to put the children in the same position they were in when they went out to work in the summer on their return in winter. He should, as a schoolmaster, prefer the third mode mentioned in Commissioners' circulars;* the present one adopted in this district for

* 10 & 11 Vict. c. 70. ss. 2, 3, 26.

APP. D.

South Northumberland.

Mr. Henley.

b.

school attendance. The age at which the children usually go to summer work is about 13; they generally return in the winter up to 14 and 15. His is a mixed school. The girls are taught needle-work. The greatest distance any children come to school is three miles. The attendance of those at a distance is the best, and they are always first in the morning. The school is under Government inspection.

7. *Mr. John Paxton*, master of the National School at Bellingham.—The fees are 3*d.* over 12 years of age, and 2*d.* under that age, paid weekly in advance. The Catechism taught, but not enforced. Attendance is affected by distance, in winter especially, and, to a certain extent, by the pecuniary resources of parents. Children of the agricultural labourers remain at school till they are about 15, that is for summer and winter, merely going away for harvest. As far as he knows the children do not learn their letters before coming to school. It would take about six weeks to teach them letters.

8. *Mr. Thomson*, master of the Bellingham British School, teaches no Catechism or doctrine. All sorts come; Church of England, Roman Catholics, and Dissenters. He reads the Bible and questions upon it, thinking the people would object to this being omitted. The fees are 4*s.* to 5*s.* 6*d.* a quarter, not in advance. The school is entirely self-supporting, and principally contains agricultural children. The attendance is very little affected by distance. They come four miles, and very little trouble about fees. The building is supported by trustees; the children pay for fuel, lighting, and books. The numbers were 112 last winter; sometimes as far as 130. Mixed school. He has not undertaken evening schools, though he has been asked to do it, but he considers it is enough to teach in the daytime. He teaches practical land surveying to children in the summer at meal times, and in the evening principally to farmers' sons.

9. *Mr. Joseph Bainbridge Fife* (Newcastle), Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, surgeon to the Infirmary for Diseases of the Eye and Ear, and to the Hospital for Sick Children, formerly lecturer on anatomy and operative surgery at the Newcastle School of Medicine and Surgery, &c. &c., was admitted a member of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1842; since that period has been constantly and actively engaged in the practice of his profession. During the Crimean war had entire medical charge of the 26th and other regiments quartered at Newcastle. At that time examined all the men recruited in the district. Has examined some hundreds; on one occasion forty in a day. Finds that there are no malformations or diseases amongst men recruited from agricultural districts which can in any way be attributed to the nature of their employment. Has not found that knock-knees, lateral curvature of the spine, flat feet, varicose veins, and rheumatism are prevalent in the men recruited from agricultural districts. Knock-knees and lateral curvature of the spine indicate a great want of constitutional vigour, which may be produced and is increased by insufficient food and unhealthy lodging, but not by field labour. Flat feet are not more common amongst agricultural labourers than any other class. The awkward gait so frequently observed is the result, in a great measure, of the habit of wearing unnecessarily heavy and badly made boots. Varicose veins have their origin in many different conditions that tend to impede venous circulation; the most common is a tight garter or string tied below the knee. There is nothing in farm work calculated to develope the disease Rheumatism exists more or less all over the United Kingdom, and affects most those who dwell in damp situations. The existence of the disease, in an excessive degree, is the result of locality and not occupation. The agricultural labourer is employed actively in the open air, and requires good food, lodging, and clothing to enable him to resist the frequent changes of temperature, daily exposure, and demand upon his muscular energy; but his vocation is undeniably healthy, and the men of this district are sound and vigorous. The women employed in field labour are not exposed to excessive toil or tempestuous weather. In stormy weather out-door farming operations are suspended. Diseases peculiar to women are not more common amongst the country people than those of a similar class who live in towns. The health of a country woman is better and her life happier than that of a woman occupying the same social position and following any of the various employments open to her in manufacturing towns. Has never seen an instance in which girls and boys have suffered from being employed in farm work, and does not remember to have ever known a case in which disease or malformation has been the result of severe labour at an early age. Does not think it necessary that any difference should be made in the age at which boys and girls should be employed. Boys and girls at an early age are equal in strength; believes, if there is a difference, that boys are the strongest. The result of his experience is that of all laborious employments agricultural are the healthiest. The labourer's physical condition can be much improved by greater attention to his domestic arrangements. It is difficult to lay down any rule for the quantity aud quality of food, as that must depend upon the demand for labour, the price and opportunity of obtaining provisions, and the number to be provided for incapable of work in a family. The landed proprietors have shown a strong disposition in this neighbourhood to improve the dwellings of the labouring classes; but there are still many cottages occupied, which are not only unfavourably situated, but in every other respect bad. The ventilation of a labourer's dwelling is almost entirely overlooked by the occupant, particularly at night; during the day the door is generally open. There is so great a desire to shut out the cold, that the ingress of pure, and the egress of foul, air are equally obstructed. The peasant does not recognize the fact that pure air and a clean skin are as necessary for himself as for his horse, or his ox. The ground upon which cottages are erected is frequently badly drained. This is productive of various disorders, and in many instances might be remedied by a very few hours of industry. The duration of the hours of labour, depending as they do on the season of the year, the condition of the crops, and the state of the weather, must vary; but periods of great activity are usually followed by comparative rest. Upon this subject any legislative enactment must be vexatious and obstructive. Has formed the opinions which he has expressed from his knowledge of the condition of the agricultural labourer in the northern counties.

10. *Mr. Elliot*, surgeon, Bellingham. — Considers some children go out to work too soon, say 12 years old. They should not work till 14, both for the sake of health and education. Finds the women who live and work in the fields most healthy, more so than those in towns or domestic service. The new cottages attached to the ironworks are very much crowded; the sanitary arrangements are fearful. The privies are the greatest nuisances. The cottages are principally inhabited by Irish and others, but the children work in the fields. The agricultural cottages are in a good state and not crowded. He had some time ago to step over 14 beds in the ironwork cottages in one room to relieve a patient, and has been shocked frequently at the presence of men sleeping in the open apartment above, during the time of a woman's confinement. He has persuaded the people as far as possible to change their diet, as they had taken principally to tea and coffee and bread instead of meat, porridge, and meal, which would improve their health greatly.

11. *Mr. McCabe*, surgeon, Matfen (Castleward Union).—Has been a union medical officer in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire; has also been in business in America, U.S., and has been living in Northumberland for a year and a half. Has never found working agricultural labourers so well off in any place, including America; in fact, there are no poor people at all here. No children go to work here till they

are in their teens. They went to work much younger in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire. The women who work out are the most healthy class, more free from the usual women's complaints, both now and in their old age. He would not allow any child to go out before 14. They ought not to be put in any charge before that age. The work of women is not in any way unsuitable, nor are their hours too long. The cottages are not too crowded, and the sanitary arrangements fair. The labourers here are better educated than in Yorkshire or Lincolnshire, but not so well as in the United States. Bastardy here is more prevalent.

12. *Mr. James Spraggon*, relieving officer, Ponteland (Castleward Union).—Has been 15 years relieving officer; formerly a farmer. The women hired as bondagers go out at 7 o'clock. Those who are not confined (*i. e.* hired) go out from 8 till 6. They have an hour and a half at dinner, going home and returning to work in their own hours; 15 minutes at 10 and the same at 4. Women do small work only here; hoeing, weeding, picking stones, haymaking work at harvest. It is not the custom here and would not be tolerated to fill dung carts, turn dung heaps, or drive carts; only those who come from the North do it. He does not consider it is women's work. Children go out to summer work as a rule about 12; some may go as an exception at 9 or 10, but that is only the pressure of a large family. A boy should go to work at 10. He ought to be able to get what education he wants by that time, finishing up in the winter. The children work the same hours as the women and with them at hoeing. Few men ever hoe with them, except an odd one. Children who go out early are pressed out not by the farmers but by the want of the parents. There are no gangs come out of Newcastle, but about 40 years ago he used to go in as a young fellow to hire women on a Sunday to come out to work on the Monday. There was then a regular hiring place (at Sandgate), and fine fun it was. The district is well off for schools; the children attend well. The guardians pay for pauper children and take care that they attend and make progress. He cannot call to mind any children that are growing up without education. The labouring people are well off; nearly or quite 1*l.* a week, including all. The cottages are much improved and plenty of them. The sanitary arrangements have been well attended to by the Guardians. Labourers live near their work, none go a mile. The utmost distance children have to go is three miles. The fees paid by the guardians are about 5*s.* or 6*s.* a quarter. The greatest number of the schools are self-supporting; all the schools teach sewing; nothing done in the evening schools. It is now common in this district, and was so when he farmed, to engage the yearly hinds with the understanding "no work no pay," so that they come on the rates when sick. Except in the new cottages, the whole family and the hired servant occupy one room, and sometimes a double hinding, *i.e.*, a son married and his family.

13. *Mr. John Robson*, relieving officer, Stamfordham district (Castleward Union).—Has only been relieving officer for six months, but has lived in the district all his life. Finds that many in the colliery district cannot sign their names; very few if any cannot do so in the agricultural districts; most of the cottages in this district have two rooms, some three, but two is the prevailing thing. Considers about eight hours enough for women's work. The schools in this district are pretty good, and the distance about two miles at the outside. The fees vary from 2*d.* to 9*d.* a week; the average would be perhaps 3*d.* In any case where parents have relief the board of guardians put the children to school. The women only do the small work, not the hard work of the North; 1*s.* a day, and extra at harvest, perhaps 2*s.* 6*d.* Men about 16*s.* to 17*s.* a week; house free; coals led. Children go out about 10 years old, and perhaps get 6*d.* to 8*d.* or 10*d.* a day. Go back to school in winter till 13 or 14.

14. *Mr. William Helnsley*, relieving officer at Chollerton (Hexham Union).—Has been relieving officer since 1836, since the commencement of the union. Children hardly go out to work in the summer till 12 or 14 years of age; in some cases they may go back again to school. Women work from 8 to 6, with an hour or an hour and a half in mid-day; a break at 10 and 4. They do the small work; and forking corn, filling dung carts, &c. is quite an exception, tho' he has seen it. Does not consider any work the women do in this district is injurious to them. Their hours are not too long. They ought not to go out before 8 in the morning, either married or single. Most of the hinds' houses in this district are single, *i.e.*, one room, though there is an improvement lately in the new houses. Not many of the hinds have a hired servant; their own family usually work the bondage. There is no want of schools in this district. The outside distance for children to come to school would be three miles; two would be an average. The attendance is not affected by want of money to pay school fees. The Guardians pay school fees in all cases where the paupers request them to do so. The parents select the school; the average fees would be 4*s.* 6*d.* or 5*s.* a quarter. The corn conditions are greatly done away with. The wages now would be about 16*s.* a week; coals led, house free, and potatoes planted. Women 1*s.* a day and 3*s.* at harvest. Sanitary arrangements in the cottages not good or as they ought to be; as much from the fault of the occupiers as from the owners. Bastardy cases have increased of late years; he knows that as registrar. People are better off in every way now than formerly. Cannot recall any person who has failed to advance in life in this district from want of education. People have a good chance now.

15. *Mr. G. Dickenson*, relieving officer, Allendale district (Hexham Union).—Has been relieving officer upwards of 30 years. One half of the district is a mining population; the hinds' wives in that part usually work the bondage. The women work from 8 to 6, the children the same. The average age for children to start would be 10 or 11; then go back usually to school in the winter. Their work is reasonable, both as to hours and kinds of work. The schools are good, both as to numbers and quality. There are cases where the children are not sent to school. It is the exception, but in some cases when the Guardians pay they have difficulty in getting the children to school; as a rule, however, the parents are anxious for education. The cottages are very good; they have nearly all two rooms and some conveniences. The great fault, in his opinion, is the ground-floor bedroom which is damp. Cottages are held by the farmers. Hinds are paid the bulk in money. It is altogether worth about a pound a week. Wages have much advanced of late years.

16. *Messrs. Thomas and James Aynsley*, relieving officers, Bellingham Union.—The hours of work of women in summer are from 7 to 6, with an hour for dinner. Children go out at 11 or 12 years of age for summer work. They work the same hours as women, and come back again in winter to school, if they are not hired. Every family they know in the district sends their children to school; they are determined to do so. The Guardians pay the fees for people who are chargeable. The parents select the schools. They have a return of attendance quarterly, with reasons for absence. There are grand schools in this union. A few people, but not many, now sign by marks; they are mostly people from 45 years old and upwards. A village in this district has a pit where they sign much more by mark. The cottages are wonderfully improved. A most mighty change. The Dukes of Northumberland have done great things, and many other gentlemen have done equally in proportion. They cannot recall any cottage where the people are very crowded. Mr. James Aynsley has lived in the south of England as a bailiff, and there is a mighty difference in the

APP. D.

South Northumberland.

Mr. Henley.

b.

education of the people; much superior in the north. Single ploughmen live in the farm houses; they get 23*l.* to 30*l.* a year; all found.

Hinds' wages are difficult to calculate, from different advantages. Women 1*s.*, some 1*s.* 2*d.* or 1*s.* 3*d.*; at harvest 2*s.* or better. Hiring single servants causes a great deal of bastardy.

17. *Mr. John Hogg*, steward to Mr. Andrew Ridley, Lincoln Hill (Hexham).—Women start in summer to work at 6, break off at 11, leave home again at 1.30 to be at work at 1.45, with 15 minutes at 4. At harvest time they have 15 minutes at 9 and 4, and two hours at mid-day. Children work the same hours as the women. The latter do all sorts of work except ploughing, harrowing, mowing, and such like. They once spread lime, but he never put them to it again. The children do not go out before 11 years old. Some may go out at 10, but he has never had any. Their work is easy. The women sack the corn for the machine, and make the sacks as heavy as they please. They have to carry the corn to be consumed on the farm up the stairs to the granary. The women have 1*s.* a day, and 10*s.* at harvest a week; and those hired without hinds have three loads of potatoes, and coals led. The hinds get 16*s.* a week, half a ton of potatoes, and house free, coals led, and find a woman worker. The womens' work would average 20 days a month. He came from Scotland and lived also in the north of this county. The people here have far better encouragement, but they are not so strong as in the north. The women destroy themselves with tea, and spend too much money on butchers' meat. All the people on the farm can read and write, but they are nothing like so well educated as in Berwickshire. As much the fault of the parents as of the schools. The schoolmaster ought to be helped by the parents in the evening. In general, the people are not so well educated here as in the north of the county. The school fees here are also heavier than in Scotland, but they teach here three children for two, which they do not do in Scotland.

18. *Mr. John Moore*, Steward to Mr. Wilson, Shotley Bridge, Hexham.—Women go out to work at 8, go on till 12 (with 10 minutes at 10), commence at 1 o'clock, and continue till 6. Children's hours the same as the women's. Women only do small work, weeding, &c. Children usually go out at 12 or 14 years of age; there may be a chance one sooner. Those of our own estate and in this parish can read and write, but those who come from over the water in Durham cannot. Of Irish labourers not one out of every dozen can write. The women's wages are 1*s.* a day, and 2*s.* at harvest. The average rate of labourers' wages would be 2*s.* 9*d.*; no privileges. There are no hired women to the hinds in this part of the country. Hinds have 16*s.*, free house and garden, coals led, three loads of potatoes, and six bushels of wheat.

19. *Mrs. Colbeck*, occupier of Wallwick Grange (Hexham Union).—Women work on her farm from 8 to 6; one and a half hours at mid-day, 15 minutes at 10 and 4. Does not approve of women doing the hard work as they do in the north; always shocked to see them filling manure carts. The women who work out here are the hinds' wives. They are hired to go out; that is, they must find a worker.

20. *Mr. Robb*, a draper at Hexham.—Thinks that single servants' hiring fairs are undoubtedly a great evil, but he cannot see his way to any remedy; register offices would not do. Last year those who came to be hired were offered the new town hall for the small payment of a penny; but they would not avail themselves of it, they preferred standing in the street. The school in the town is managed by a mixed committee of dissenters and churchmen. The parish clergyman is the present chairman, but not necessarily so; no catechism is taught to any child, and so far the system works smoothly, but has great difficulty in getting the children of the townspeople into the school. He ascertained the other day, after careful enquiry in the town, that from 150 to 200 more children ought to have been at the school. He cannot suggest any way of getting them there, but sooner than leave the people in the present state of ignorance he would come to secular education, though he is himself a religious man and a preacher. Mr. Robb set up 25 years ago a Sunday school upon purely Bible teaching, and has now an attendance of 150 to 200 children, of the very lowest class swept off the streets. They learn to read by coming to the Sunday school. He started evening schools, but was met by the usual difficulty that the young men could not read or write. The people from the country districts are more generally educated than those in this town.

21. *William Riddle*, Kirk Harle (Bellingham Union), 11 years old.—Has never been to school, but has been instructed at home. Was at work this summer, but does not know at what, or if at any wages at all. Knows his letters, but does not know the name of God, or who made him or the world; the name of Jesus Christ, or heaven or hell. Does not know who will punish him if he tells a lie, but knows it is wrong, and would not do it. Has been to church, but cannot remember anything he ever heard there. Has been living with his grandparents.

[Could not on trial point out his letters.—J. J. H.]

22. *Mr. John Thornton* (Castleward Union).—Works at his own hand; wife and four children at home; none at school; one at turnips, 12 years of age, and been at work all summer. Second, boy of 9, neither at school or work. His third, a girl of 7, has been at school a bit. Neither boy or girl at home can read or write.

23. *John Thornton* (Castleward Union), a boy of 12, found at work.—Does not know the name of Jesus Christ, Noah, Eve, or the name of the county he lives in; "thinks it is the west of England." Reads very imperfectly; at Ingoe school formerly.

24. *Mr. Lumsden*, farmer, Shotton Cramlington (Castleward Union).—Began life in the Bamburgh country at 9 years of age for 3*d.* a day. Never went back to school, so got very little education; has found the want of it, so has taken care to give his sons a good education. People's wages at that time (he is now 52) were 9*s.* a week for hire; women 8*d.* a day, 1*s.* for harvest. They all now stop at 9 o'clock for breakfast—that is a new custom—and again at 4. Some women get 10*d.*, and some 1*s.* Does not think that turning dung heaps and filling dung carts is suitable for women; they should not fork the corn or load. Spreading lime is not injurious to them. Children should not go to work before 12 years old; that age would not press upon the parents. They should continue at school later if the parents could afford it; they will have time enough after that to become good labourers. He worked 10 years with horses, and has drained 21 years for Sir Mathew White Ridley, M.P. He has now been two years a farmer; saved his money; had not a shilling come in from any other source. The women go out here at 6, 7, or 8 o'clock, according to masters. In most instances the children work with the women. The women only do the small work, unless the masters come from the north. The dinner hour is from 12 to 1.30. The schools are better now, and the people are far more able to pay than formerly. Has been a very large employer of labour, and does not know any young men hereabouts who cannot read and write. He would not like religion put out of the schools; many of the schoolmasters teach them far too little. Never has heard of any hindrance in this part from any religious teaching. He does not believe the labouring class hereabouts are so strong as formerly; they have entirely changed their food; given up meal, milk, &c., and taken to white bread and butcher's meat. He quite believes that it takes three men now to do the work of two. The employment of young girls is not injurious; they are far better than marching about idle.

APPENDIX E.

Summary of the Returns sent in answer to the Commissioners' Circular of Inquiry.

List of Persons who have answered Circulars.

In Glendale.

1. Mr. George Culley, Landowner, J.P. and High Sheriff, Fowberry Tower, Chatton.
2. Mr. M. T. Culley, Landowner, Chairman of the Board of Guardians, Coupland Castle, Wooler.
3. Mr. Charles Selby, Landowner, J.P., Yearle, Doddington.
4. Mr. William Nicholson, occupier, N. Hazelridge, Chatton.
   Mr. John Cayle, Hazelridge School, Belford.
5. Mr. Robertson, occupier, Hazelridge.
6. Mr. Robert T. Maddison, occupier, Wandon, Chatton.
7. Mr. John Borthwick, occupier, Kilham.
8. Mr. James Ramsey, occupier, Lilburn Grange, Eglingham.
9. Mr. Black, occupier, Lanton.
10. Mr. James B. Boyd, occupier, Doddington.
11. Mr. James Hall, occupier, Newtown, Chillingham.
12. Miss Margaret Dodds, occupier, Haugh Head, Eglingham.
13. Mr. Thomas Stawart, occupier, Roddam.
14. Mr. Andrew Thompson, occupier, Paston.
15. Mr. John Turnbull, occupier, Branton.
16. Mr. James Grey, occupier, Kimmerston, Ford.
17. Mr. Richard Huntley King, occupier, Wooperton.
18. Mr. Thomas Laidler, occupier, Fenton, Wooler.
19. Mr. Matthew Laidler, occupier, Fenton Hill, Wooler.
20. Mr. William Henderson, occupier, Fowberry Mains, Chatton.
21. Mr. Charles Borthwick, occupier, Mindrim.
22. Mr. Thomas Chartres, occupier, Turvelaws, Wooler.
23. Mr. Joseph Atkinson, occupier, Brandon.
24. Mr. Peter W. Purves, occupier, Lilburn.
25. Mr. Christopher Atkinson, occupier, Rosedon.
26. Mr. J. Marshall, occupier, Chatton Park, Belford.
27. Mr. Charles Rea, occupier, Doddington.
28. Mr. John Duncan Ogilvie, occupier, Mardon, Ford and Branxton.
29. Mr. J. C. Langlands, occupier. Old Bewick.
30. Mr. George Rea, occupier, Middleton House, Ilderton.
31. Mr. William B. Boyd, occupier, Hetton Hall, Chatton.
32. Rev. Matthew Burrell, Vicar of Chatton.
33. Rev. Thomas Knight, Rector of Ford.
34. Rev. John S. Green, Vicar of Wooler.
35. Rev. Henry Parker, Rector of Ilderton.
36. Rev. John Richard King, Vicar of Carham.
37. Rev. James Allgood, Ingram Parish.
38. Rev. Joseph Hudson, Chillingham Parish.
39. Rev. William Procter, Doddington Parish.
40. Mr. George Young, Schoolmaster, Lilburn.
41. Mr. William Robson, Teacher, Crookham.
42. Mr. Robert Frizell, National Schoolmaster, Crookham.
43. Rev. John Fraser, Presbyterian Minister, Lowick.
44. Rev. Peter Whyte, Presbyterian Minister, Wooler.
45. Milfield School.
46. Mr. George Pringle Hughes, occupier, Middleton Hall, Ilderton.
47. Mr. Joseph Scott, National Schoolmaster, Lowick.
48. Mr. Anthony Barber, occupier, West Weetwood, Chatton.
49. Mr. F. P. Lynn, occupier, Mindrim Mill, Carham.
50. Rev. P. G. McDouall, Kirknewton Vicarage.

In North Northumberland.

1. Rev. William Clark King, Vicar of Norham.
2. Rev. James Blythe, Presbyterian Minister, Alnwick.
3. Mr. James Aitchison, Farm Steward, Embleton.
4. Mr. Thomas Allan, occupier and Chairman of Union, Snitter, Rothbury.
5. Mr. George Drysdale, occupier, Great Ryle, Whittingham.
6. Mr. Thomas Rodger, occupier, Embleton.
7. Mr. John Bolam, occupier, Glarorum.
8. Mr. R. S. Bainbridge, occupier, Woodhorn Grange.
9. Mr. James Laing, occupier, Bamburgh.
10. Mr. John Angus, occupier, Whitefield, Bothal.
11. Mr. John Davison, owner and occupier, Tritlington Hall, Hebron.
12. Mr. Thomas Lawson, owner and occupier, Longhirst Grange, Bothal.
13. Mr. George Laing, occupier, Cornhill.

In South Northumberland.

1. Rev. John F. Bigge, Vicar of Stamfordham.
2. Rev. J. Elphinstone Elliot, Whalton Parish, Chairman of Board of Guardians.
3. Rev. John Fox, Stamfordham Parish.
4. Mr. L. Wilson Atkinson, J.P., Newbiggin, Hexham.
5. Board of Guardians, Hexham.
6. Mr. R. Pickering, Clerk to Board of Guardians, Haltwistle.
7. Mr. William Henry Charlton, Landowner, Hesleyside, Bellingham.
8. Mr. Joseph Lee, occupier, Dilston, Corbridge.
9. Mr. Thomas Palliser Dods, Chairman of the Hexham Board of Guardians, Anick Grange, Hexham.
10. Mr. John Fewster Newlands, occupier, Ebchester, Gateshead.
11. Mr. G. N. D. Waddilove, J.P., occupier, Brunton, Wall.
12. Mr. Edward Coulson, occupier, Bridgeford, Bellingham.
13. Mr. Henry T. Thompson, occupier, Barrasford, Chollerton.
14. Mr. Samuel Pattison, occupier, Old Ridley, Bywell St. Peter.
15. Mr. John Johnson, occupier, Old Town, Allendale.
16. Mr. Andrew Ridley, occupier, Chesters, Hexham.

APP. E.

Northumberland.

Mr. Henley.

b.

17. Mrs. Isabella Colbeck, occupier, Walwick Grange, Warden.
18. Mr. Thomas Sample, Land Agent, Matfen, Stamfordham.
19. Mr. Thomas Wilson, occupier, Shotley.
20. Mr. W. B. Wilson, occupier, Blagdon, Stainington.

ANALYSIS OF THE FOREGOING LISTS.

In Glendale.

3 Landowners.
31 Occupiers.
9 Clergymen.
2 Presbyterian Ministers.
5 Schoolmasters.

In North Northumberland.

1 Vicar.
1 Presbyterian Minister.
1 Chairman of Board of Guardians.
9 Occupiers.
1 Farm Steward.

In South Northumberland.

1 Chairman of Board of Guardians.
1 Clerk of Board of Guardians.
1 Justice of the Peace.
3 Clergymen.
1 Landowner.
12 Occupiers.
1 Land Agent.

I. AS TO EMPLOYMENT IN PRIVATE GANGS.

The system of employing persons in agriculture in private gangs does not exist in Northumberland. The labourers live usually on the farms or within a very short distance of them.

Rev. John Fraser, Lowick, Glendale union, states that the children, young persons, and women, live

"Some half a mile, others about a mile, scarcely any more than two miles" from their work.

Mr. George Pringle Hughes, occupier, Ilderton, Glendale union, says the persons employed are

"For the greater part composed of the members of families living upon the farm with a character to maintain."

Mr. Thomas Lawson, owner and occupier, Longhirst Grange, Bothal, North Northumberland, says they are

"The young members of the agricultural labourers families, often working in the presence of their parents, and always in close proximity to them, and generally under the superintendence of the most skilled local labourer."

Rev. John F. Bigge, Stamfordham, South Northumberland, says that

"Two miles is the extreme limit" of the distance of their homes from their work.

Mr. Thomas Palliser Dods, occupier, and chairman of the Hexham board of guardians, St. John Lee, South Northumberland, says,

"At a busy time, such as in harvest or turnip pulling, I have a few extra hands from the village close by, and from Hexham, a mile and a half from the homestead, but nearer to part of my farm than the homestead is."

QUESTIONS II. 22 (*a*) and (*b*).—NUMBERS and AGES of CHILDREN returned as working in the Fields.

GLENDALE UNION.

Name of Informant.	Place.	Males.					Females.						
		Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
Mr. King	Carham	—	—	25	40	65	—	—	25	55	7	45	132
„ Thompson	Paston	—	—	4	4	8	—	—	3	7	—	18	28
„ Allgood	Ingram	—	—	3	7	10	—	—	—	7	4	10	21
„ James Hall	Chillingham	—	—	—	4	4	—	—	—	1	—	14	15
„ James Ogilvie	Ford and Branxton	—	—	2	4	6	—	—	4	4	2	11	21
„ N. Henderson	Lowick	—	4	4	3	11	—	2	2	10	—	—	14
„ Nicholson	Chatton	—	—	—	5	5	—	—	—	3	—	7	10
„ John Borthwick	Kilham	—	1	—	2	3	—	—	2	8	2	10	22
„ C. Rea	Doddington	—	1	2	1	4	—	—	1	6	—	13	20
„ Grey	Kimmerston, Ford Parish.	—	—	4	2	6	—	—	2	3	2	9	16
„ James Boyd	Doddington	—	—	—	5	5	—	—	—	4	—	11	15
„ King	Wooperton	—	—	3	2	5	—	—	1	4	1	8	14
„ C. Atkinson	Rosedon	—	—	2	4	6	—	—	—	3	—	9	12
„ Marshall	Chatton Park, Chatton.	—	—	1	3	4	—	—	—	3	—	8	11
„ G. P. Hughes	Middleton Hall, Ilderton.	—	—	2	1	3	—	—	2	3	—	5	10
„ Black	Lanton	—	—	2	3	5	—	—	1	1	1	5	8
„ Langlands	Old Bewick	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	2	—	10	12
„ Ramsey	Lilburn Grange, Eglingham.	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	5	6
„ Stawart	Roddam	—	—	—	2	2	—	—	—	1	1	8	10
„ J. Turnbull	Branton	—	—	—	2	2	—	—	—	2	—	5	7
„ P. Purves	Lilburn, South Steads, Eglingham.	—	—	—	2	2	—	—	—	3	1	—	4
„ G. Culley	Fowberry Tower, Chatton Parish.	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	3	3
„ J. Atkinson	Brandon, Parish of Eglingham.	—	—	1	3	4	—	—	1	5	1	5	12
„ W. Boyd	Hetton Hall, Chatton	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	2	—	10	12
„ W. Henderson	Chatton	—	—	—	3	3	—	—	—	1	—	6	7
„ R. Maddison	Wandon, Chatton	—	—	1	3	4	—	—	1	3	2	14	20
„ Robertson	Hazelridge, Chatton	—	—	1	7	8	—	—	—	6	1	9	16
„ Chartres	Turvelaws, Wooler	—	—	4	—	4	—	—	—	3	1	8	12
„ C. Borthwick	Kirk-Newton	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	2	7	—	6	15
„ G. Rea	Middleton House, Ilderton.	—	—	6	12	18	—	—	8	10	—	27	45
„ Lynn	Mindrim, Carham	—	—	2	4	6	—	—	—	4	—	8	12
„ M'Douall	Kirk Newton	—	1	9	39	49	—	—	16	52	3	87	158
	Total of the above	—	7	80	170	257	—	2	71	224	29	394	720

NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND.

Name of Informant.	Place.	Males. Under 8.	Males. Between 8 and 10.	Males. Between 10 and 13.	Males. Between 13 and 18.	Males. Total Males.	Females. Under 8.	Females. Between 8 and 10.	Females. Between 10 and 13.	Females. Between 13 and 18.	Females. Over 18. Married.	Females. Over 18. Unmarried.	Females. Total Females.
Mr. James Aitchison	Rock, Embleton	—	—	—	8	8	—	—	—	6	—	20	26
„ G. Drysdale	Great Ryle	—	—	2	1	3	—	—	1	1	1	6	9
„ T. Rodger	Embleton, South Side	—	—	15	14	29	—	—	10	—	18	50	78
„ R. Bainbridge	Woodhorn Grange, Morpeth.	—	—	3	2	5	—	—	—	—	1	3	4
„ J. Laing	Bamburgh	—	—	—	4	4	—	—	—	5	—	16	21
„ J. Angus	Bothal, Morpeth	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	5	9	22	36
„ J. Davison	Tritlington, Morpeth	—	—	—	2	2	—	—	—	1	—	11	12
„ T. Lawson	Longhirst, Morpeth	—	—	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	2
„ G. Laing	Cornhill, Coldstream	—	—	3	2	5	—	—	1	3	—	17	21
	Total of the above	—	—	25	34	59	—	—	12	23	29	145	209

SOUTH NORTHUMBERLAND.

Name of Informant.	Place.	Males. Under 8.	Males. Between 8 and 10.	Males. Between 10 and 13.	Males. Between 13 and 18.	Males. Total Males.	Females. Under 8.	Females. Between 8 and 10.	Females. Between 10 and 13.	Females. Between 13 and 18.	Females. Over 18. Married.	Females. Over 18. Unmarried.	Females. Total Females.
Mr. R. Pickering	Haltwistle	—	—	—	3	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	3
„ W. H. Charlton	Hesleyside	—	—	16	36	52	—	—	8	88	72	64	232
„ Joseph Lee	Dilston	—	—	2	—	2	—	—	1	4	4	3	12
„ Thomas P. Dods	Anick Grainge, Hexham.	—	—	1	3	4	—	—	—	—	5	1	6
„ Waddilove	Wall, Hexham	—	—	6	8	14	—	—	14	7	13	15	49
„ E. Coulson	Bridgeford	—	—	4	9	13	—	—	2	22	18	16	58
„ Henry T. Thompson.	Middle Farm, Chollerton.	—	—	—	10	10	—	—	—	9	11	20	40
„ S. Pattison	Old Ridley	—	—	3	2	5	—	—	—	2	—	5	7
„ J. Johnson	Old Town, Allendale	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
„ A. Ridley	Chesters, Hexham	—	—	2	1	3	—	—	3	—	3	4	10
Mrs. Isabella Colbeck	Walwick Grange	—	—	5	—	5	—	—	5	—	13	6	24
Mr. T. Wilson	Shotley Hull	—	—	15	13	28	—	—	1	15	17	38	71
	Total of the above	—	—	54	85	139	—	—	34	150	156	174	514

(*d.*) Do they live on or near the farms on which they work?

GLENDALE UNION.—Of the 50 witnesses who have returned forms, 11 leave this question unanswered; 30 reply that all live on the farm on which they work; three, that they mostly live on the farm; two, that those who are not on the farm are within half a mile of it.

Mr Joseph Scott, national schoolmaster, Lowick, says that some go one mile to their work, others more.

Rev. John Richard King, Carham, says,

"Generally on the farms, one or two go about three miles, but the cases are quite exceptional."

Rev. John Fraser, Lowick, says that some

"Go half a mile, others about a mile, scarcely any more than two miles."

Mr. George Pringle Hughes, occupier, Ilderton, says,

"In Northumberland the labourer very rarely travels more than two miles to his work."

NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND.—Of the 13 witnesses who have returned forms, one leaves this question unanswered; seven reply that all live on the farm; one says that they mostly live on the farm; and three that those who are not on the farm live within a quarter or half a mile of it.

Mr. R. S. Bainbridge, occupier, Woodhorn, says all live on the farm "Except one family."

SOUTH NORTHUMBERLAND.—Of the 20 witnesses who have returned forms, one leaves this question unanswered; 10 reply that all live on the farm; four say that they mostly live on the farm; two that they live on or near the farm; one that they are on an average within one mile of the farm; one that all are within one mile, and one that all are within one and a half miles of their work.

(*e.*) What are their usual hours of work upon the land?

The following summary shows the nature of the answers received to this question:—

Times.	Number of Forms in which each particular Statement is made. In Glendale Union.	In North Northumberland.	In South Northumberland.
5.30 A.M. to 6.30 P.M.	1	—	—
6 „ 6 „	4	1	—
6 to 10.30 A.M. and 1.30 to 6 P.M.	—	1	—
6 „ 11 „ 1 „ 6 „	2	—	1
6 „ 11.30 „ 2 „ 6 „	1	1	—
6 „ 12 „ 2 „ 6 „	4	1	—
6 „ 12 „ 1.30 „ 6 „	—	1	—
7 A.M. to 6 P.M.	—	—	1
7 or 8 A.M. to 6 P.M.	—	—	1
8 A.M. to 6 P.M.	—	—	4
7 to 12 A.M. and 1.30 to 6 P.M.	—	2	—
8 „ 12 „ 1 „ 6 „	—	—	2
8 „ 12 „ 1.30 „ 6 „	—	—	2

APP. E.

Northumberland.

Mr. Henley.

b.

Times.	Number of Forms in which each particular Statement is made. In Glendale United.	In North Northumberland.	In South Northumberland.
8 hours	—	—	1
9 "	9	2	3
9¼ "	—	—	1
9½ "	11	3	1
10 "	10	—	1
8½ " for females 10 " " males	—	—	1
No return	8	1	1

These times are in some cases stated to be those for the summer; probably they are so in all cases.

(*f.*) What are their hours, reckoning from the time of leaving home to go to work in the morning to the time when they come back from work?

(1.) Of those who live near the farm in which they work?

(2.) Of those at a distance?

The answers to this question (under the peculiar circumstances of Northumberland) are not important. The state of things is sufficiently explained by the answers to questions (*d.*) and (*e.*). Accordingly, 41 of the witnesses return no answer, and 11 repeat the times given in answer to question (*e.*). A majority of the remainder add a short time (generally half an hour or an hour) to the period there stated.

Rev. John Richard King, Carham, Glendale union, says,

"The same, with the addition of the time for going to and fro. In one extreme case, a girl 12 years old, 5 a.m. to 8 p.m."

Rev. William Clark King, Norham, North Northumberland, says,

"Depending on the distance. Perhaps 14 hours on the average."

Mr. John Angus, occupier, Bothal, North Northumberland, says, the hours of those who live at a distance are

"An hour short of our own cottagers. In summer they do not commence work till 8 a.m."

Mr. Thomas Palliser Dods, occupier, St. John's Lee, South Northumberland, says,

"It is only during harvest or other busy time that I employ female workers not resident on the farm, and then they come from a village close by or from Hexham, a mile off, and are from half an hour to an hour shorter than my own people."

(*g.*) What are the times allowed for meals?

In Northumberland a certain time is allowed in the middle of the day for dinner, and often other shorter periods in the morning and afternoon. Two witnesses (in South Northumberland) refer to these as the periods for "lunch" and "afternoon coffee."

The following is a summary of such of the answers received as are sufficiently definite to admit of tabulation. When only one period is mentioned in the second column it is probably allowed in the morning for breakfast ("second breakfast" as it is styled by one witness). The time quoted in the first column no doubt includes, in some cases, the shorter intervals allowed in the morning and afternoon. It is probable, too, that in other cases the short periods allowed for "rest" and refreshment have been altogether omitted.

To simplify the statement 20 minutes, 10 minutes, and (in one instance) "a short time" have been counted as a quarter of an hour.

For Dinner, or in Total.	In addition.	Number of Forms in which each particular Statement is made. In Glendale Union.	In North Northumberland.	In South Northumberland.
hour	-	—	—	1
"	¼ hour + ¼ hour	—	—	4
"	1 " (for breakfast)	—	—	1
"	¼ " + ¼ hour	—	1	—
1½	-	1	1	3
1½ "	¼ "	2	1	1
1½ "	¼ " + ¼ hour	—	2	3
2 "	-	10	2	1
2 "	¼ "	11	—	—
2¼ "	-	4	1	—
2½ "	-	6	1	—
2 "	¼ " + ¼ hour	3	1	—
2¾ "	-	—	—	1
3 "	-	2	1	—
2 " males 1½ " females	-	—	—	1

(*h.*) Does the demand upon their physical powers injuriously affect their health and constitution?

In Glendale.—Of the 50 witnesses who return forms, 9 leave this question unanswered and 39 reply in the negative.

Mr. John Turnbull, occupier, Branton, says,

"No, for those invalided from in-door work frequently come out for change."

Mr. George Pringle Hughes, occupier, Ilderton, says,

"In no respect. The farm labourer of North Northumberland is proverbially robust."

In North Northumberland.—Of the 13 witnesses, 1 omits to answer this question and 10 reply in the negative.

Mr. Thomas Rodger, occupier, Embleton, replies,

"Five of my workwomen to my certain knowledge are obliged to seek for health in out of doors work. I annex the actual height of 16 of my workwomen, the Commissioners can form their own conclusion."

Summary of the enclosed list.

5 feet 8 inches	1	
5 „ 7½ „	3	
5 „ 7 „	1	
5 „ 6½ „	2	
5 „ 6 „	2	
5 „ 4½ „	1	
5 „ 4 „	2	
5 „ 2 „	1	
5 „ 3 „	1	Under 18 years of age.
5 „ 1 „	2	

Mr. John Angus, occupier, Bothal, replies,

"I see no women so robust as those employed in agriculture, except women employed in fishing."

In South Northumberland.—Of the 20 witnesses, 2 omit to answer this question and 16 reply in the negative.

The Hexham Board of Guardians say,

"Decidedly not. They are a strong healthy race, and the work they are employed in is decidedly healthful."

Mr. William Henry Charlton, landowner, Hesleyside, says,

"The females employed in agriculture are almost always more healthy than others in the district."

(*i.*) Are the young, or the females, whether young or grown up, subject to any ill treatment?

In Glendale.—Of the 50 witnesses, 7 make no answer, and 42 reply in the negative.

Mr. George Pringle Hughes, occupier, Ilderton, says,

"To none whatever. The means of redress are within everyone's power, and the northern labourers are too independent in their spirit to allow oppression."

In North Northumberland.—Of the 13 witnesses, 1 omits to answer, and 8 reply in the negative.

Rev. William Clark King, Norham, says,

"I have not in 10 years heard more than one complaint."

Mr. Thomas Allan, occupier, and chairman of union, Rothbury, says,

"None whatever. If a labourer met with ill treatment in one situation he would quickly change his place, as there is a constant and ready demand for the services of agricultural labourers."

Mr. Thomas Rodger, occupier, Embleton, says,

"None, to my knowledge: instant dismissal would follow such ill treatment."

Mr. John Davison, occupier, Hebron, says,

"None, so independent are they all, that if this were the case, would leave work at once."

In South Northumberland.—Of the 20 witnesses, 1 makes no answer, and 19 reply in the negative.

(*j.*) Do any special employments injuriously affect females or the young generally?

In Glendale.—Of the 50 witnesses, 12 leave this question unanswered, and 31 reply in the negative.

Mr. Joseph Atkinson, occupier, Brandon, says,

"We never employ them on wet days except under cover, that is the barn or granaries."

Mr. Christopher Atkinson, occupier, Rosedon, says,

"They are not asked to work on wet days, and all their employment is quite healthy."

Mr. Charles Rea, occupier, Doddington, says,

"The only work injurious is in threshing corn, that is dusty in spring time."

Rev. John Richard King, Carham, says,

"I have never heard any complaints, though in a position to hear them if there was any general abuse of the kind. I have heard some of the people say that women's work on the fields is harder now than it was, say 25 years ago, that they are set to do many things that men used to do."

Rev. William Procter, Doddington, says,

"Gathering turnips out of snow after working in the barn the same day, does injuriously affect females. Working in barns with improved threshing machines is often an excessive demand upon the physical powers of young women; and filling dung carts."

Mr. George Pringle Hughes, occupier, Ilderton, says,

"In wet or stormy weather the farmer seldom finds the out-door employment of women and children profitable to himself, and has often indoor work for them."

Rev. John S. Green, Wooler, says,

"The employment of driving horses, turning manure heaps, and carrying heavy weights is my opinion injurious physically and morally.

In North Northumberland.—Of the 13 witnesses, one leaves this question unanswered and 11 reply in the negative.

Rev. William Clark King, Norham, says,

"I think that turning rotten and compact manure is injurious to young females."

In South Northumberland.—Of 20 witnesses, one omits to answer this question and 19 reply in the negative.

(*k.*) Have you any observations to make as to the effect of the employment of females in agriculture on morals and on their proper training for domestic duties?

In Glendale.—*Mr. Matthew Tewart Culley, landowner, and chairman of the Wooler board of guardians*, says,

"It is possible that the indiscriminate employment of both sexes in field labour from an early age may in some measure affect their morality, and the hard labour required from females certainly unfits them for domestic service; at the same time it in no way interferes with the performance of their domestic duties as wives and mothers in after life, and serious offences are most uncommon among them."

Mr. Charles Selby, J.P., landowner, Yearle, Doddington, says,

"All or nearly all of the female servants who have been in my service have been employed in agriculture, and I think it had no detrimental effect either on their morals or on their efficiency as house servants."

Mr. William Nicholson, occupier, Hazelridge, says,

"A great proportion of the domestic servants here have been brought up to field labour in their youth, and when they marry they make good wives generally."

Mr. John Turnbull, occupier, Branton, says,

"They might be better fitted for domestic duties."

Mr. Richard Huntley King, occupier, Wooperton, says,

"I do not consider that the employment of females in agriculture has any evil effect on morals or domestic training. As to the morals of the females employed in this district I am aware that much is said against them. There is no doubt that a considerable amount of bastardy is extant, very large in comparison with many large towns, and in fact with most towns, but at the same time it is to be remarked that prostitution does not exist. I do not think that this laxness of morals is due to the fact of the females being employed in field work. No doubt the attendance at fairs and hiring markets has very much to do with it. I know, however, of very many instances where the country has to bear the imputation of immorality properly belonging to the town, as there is a growing popularity among our females for situations in towns, and it is there that many not only lose their own character,

but also contract habits and ideas which are sufficient, on their return to the country, to hide the results of their fall, to poison a whole community. It is no doubt much to be regretted that there is a want of sense of shame among the females of the district as to bastardy, and more unfortunate that this want extends also to the males, as I believe that one great cause of the continuance of the evil is that it is in no way an impediment to matrimony. I cannot see, however, that it can be attributed to the fact of being employed in field labour, that the amount of this particular evil exists in the district."

Mr. Charles Borthwick, occupier, Mindrim, says,

"Yes; I think it is against their morals, and in part unfits them for domestic duties."

Mr. Thomas Chartres, occupier, Turvelaws, uses almost the same words as Mr. Borthwick.

Mr. Joseph Atkinson, occupier, Brandon, says,

"Employment such as we provide for them is certainly not prejudicial to their morals, and very likely by teaching them to be industrious to prepare them for all other domestic duties."

Mr. Christopher Atkinson, occupier, Rosedon, says,

"I do not consider the women employed in the fields in my district more immoral than any other working people, and they have always a respectable steward with them to check any improper language or conduct if they were so inclined, which they are not."

Mr. Charles Rea, occupier, Doddington, says,

It does not unfit them for domestic purposes, only making them a little rougher in their manner."

Mr. George Rea, occupier, Ilderton, says,

"Those who wish for house work as servants have no difficulty in procuring situations."

Mr. J. C. Langlands, occupier, Old Bewick, says,

"In general they are good domestics."

Rev. Thomas Knight, Ford, says,

"There can be little doubt that the employment of females in agriculture is one of the causes of the low state of morality in this district. In large gangs of from 12 to 20 there are too often some who are given to indulge in improper conversation, by which the minds of the young are corrupted. Hence the objection of many mothers to field work, and their anxiety to find places for their daughters in respectable families. Yet in justice it ought to be mentioned that though the tone of morality be unfortunately low in this district, the crimes of infanticide and adultery are unknown. The women who have once fallen never become utterly depraved, but generally marry and turn out good wives." "The rough manner females acquire in field work certainly unfits them for service in respectable families and for domestic duties in their own, and when tried in the former, finding the confinement and restriction placed upon them irksome, they seldom remain long in the same situation."

Rev. John Richard King, Carham, says,

"The bondage system, I think, did a great deal to injure the morality of the women, both as conducing directly to the seduction of the young women hired into strange families, and as destroying the idea of domestic privacy and modesty. It is now dying a natural death, but its effects will be felt for some time, and perhaps throw undeserved discredit on the employment of women in field labour under better regulations. I believe too that the public 'hirings' do great harm, bringing young men and women together in great numbers without control."

Rev. William Procter, Doddington, says,

"I am not of opinion that any moral evils and hardships accompany the employment of children, young persons, and women in agriculture here which would not be increased by legislative enactments."

Rev. John Fraser, Lowick, says,

"Most of the females while labouring in the field learn from their mothers at home how to manage a house. I am sorry to learn, however, that on the field the general talk is occasionally not very seemly. This of course could be restrained, if not altogether corrected, by the overseer who may be with them."

Rev. Peter Whyte, Wooler, says,

"Have reason to believe that the effect of such employment in many cases is injurious to morals and unfavourable to the proper training of females for domestic duties."

Mr. George Pringle Hughes, occupier, Ilderton, says,

"My superintendent has strict orders to prevent levity between the sexes, and an immoral worker would not be allowed to mix with the others unless he or she showed an orderly disposition." "I believe when females are strictly superintended their morals may be kept correct though their domestic qualities do not improve by employments out of doors."

Mr. F. P. Lynn, occupier, Mindrim, says,

"Many of the females go to be house servants after they are 18 or 20 years old."

Rev. P. G. McDouall, Kirknewton, says,

"The constant employment of females in this district is, I think, prejudicial to morality, and is decidedly so to their proper training for domestic duties."

Five other witnesses state that no ill effect is produced. The remainder make no reply to this question.

In North Northumberland. — *Rev. William Clark King, Norham,* says,

"I think that in cases where females live in their own families there is no ill effect. Where they are servants to farm labourers there is great laxity of morals."

Rev. James Blythe, Alnwick, says,

"The employment of females in agriculture is on the whole in my opinion *not* conducive to a high state of morals, neither do I consider young women who have been always engaged in out door labour well fitted for the discharge of domestic duties."

Mr. Thomas Rodger, occupier, Embleton, says,

"They are neither better nor worse than the average of females otherwise employed in purely agricultural districts. They are all well and warmly clad, and if they do make a little show on Sundays they only follow the example of their superiors in position who make the same show on Sunday and Saturday alike."

Mr. R. S. Bainbridge, occupier, Woodhorn, says,

"There is nothing in the nature of their employment to damage their morals, and in respect to domestic duties, neither the length of the hours nor the hardness of their work need hinder domestic duties being attended to, both before and after work hours, and the open air employment is conducive to a healthy body."

Mr. John Davison, owner and occupier, Hebron, says,

"Work on the farm" is not "injurious to their morals but rather otherwise, as keeping them out of idleness. If employed on farm work any length of time it is much against young females becoming good domestic servants, but still when they have an active industrious mother they can learn much."

Mr. Thomas Lawson, owner and occupier, Bothal, says,

"The employment of females in agriculture does not necessarily exercise any improper influence on their morals, but the ordinary work allotted to them improves their strength and enables them to attain a practical knowledge of much that aids them in the proper fulfilment of their domestic duties as wife and mother."

Mr. George Laing, occupier, Cornhill, says,

"The females that have been employed in agriculture make as good wives and mothers as those that have been employed in any other way in this neighbourhood.

Two other witnesses state that no ill effect is produced. The remainder do not reply to this question.

In South Northumberland. — *Rev. J. Elphinstone Elliot, Whalton,* says,

"They are on the whole as well behaved as any other class; better, I think, than the women in the

pit villages, and generally speaking their houses when they marry are kept clean and tidy."

The Board of Guardians, Hexham, say,

"We do not think it has necessarily any bad effect on their morals. Wherever young people of either sex are congregated together without proper supervision evil is likely to arise. As to their training for domestic duties, were they constantly in the field they could not have such training, but this is not the case; and the constant demand from towns for country servants shows that both in morals and domestic duties they are in advance of those of a like standing in towns."

Mr. Thomas Palliser Dods, chairman of the Hexham Board, replies in the same terms.

Mr. R. Pickering, clerk to the Haltwistle Board of Guardians, says,

"It does not fit them for domestic duties."

Mr. Edward Coulson, occupier, Bridgeford, says,

"To the extent females are employed in this parish it can have *no* evil effect on their morals, and I do think a good effect on their proper training for domestic duties among agriculturists."

Mr. Samuel Pattison, occupier, Bywell St. Peter, says,

"There is nothing in connexion with their labour to injuriously affect their morals, and they have a good deal of time in hand morning and evening to attend to domestic duties."

Mr. John Johnson, occupier, Allendale, says,

"It is very important that young females should have a knowledge of labour, which may be of great benefit in after life."

Mr. Andrew Ridley, occupier, Chesters, Hexham, says,

"The effect of field labour is good if under proper direction for their future lives."

Mrs. Isabella Colbeck, occupier, Warden, says,

"My experience leads me to believe that girls brought up to farm labour make the best wives and household servants."

Mr. W. B. Wilson, occupier, Blagdon, says,

"I do not think any evil can arise in the employment of females in field work as practised here, but on the contrary I consider it conducive to health and robustness of constitution."

Three other witnesses state that no ill effect is produced, and the remainder leave this question unanswered.

(*l.*) Taking into consideration the demand for labour in your parish and neighbourhood, and the pecuniary resources of the agricultural labourers, are you prepared to recommend that any restriction should be placed on the employment of females in field work?

If so, would you limit the restriction to females of a defined age, or would you prohibit female labour in the fields altogether, excepting at hay and corn harvest?

In Glendale.—Of the 50 witnesses who return forms, nine leave this question unanswered, and 24 reply in the negative.

Mr. George Culley, landowner, Chatton, says,

"Women should not be put in charge of horses and carts, which I think dangerous, nor employed in heavy work, such as filling dung, as on many farms in this district." With these exceptions "I would put no restriction on female labour where the age of the woman exceeds 18 years. Turnip singling, for instance, is lighter work, and as important here as harvest work."

Mr. Matthew Tewart Culley, landowner, and Chairman of the Wooler Board of Guardians, says,

"No. The agricultural population is so scanty that every available labourer is required at the busy periods of the year, viz., turnip dressing, &c., and hay and corn harvest, and there are in North Northumberland very few towns and villages whence an extra supply of labour can be at any time obtained. Women are, I believe, never required to work beyond the regular hours, except at harvest and on rare occasions in hoeing turnips, and then the wages are raised proportionably. But without female labour the work of our farms could not under present circumstances be carried on."

Mr. William Nicholson, occupier, Hazelridge, says,

"To prevent women working in the fields would be a great injury to them, it would drive them to the large towns and factories and be a most serious injury to the agriculture of this district."

Mr. Thomas Stawart, occupier, Roddam, says,

"They ought not to be in the field under 13 or 14 years of age."

Mr. Richard Huntley King, occupier, Wooperton, says,

"No, unless such as would come under the head of education."

Mr. Charles Borthwick, occupier, Mindrim, says,

"In my parish and neighbourhood, generally speaking the demand is great, and is increasing, and I cannot see how the work could be done without them. Any restriction as to age is not required: it would be very much against both the employer and the employed to prohibit female labour. We cannot get males to work: females work here as they do in the South."

Mr. Thomas Chartres, occupier, Turvelaws, replies to the same effect and in almost the same words as Mr. Borthwick.

Mr. Joseph Atkinson, occupier, Brandon, says,

"No, I should consider any restrictions would be disadvantageous both to employers and labourers, and the latter would suffer most."

Mr. Christopher Athinson, occupier, Rosedon, says,

"No interference whatever is required in this district, as the labour of the women is not hard, and they can always take a day's rest when they wish. The women themselves must work for a livelihood, and the youths have every facility for going to school, which we encourage as much as possible by not employing them in winter."

Mr. Charles Rea, occupier, Doddington, says,

"I should restrict girls below 12 years working in the fields."

Rev. Matthew Burrell, Chatton, says,

"They should not be employed with horses or in doing heavy dirty work, such as filling dung-carts, &c."

Rev. Thomas Knight, Ford, says,

"Since the employment of females in agriculture cannot be altogether dispensed with in this part of the country, I am not prepared to say what particular restriction should be placed upon it, except that they ought to be exempt from such labour as no female should be employed in, namely, the filling and driving of dung carts and the turning of dung hills."

Rev. John S. Green, Wooler, says,

"It would be desirable to fix the time for going out in the morning to 8 o'clock."

Rev. Henry Parker, Ilderton, says,

"Should not drive carts as done here."

Rev. John Richard King, Carham, says,

"Not when they are living with their parents or other natural protectors: except so far as attendance at school may be a condition. In this answer I take into consideration the fact that in this neighbourhood children do not generally work out under 10."

Rev. John Fraser, Lowick, says,

"No, excepting that some are sent to out work when too young."

Rev. P. G. McDouall, Kirknewton, says,

"Some restriction should be placed on the employment of females in driving carts and work of any similar character for which they are not suited."

In North Northumberland.—Of the 13 witnesses who return forms, 2 leave this question unanswered, and 3 reply in the negative.

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Rev. James Blythe, Alnwick, says,

"I am not prepared to recommend any restriction, but there are some kinds of work which I consider unfit for females, such as driving dung carts, turning dung heaps, and driving horses in harrows. Some young women object, but most of them are quite willing to do these things for the sake of earning money. I would not limit the restriction either as respects age or employment; cleaning the land and hoeing turnips are as easy and as healthy operations as hay and corn harvest."

Mr. George Drysdale, occupier, Great Ryle, says,

"Certainly not. Female labour in field work is much required, and now well paid for."

Mr. James Aitchison, farm steward, Embleton, says,

"I do not see why any restriction should be put upon female labour. Our females are quite as healthy as those employed in a gentleman's house, and as well behaved."

Mr. Thomas Rodger, occupier, Embleton, says,

"The earnings of the females employed in this parish alone amount to about 1,500*l.* per annum; withdraw this sum and starvation and misery will in many cases follow. The turnip crop is of more value than the corn crop on this farm, and I can more readily get my corn secured than the turnips thinned. The hay crop is of secondary importance in the border counties."

Mr. John Angus, occupier, Bothal, says,

"If the Legislature interferes it will do harm. I would not prohibit free labour for females. If you do, you inflict a great hardship on many industrious females, especially widows and aged spinsters."

Mr. John Davison, owner and occupier, Hebron, says,

"Could not do without females in turnip season."

Mr. Thomas Lawson, owner and occupier, Bothal, says,

"Most certainly not. I would sooner recommend that every young female should, on physical and national grounds, be obliged to work a certain number of days for a certain number of years at field work."

Mr. R. S. Bainbridge, occupier, Woodhorn, says,

"The only restriction" . . . . not "under 12 years of age."

In South Northumberland.—Of the 20 witnesses who return forms, 1 gives no answer to this question, and 13 reply in the negative.

The Hexham Board of Guardians say,

"We are not, except as noticed in answer to question 26. Few, if any, of the farmers in this union employ either boys or girls under 12 or 13, and they would prefer not to have either till they are 14 or 15, but they must learn to work, and their parents press to have them employed that they be taught." "To prohibit female labour in this district would simply be to prohibit farming."

Mr. Thomas Palliser Dods, Chairman of the Hexham Board, replies in the same words as above, and adds,

"A good female worker here commands nearly as much wage as a man in some of the southern counties and to our men we are paying more than double a Dorsetshire wage."

Mr. John Fewster Newlands, occupier, Ebchester, says,

"No, or farmers might give up their farms."

Mr. Henry T. Thompson, occupier, Chollerton, says,

"No restriction is required. To prohibit female labour would be to cause the arable land to be laid to pasture."

Mr. Samuel Pattison, occupier, Bywell St. Peter, says,

"No restrictions whatever. We could not farm if female labour was prohibited. Moreover, the women themselves find it both profitable and healthy, and I am certain would not like to be prevented working."

Mr. Joseph Lee, occupier, Dilston, says,

"Restrict females under 10 years of age."

(*m.*) Taking into consideration the demand for labour in your parish and neighbourhood, and the pecuniary resources of the agricultural labourers, are you prepared to recommend that any restriction should be placed upon the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed in farm labour?

In Glendale.—Of the 50 witnesses who return forms, 22 leave this question unanswered, 12 reply in the negative, 4 say that no boys under 10 should be employed, 1 that no boy should be employed till he is between 11 and 13, and 6 that no boy under 12 should be employed.

Mr. Matthew Tewart Culley, landowner, and chairman of the Wooler Board of Guardians, says,

"No, and for the same reasons which apply to the employment of women. There is much easy work done by young children for which older workers could not be spared, but yet such as no very young child could be employed in."

Mr. John Turnbull, occupier, Branton, says,

"No, for boys seldom work under 13 or 14."

Mr. Richard Huntley King, occupier, Wooperton, says,

"Not under 10 at any time or under 13 in winter."

Mr. Joseph Atkinson, occupier, Brandon, says,

"No. We do not consider the labour of boys under say 12 years of age remunerative to the employer, but often necessary to their parents."

Mr. Christopher Atkinson, occupier, Rosedon, says,

"No boy should work till he is above 10, and only during summer for the purpose of learning."

In North Northumberland.—Three of the witnesses omit to answer this question, 4 answer it in the negative, 4 say that no boy under 10 should be employed, and 2 that no boy should be employed under 12.

In South Northumberland.—Three of the witnesses omit to answer this question, 5 answer it in the negative, 1 says that no boy under 9 should be employed, 2 that none should be employed under 10, and 2 that none under 12.

The Hexham Board of Guardians say,

"We do not. Boys are not employed till they are 12 or 13, and as the desire for education increases they will be kept longer at school, without the interference of the Legislature."

The Chairman replies in the same words.

Mr. William Henry Charlton, landowner, chairman of the Bellingham Board of Guardians, says,

"Children of either sex under 12 years of age are of little use to the farm, and ought to be at school."

Mr. Joseph Lee, occupier, Dilston, says,

"Boys should be 9 years old before they are employed, and girls 10. They should be sent to school during winter."

Mr. Henry T. Thompson, occupier, Chollerton, says,

"Not earlier than 13 years. Few are employed earlier."

Mr. Samuel Pattison, occupier, Bywell St. Peter, says,

"No restrictions are necessary; as a rule we never wish to employ children."

Mr. John Johnson, occupier, Allendale, says,

"Either boys or girls might be engaged in field labour at from 9 or 10 years of age to the advantage of their parents."

(*n.*) Do you see any reason for recommending that the distance to which children and young persons should be allowed to go to work in farm labour should be restricted according to age?

If you should think some restriction of distance in reference to age desirable, do you ap-

prove of the following, which assumes that boys under eight years of age would not be allowed to be employed at all?

	No boy of 8 years of age and under 10 - -	to be taken to work beyond a distance from his or her home of	1 mile.
	No girl under the age of 13		
No boy of	10 years of age and under - 11		2 miles.
	11 " " 12		
	12 " " 13		
No young person of	13 " " 14		3 miles.
	14 " " 15		
	15 " " 16		4 miles.
	16 " " 17		
	17 " " 18		

In Glendale.—In 35 instances this question is unanswered. Eleven witnesses (two of whom express an approval of the table) say that the rule would not be applicable to this district, or reply in the negative.

Mr. William Nicholson, occupier, Hazelridge, says,

"Children should only be employed on the farm on which they live, or where their homes are nigh at hand. The distances in this table are, I think, too far for children to travel."

Mr. Christopher Atkinson, occupier, Rosedon, says,

"Two miles is quite far enough for youths to go and do a day's work afterwards."

Mr. George Rea, occupier, Ilderton, says,

"It is the exception if any boys or girls are employed at all under the age of 11 at least, and more frequently 12; if so, they are put to the lightest work possible, such as keeping crows."

Rev. John Richard King, Carham, says,

"I should prefer a minimum limit of 1½ miles, and certainly a maximum limit of 3 miles for all under 17. Above that no prohibition. In respect to the first point, in this parish there is only one village, Wark, where there is any independent population, and it is more than a mile from any other farm, so that the limit of one mile would amount to absolute prohibition of the only children in the parish who are likely to want work away from home accepting it at all."

In North Northumberland.—In four cases no answer is returned to this question, and in four others the reply is in the negative.

Rev. William Clark King, Norham, says,

"Certainly I think that when the distance exceeds two miles time should be allowed off their work sufficient for them to walk the extra distance beyond two miles."

Mr. James Aitchison, farm steward, Embleton, says,

"None ought to go beyond 1 mile. If ours have to go beyond 1 mile, we send carts with them."

Mr. Thomas Rodger, occupier, Embleton, says,

"No young person to be taken to work beyond a distance of 2 miles from his or her home."

Mr. John Davison, owner and occupier, Hebron, says,

"No boy or girl ought to work under 10 years of age."

Mr. Thomas Lawson, owner and occupier, Bothal, says,

"I do not think walking any of the above distances injurious to any of the ages; but walking to and from should be deemed work and should not be quick."

In South Northumberland.—In 10 cases no answer is returned to this question. Four witnesses reply in the negative or state that the rule is not applicable to the district, and one of these approves of the table.

Rev. John F. Bigge, Stamfordham, says,

"Not in this parish. I consider these distances too far."

Mr. William Henry Charlton, landowner, Hesleyside, says,

"Not more than 2 miles."

Mr. Thomas Palliser Dods, occupier, Anick Grainge, says,

"This is not applicable to this district, as all the workers, male and female, old and young, are, with rare exceptions, *on* the farm, and the farmers here would give very little for either boy or girl who had to come a couple of miles to their work."

Mr. Edward Coulson, occupier, Bridgeford, says,

"I think no child should be employed in the field below 12 years of age (but kept at school till that age), and am of opinion that none should travel more than three miles to work, of whatever age."

Mr. Andrew Ridley, occupier, Chesters Hexham, says,

"I think to have a good working man he should live on the farm or within one mile. Four miles is too much for any man."

Mrs. Isabella Colbeck, occupier, Warden, says,

"When two miles distant my people are taken to and from work in carts."

(*o.*) Do you see any reason for recommending that any restriction should be placed upon the hours of work of children and young persons employed in agriculture; and, if so, what amount of restriction would you propose?

In Glendale.—In 25 cases this question has been left unanswered. In 20 cases the answer is in the negative.

Mr. George Culley, landowner, Chatton, says,

"Say not more than 8 hours up to 15 years of age. But of course very light work for 10 hours would do less harm than heavy work for 8 hours. The nature of the work can hardly be a subject for legislation."

Mr. Matthew Tewart Culley, landowner, Coupland Castle, says,

"I think it impossible to make any such restriction as to be available in this neighbourhood, as farm work is often slack and then for a period of a few weeks at a time the demand for labour is greater than the supply, and were any such restriction made, the farm-work could not be properly done, and the women and children would be unduly restricted in their earnings."

Mr. Richard Huntley King, occupier, Wooperton, says,

"I have no reason to suggest any restriction, as I am convinced from careful observation that the children and young persons employed are never over fatigued at the end of their day's work, in proof of which I may state that whenever I have cause to wish it they are always willing and *able* to work overtime."

Mr. Christopher Atkinson, occupier, Rosedon, says,

"I think no person should be asked to work more than 10 hours a day in summer. In winter the time at farm work will not average above 7 hours a day."

Rev. John Fraser, Lowick, says,

"Eight hours a day quite long enough."

In North Northumberland.—In six cases this question is left unanswered. In five cases the answer is in the negative.

Mr. R. S. Bainbridge, occupier, Woodhorn, says,

"The nature of the field work in this county is such that all the females and children must work the same hours, which is never more than 9½ hours in busy times."

Mr. Thomas Lawson, owner and occupier, Bothal, says,

"I do not think any restriction necessary, because I do not know of any excess. Ten hours including travelling I think as a maximum may be sustained daily without injury or annoyance even by children. It is very desirable that workers of this description all begin and conclude together."

In South Northumberland.—In seven cases this question is unanswered. In 11 cases the answer is in the negative.

Mr. Thomas Palliser Dods, occupier, Anick Grainge, says,

"None, so far as this district is concerned. They

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are not now kept at work unreasonable hours. In the summer evenings neither boys nor girls are too tired for play after their work."

Mr. W. B. Wilson, occupier, Blagdon, says,

"Not exceeding 10 hours a day."

III. As to requiring some amount of school attendance in the case of children earning wages by employment in farm labour.

23. The Commissioners being instructed to inquire to what extent and with what modifications the principle of the Factory Acts can be adopted in reference to children employed in agriculture, "especially "with a view to the better education of "such children" your opinion is invited on the following points.

24. The three modes by which the prescribed amount of school attendance of children employed in trades and manufactures is obtained are,—

By the Factory Act (7 Vict. c. 15. ss. 31–9).

1. By half time at school, and half day at work.
2. By alternate whole days at school and whole days at work.

By the Print Works Act (10 & 11 Vict. c. 70. ss. 2, 3, 26).

3. By school attendance for a certain number of hours during the preceding six months.

25. Accompanying this circular you will find brief extracts from the above Acts, together with some remarks from the Sixth Report of the Children's Employment Commission (1862), ss. 65 to 74, and ss. 80 to 83, referring to the difficulties to be encountered, and the possible modes of meeting them.

26. You are requested to state which of such modes of enforcing some amount of school attendance would seem most applicable to the circumstances of your parish and neighbourhood; or whether a combination of one or more of them would better meet those circumstances; or whether any other mode that you might wish to suggest appears to you preferable.

In Glendale.—Nineteen of the witnesses return no answer to this inquiry. Seven express a preference for the third mode.

Mr. George Culley, landowner, Chatton, says,

"Regular attendance for the winter months for children from 12 years of age to say 15 years of age. Half day at school and half day at work would not answer, nor would alternate days. In this district children could attend school from November 1st to March 1st."

Mr. Matthew Tewart Culley, landowner, Coupland Castle, says,

"It would be impossible in this neighbourhood for the children to attend school when any of the busy periods of farm labour come on. Every available worker is then required and one who came on alternate days would be almost useless, while the time occupied in going to and from school would make it impossible for a child to attend school and work on part of the same day. These busy periods do not last long and are chiefly during summer. In winter work is not abundant, and the children generally attend school from November to March or April, and very regularly."

Mr. William Nicholson, occupier, Hazelridge, says,

"It would suit country children best to go to school in the winter, and work in summer to help their parents."

Mr. Robertson, occupier, Hazelridge, says,

"Boys and girls under 13 years of age go to work during the summer, and attend school in winter."

Mr. John Turnbull, occupier, Branton, says,

"The system now existing is by far the most suitable, that is, to attend school in winter and to work in summer, as the weather is favourable for them being out and their labour then only necessary."

Mr. Richard Huntley King, occupier, Wooperton, says,

"As to enforcing school attendance, I believe that any legislation on this subject is in the district perfectly unnecessary. I do not think that the system of half a day at work and half a day at school could answer, as no farmer could so apportion his work as to employ the labour of children under such a system, and the same would apply to the plan of alternate days. As regards the third system of enforcing attendance for a certain number of days during the preceding six months, I do not consider it objectionable, but unnecessary as regards the children in this district as (except in rare cases) the majority do attend school for about half the year, and by working the remaining half year are enabled to pay for their own education and assist in their maintenance. I consider that the majority of the children of agricultural labourers are sufficiently educated for their rank in life."

Mr. Joseph Athinson, occupier, Brandon, says,

"The system usual here, the best . . . to go to school during the winter months."

Mr. Peter W. Purves, occupier, Lilburn, says,

". . . not necessary to enforce any amount of school attendance. They attend pretty regularly when young, to 10 or 12, often for the winter half year after this age."

Mr. Christopher Atkinson, occupier, Rosedon, says,

"I think the best way is to send the children to school during the autumn and winter months and allow them to work for a few months during summer. This is the plan we adopt here, and I consider it much better than having them alternately working and going to school."

Mr. Charles Rea, occupier, Doddington, says,

"Attendance during four months in winter is best. The alternate mode of school attendance could not be carried out with advantage either to themselves or their master."

Mr. John Duncan Ogilvie, occupier, Mardon, says,

"The parents in this neighbourhood seem quite alive to their duty of educating their children and I think any compulsion unnecessary."

Mr. J. C. Langlands, occupier, Old Bewich, says,

"Regulations 1 and 2 would not work. No enforced mode is needed. The parents are all disposed to have their children educated."

Mr. George Rea, occupier, Ilderton, says,

"There is the greatest and most praiseworthy anxiety in the parents to send all their children to school so soon as they can possibly learn and walk a distance of say two miles to school. This is mostly from the age of 5 or 6 to the time they go to work at 11 or 12 years old. After that age their work is not continuous, there being little employment from harvest to April, so that they have the opportunity of attending school even till they are 14 years old for that part of the year, and in almost every instance they avail themselves of it."

Mr. William B. Boyd, occupier, Chatton, says,

"Would not approve of any of the above modes; would suggest as a good plan that carried out to a certain extent at present, viz.: attending school during the winter half-year and working in the summer half."

Rev. Matthew Burrell, Chatton, says,

"Children working out during the summer months and attending school in the winter seems the mode best adapted to this neighbourhood."

Rev. John Richard King, Carham, says,

"I think the third method might be adapted to our circumstances, the year being divided into the two portions of May to Martinmas and Martinmas to May. In the former portion any attendance at school of children over 10 years old would be difficult and

perhaps undesirable to enforce. During the winter portion most of the children up to 12 years old do attend, and I think compulsory attendance would be beneficial. I should myself suggest 150 school 'attendances' as estimated by the Revised Code as the minimum and strongly recommend the calculation to be made by 'attendances' not by days or hours."

Rev. James Allgood, Ingram, says,

"I consider methods 1 and 2 when practicable would be most advantageous to the education of the children, and No. 3 most convenient to the employer. I doubt however if No. 1 would be found practicable when the dwellings are situated at any distance from the school."

Rev. Joseph Hudson, Chillingham, says,

"By alternate days at school and whole days at work."

Rev. William Procter, Doddington, says,

"Modes 1 and 2 are not applicable to an agricultural parish, where labour must be pushed on in the right season. Mode 3 might possibly be adopted with advantage, and secure better school attendance in winter."

Mr. Robert Frizell, national schoolmaster, Ford, says,

"The children who work in the fields come back to school in November and December and continue until April or beginning of May, and make an average of 81 days; 6 hours per day, or 486 hours. Average age of the children is 11 years 10 months. Average attendance is low for the number of months counted at school, but many of the older children have work days during this time."

Rev. John Fraser, Lowich, says,

"What I consider best would be for the children to be left at school till they acquire what may be called a respectable education. If teachiug is to be mixed with the work perhaps work and school on alternate whole days is the most likely for good."

In the return for Milfield school it is observed,

"Mode 3 is the most applicable and is the one in operation though not compulsory; but the attendance scarcely reaches the full half year owing to out-door work in the spring commencing. Either of modes 1 and 2 would be quite impracticable in this neighbourhood."

Mr. George Pringle Hughes, occupier, Ilderton, says,

"Where the distance to school is considerable ($1\frac{1}{2}$ miles), as in my case the third alternative would be most convenient. There is much to be said in favour of the second alternative so far as the children are concerned.

Rev. G. P. McDouall, Kirhnewton, says,

"The Factory Act would be inapplicable in this agricultural district. The Print Works Act might be serviceable; but at the same time scarcely needed in this district, as the bigger lads who are employed during the summer months in farm labour, attend the schools well during the winter months.

In North Northumberland.—In three cases this question is left unanswered. One witness replies that the third mode is the only one which could be employed with advantage, and one that the children should go to school in winter.

Rev. William Clark King, Norham, says,

"I prefer the second plan. I would allow no child to work under 10 years, and require that then they should produce a certificate of attendance at school for 100 days during each of the last three years."

Rev. James Blythe, Greenville, Alnwich, says,

"In this locality the third mode is the only practicable one. Farmers would not and could not engage children either for half a day or on alternate days, neither do I think such a system would be beneficial to the children. In the winter months when the demand for labour is not so great as in the summer, there might be and there generally is a good attendance of boys and girls at the several schools."

Mr. Thomas Allan, chairman of the Rothbury Union, says,

"This would be best met by requiring so much school attendance during the preceding twelve months. The children of agricultural labourers ought to work in the fields iu summer and go to school in winter. No sane person at all acquainted with this subject could ever think of requiring either half days or alternate days' attendance at school."

Mr. George Drysdale, occupier, Great Ryle, says,

"No boys or girls being employed in winter half year, they then have an opportunity of attending school, and generally do so."

Mr. Thomas Rodger, occupier, Embleton, says,

"Children above 10 years of age are better employed in light work in summer than any other way. From 10 to 12 years of age they almost invariably go to school in this parish in winter, indeed I know of no instance of their doing otherwise when well. Public opinion would send any man earning wages in this parish to the position of a brute who did not send his child to school."

Mr. John Angus, occupier, Bothal, says,

"Children under 13 should go to school in winter, and if their parents cannot want their earnings let them work in summer." Against 1 and 2 he notes, "Nonsense, impracticable in agriculture."

Mr. John Davison, owner and occupier, Hebron, says,

"Any child under 12 years of age" should "attend school in winter." "No compulsion is necessary, as nearly all the parents are wishful to send their children to school."

Mr. Thomas Lawson, owner and occupier, Bothal, says under 1,

"Such an arrangement is not compatible with the ordinary work of agricultural children. The third mode only is practicable and might be modified to four months. A definite standard of educational attainments might exist either as a total or at certain ages. An agricultural child's education by observation and the use of agricultural implements begins much earlier than it would be proper to send him to school."

In South Northumberland.—In six cases this question is left answered. One witness prefers the 2nd mode; one replies that the 3rd is the only one which could be adopted with advantage; and two say that children should go to school in winter. One says that such enactments do not apply in this district.

The Hexham Board of Guardians say,

"It would be quite practicable to enforce a certain amount of school attendance up to the age of 12 or 13, but either half day or alternate day attendance at school is utterly impracticable. We are prepared to recommend that no boy or girl be allowed to be employed under 12 or 13 without producing a certificate of attendance at school for a certain number of days during the preceding six months."

Mr. William Henry Charlton, landowner, Hesleyside, says,

"There appears to be in this Union no necessity for enforcing any amount of school attendance."

Mr. Thomas Palliser Dods, occupier, Anick Grainge, says,

"Either of the modes prescribed by the Factory Act would be utterly impracticable in agricultural districts. That prescribed by the Print Works Act would be quite practicable, and now that so much power is put into the hands of the working classes it is imperative that provision should be made for their education. A certain amount of school attendance should be made imperative up to 12 years old, and from 12 to 14 a portion of the winter should be spent at school—say December, January, and February."

Mr. John Fewster Newlands, occupier, Ebchester, says,

"The children get more or less schooling till they are about 14 years of age, and after that they frequently go to school during the winter months to improve themselves."

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Mr. G. N. D. Waddilove, J.P., occupier, Brunton, Wall, says,

"A meeting of guardians decided to-day that alternate days is impracticable; that school should be in the winter months."

Mr. Edward Coulson, occupier, Bridgeford, says,

"If children were kept at school till they were 11 or 12 years of age, and after that age when not employed in the fields, which would be all the autumn and winter and half of the spring and summer, would give them quite sufficient education."

Mr. Henry T. Thompson, occupier, Chollerton, says,

"The way usual in this parish is for the children to go to school until 12 or 13 years of age, and then go to work and at field work during the summer, and attend school in winter."

Mrs. Isabella Colbeck, occupier, Warden, says,

"In agricultural districts winter is the time when children can be best spared to attend school. The above factory regulations would not suit farmers."

Mr. W. B. Wilson, occupier, Blagdon, says,

"This appears to me better left in the hands of parents. It is usual in this county for boys and girls after reaching a certain age to work during the summer months when employment is plentiful, and to go to school during winter when work is scarce.

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27. How far is the school attendance affected by the distance that the children have to go to school?

In Glendale.—In 14 cases this question is left unanswered. Ten witnesses say that the attendance is not at all affected by the distance, and 10 that it is very little affected. One states that the schools are numerous.

Mr. George Culley, landowner, Chatton, says,

"The country being thinly populated the attendance is necessarily affected by the distance children have to travel to go to school. On my estate 1¼ miles is the longest distance."

Mr. Matthew Tewart Culley, landowner, Coupland Castle, says,

"In thinly peopled districts a good deal; but this can scarcely be avoided as each village could not support a school. Taking into account the distances to be traversed the attendance is good."

Mr. Robertson, occupier, Chatton says,

"Children attend very regularly from a distance of two miles."

Mr. Thomas Chartres, occupier, Turvelaws, says,

"Not much except in hill parishes."

Mr. John Duncan Ogilvie, occupier, Mardon, says,

"The parents try to send their children to school however far it is off."

Rev. Thomas Knight, Ford, says,

"In cases of very wet weather or snow storms the attendance is diminished one half-or even two-thirds; otherwise the distance does not seem to affect the attendance."

Rev. John Richard King, Carham, says,

"Among the older children very little, except in exceptionally bad weather; but we scarcely get any children under 6 years old from distances of a mile and upwards."

Mr. George Young, Lilburn School, says,

"Very materially; especially in winter and in wet or stormy weather at any season."

Mr. William Robson, teacher, Crookham, says,

"Young children at the distance of a mile and beyond are unable to attend regularly in stormy weather, nor are they able to come to school until about 7 years of age."

Mr. Robert Frizell, National School, Ford, says,

"In winter they are sometimes prevented by the weather."

Rev. John Fraser, Lowick, says,

"But few in this quarter are kept from school by distance. Some have to go three miles however, and they would prefer a school nearer hand. Except in the case of the very young ones, however, the difficulties of distance are surmounted."

Rev. Peter Whyte, Wooler, says,

"Not to any great extent. Some children, owing to distance cannot attend so early as others, and those who are so distant that they cannot attend school at all, and live with their parents, are mostly the children of shepherds who hire lodgings for them or send them to live with friends who are near school."

The return from Milfield School says,

"Very slightly; especially in summer. But in winter, distance does affect the attendance, when the weather is stormy and the roads covered with snow."

Mr. George Pringle Hughes, occupier, Ilderton, says,

"By the state of the weather, which would be no impediment were schools at a more convenient distance. Children might likewise attend school at an earlier age."

Rev. P. G. McDouall, Kirhnewton, says,

"In some farms badly situated as regards distance from any school, the younger children are unable to attend; but the schools are well attended in this district, the children having frequently to walk three miles to school and back again every day."

In North Northumberland.—In two cases, this question is unanswered. Four witnesses state that the attendance is not at all affected by distance, one that it is very little affected, and one that schools are numerous.

Rev. William Clark King, Norham, says,

"In winter and bad weather materially, when beyond 1 mile or 1½ at most."

Mr. R. S. Bainbridge, occupier, Woodhorn, says,

"Greatly in the country, where in this neighbourhood the school is 1½ miles from their homes, and in stormy weather the children are properly kept at home, as it would be highly injurious for the children to sit all day in damp clothes."

Mr. Thomas Allan, Chairman of Union, Rothbury, says,

"Not much in the arable parts of the union. In some of the pastoral portions the young persons suffer from their distance from any school."

Mr. Thomas Rodger, occupier, Embleton, says,

"There are six unassisted by Government schools in this parish to meet the difficulty of poor children having to travel miles through frost and snow to school, and it is a positive disgrace to the Legislature that results should not be paid for unless under a certificated master. This parish could support one such, and then the children must work harder travelling to school than any farmer would put them to."

Mr. George Laing, occupier, Cornhill, says,

"Children living at the outlying farms are often prevented attending school by bad weather."

In South Northumberland.—In four cases this question is unanswered. Four witnesses reply that the attendance is not affected at all by distance, and two that it is very little affected.

Rev. J. Elphinstone Elliot, Whalton, says,

"Very little. In some few cases where the children have to travel two or three miles to the school they may be occasionally prevented by stormy weather. But for the most part the parents are sufficiently eager to send them."

Mr. L. Wilson Atkinson, J.P., Newbiggin, says,

"There is only a private school in this township."

The Hexham Board of Guardians say,

"In some districts of the union it is, but not generally. It is frequently affected by the parents not liking the teacher, and by their fancying (sometimes justly) that they do not get value for their money."

Mr. William Henry Charlton, landowner, Hesleyside, says,

"There are schools in all parts of the union, and the distances to be travelled are generally short."

Mr. Thomas Palliser Dods, occupier, Anick Grainge, says,

"In some districts it is. The children on this farm go some of them two and some three miles to school. There is a dame school in the village where some of the very young attend, but it is just about useless."

Mr. John Fewster Newlands, occupier, Ebchester, says,

"Very little, except in a storm of snow."

Mr. G. N. D. Waddilove, J.P., occupier, Brunton, Wall, says,

"Few are situated beyond the reach of two miles from school, and in thinly inhabited districts other arrangements would be difficult to effect."

Mr. John Johnson, occupier, Allendale, says,

"The attendance is not in the least affected from the distance; but more from the neglect of the parents not sending them."

Mrs. Isabella Colbeck, occupier, Warden, says,

"The children being mostly hardy, distance affects attendance very little."

Mr. Thomas Sample, land agent, Stamfordham, says,

"Young children, whose homes are at a distance, are prevented from attending school in bad weather."

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28. How far is the school attendance affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents?

In Glendale.—In 14 cases this question is unanswered. Eight witnesses say that attendance is very little affected, and nine that it is not at all affected. One witness states that most parents are able to pay, and one, that every facility is given, and the school fees are moderate.

Mr. George Culley, landowner, Chatton, says,

"Not considerably: lower terms are accepted for more than one member of the same family; three children go for the price of two."

Mr. Matthew Tewart Culley, landowner, Coupland Castle, says,

"The agricultural labourers here are quite able to send their children to school and exceedingly anxious to do so. During harvest, the ordinary schools are shut up, and after the age of 14, children seldom attend regularly, but before that age they are very generally sent regularly to school in autumn and winter."

Mr. Charles Selby, landowner, Yearle, says,

"I think at the rate of 5 or 6 per cent. of the children."

Mr. William Nicholson, occupier, Chatton, says,

"Generally the children are sent to school; not many exceptions to this."

Mr. John Turnbull, occupier, Branton, says,

"About one family in six or seven find a difficulty in meeting the expense of school fees."

Mr. Thomas Chartres, occupier, Turvelaws, says,

"In nine cases out of 10 I think where you find a family of children whose parents do not send them to school, the parents are careless and extravagant; but generally speaking, I think farm servants' children attend well."

Mr. Christopher Atkinson, occupier, Rosedon, says,

"The farm labourers in this country being highly paid, they are quite able to educate their children, as the school fees are small. A man, whose children are all young, will find a little difficulty till some of the older ones can earn something from work. The schools are numerous, and the fees very small, the teachers being well supported by bonuses from the landlord."

Mr. John Duncan Ogilvie, occupier, Mardon, says,

"Parents who can't afford to give their children a good education only keep them at school till they are able to read and write."

Mr. William B. Boyd, occupier, Chatton, says,

"All the children here attend school, and their parents are quite able to pay all school fees."

Rev. Matthew Burrell, Chatton, says,

"The generality of persons being well employed willingly pay for their children's education. Of course with some few exceptions."

Rev. Thomas Knight, Ford, says,

"The school fees are lower than in former times and are quite within the means of the parents. Children are never, or very rarely indeed, absent from school through poverty of parents."

Rev. James Allgood, Ingram, says,

"Few who are really anxious about the education of their children are prevented sending them to school on account of the expense. There are exceptions, but assistance is generally given when needed."

Rev. William Procter, Doddington, says,

"When the children of a family are kept from school by poverty, I generally succeed in getting them to attend by offering to pay half of the school wages out of annual subscriptions and church collections placed at my disposal."

Mr. George Young, Lilburn School, says,

"Not a great deal as a general rule, though in certain cases the children are absent at certain seasons from want of proper clothing."

Rev. John Fraser, Lowick, says,

"The fees are low and almost all can meet them. Widows and the very poor have a difficulty, and frequently such are taught without charge to the relatives, the parish or others paying for them. About one-thirtieth part of this class."

Mr. F. P. Lynn, occupier, Mindrim, says,

"I pay the school wages for all the children upon the farm till they are eight years old; the school being upon the farm, they are sent very young, and many of the children below the age I mention can read and write well."

Rev. P. G. McDouall, Kirknewton, says,

"During the past summer we reduced the school fees, and consequently (as I believe) the attendance was doubled."

In North Northumberland.—In three cases no answer is returned to this question. One witness says that school attendance is very little affected from this cause, and three that it is not at all affected.

Rev. William Clark King, Norham, says,

"Very little except in cases of long continued sickness in a family; loss of a cow or other serious accident.

Rev. James Blythe, Alnwick, says,

"The parents are generally both able and willing to pay the school fees."

Mr. R. S. Bainbridge, occupier, Woodhorn, says,

"The wages in this county being high (15*s.* per week and free cottage with coals led) the parents are well able to pay for their children's education."

Mr. John Davison, owner and occupier, Hebron, says,

"Only one instance (in my case) that any parent said she (a widow) could not afford to want her boy's wages and send him to school although he was a free scholar."

Mr. George Laing, occupier, Cornhill, gives a statement as to the advantages enjoyed by ploughmen. This is printed in Appendix A.

Mr. John Bolam, occupier, Glarorum, says there is "Education free of all expense to parents."

In South Northumberland.—In three cases no answer to this question is returned. Four witnesses say that school attendance is very little affected from this cause, and four that it is not at all affected.

Rev. J. Elphinstone Elliot, Whalton, says,

"Very little. The parents are generally both able and willing to secure education for their children, and where this is not the case it is commonly provided for by the Union, or by private benevolence."

Mr. L. Wilson Atkinson, J.P., occupier, Newbiggin, says,

"The people in this parish are well enough off to afford the small sum that is required for the education of their children."

APP. E.

Northumberland.

Mr. Henley.

b.

The Hexham Board of Guardians say,

"Not at all. The school fees of pauper children are all paid by the Union; and the wages earned in the district (from 17*s.* to 20*s.* per week) are quite sufficient to enable any working man to pay for the education of his children."

Mr. Thomas Pallisor Dods, occupier, Anick Grainge, answers to the same effect.

Mr. William Henry Charlton, landowner, Hesleyside, says,

"Very little on the whole. The schooling of outdoor pauper children is paid for by the Poor Law Guardians."

Mr. G. N. D. Waddilove, J.P., occupier, Brunton, Wall, says,

"The scanty means of some parents doubtless affects the school attendance of their children."

Mr. Henry T. Thompson, occupier, Chollerton, says,

"No need for want of schooling, for where the pecuniary resources of parents are wanting the children are paid for by parochial rates."

Mrs. Isabella Colbeck, occupier, Warden, says,

"Unless in the case of a large family of young children (when I have always given assistance) few or none of my labourers have been unable to send their children to school."

Mr. W. B. Wilson, occupier, Blagdon, says,

"Any labouring man in this parish can afford to educate his children."

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29. Are any efforts being made for the industrial training of girls, in connexion with elementary education, with especial reference to preparing them for their domestic duties?

In Glendale.—This question is left unanswered in 26 cases. Eight witnesses answer in the negative; 11 say that sewing is taught; one that needlework is taught; and one that sewing, knitting, and repairing clothes is taught. One answers "not generally;" and two reply in the affirmative.

In North Northumberland.—This question is left unanswered in 4 cases; 3 witnesses reply in the negative; 1 that the matter is only partially attended to; 3 that sewing is taught; and 1 that sewing and knitting are taught. One answers that an arrangement which formerly existed for teaching sewing, knitting, and mending is to be re-introduced.

In South Northumberland.—This question is left unanswered in six cases. Four witness reply in the negative; one states that sewing is taught; and five that sewing and knitting are taught; four reply in the affirmative.

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30. Have you any remarks to make on the subject of cottage accommodation, in regard to its effect on morality or education, or on the health and comfort of the labouring poor?

In Glendale.—This question is left unanswered in 24 cases. Three witnesses say that the accommodation is insufficient; one that it is bad; one witness says that it is generally good; and one that it is very good.

Mr. George Culley, landowner, Chatton, says,

"The cottage accommodation is greatly improving from year to year, but I do not think that better accommodation has improved the morals of the people; no doubt it improves their health."

Mr. Matthew Tewart Culley, landowner, Coupland Castle, says,

"The cottages of North Northumberland were formerly exceedingly small and bad, and no doubt there was a corresponding effect on morality from the crowded state of the dwellings, the whole family and a female worker besides being usually crowded into one room; but a great change is being made in this respect, and villages are generally now very unlike what they formerly were. Health no doubt suffered too, but less than might have been expected, from the salubrity of the climate and the short time which the labouring population actually spent in their houses."

Mr. William Nicholson, occupier, Hazelridge, says,

"I think all cottages should have separate apartments for sleeping in. To make this imperative on proprietors of land would be a good thing.

Mr. Robertson, occupier, Hazelridge, says,

"They should not have less than two apartments."

Mr. James Ramsey, occupier, Eglingham, says,

"The accommodation is not sufficient, most of the cottages having only one apartment about 15 feet square."

Mr. John Turnbull, occupier, Branton, says,

"Good cottages are essential to the comfort and health of the families, and generally prized by the labouring class. Here they are all that can be wished."

Mr. Richard Huntley King, occupier, Wooperton, says,

"I think want of accommodation *may* have an effect on the morality, but much less so than is generally supposed."

Mr. Charles Borthwick, occupier, Mindrim, says,

"I do not think the accommodation has any ill effect on morality, with a very few exceptions at least. I think something more might be done by landowners for their health and comfort."

Mr. Thomas Chartres, occupier, Turvelaws, replies in the same terms.

Mr. Peter W. Purves, occupier, Lilburn, says,

"I think many cottages, especially the old ones, want the necessary accommodation for separating the sexes at night; all ought to have two sleeping apartments. The drainage often bad and the supply of water neglected or at a considerable distance."

Mr. Christopher Athinson, occupier, Rosedon, says,

"Many of the labourers' cottages in this district are comfortable and adapted to the requirements of the people, but I regret to say that there are a great many upon certain estates very deficient. I do not think the people's morals are at all affected in consequence, and the nature of their employment keeps them healthy."

Mr. Charles Rea, occupier, Doddington, says,

"The cottage accommodation is very defective in this district, and prolific of evils to the morals, health, and comfort of the labourers, one apartment being in many cases the sole accommodation for a large family."

Mr. William B. Boyd, occupier, Chatton, says,

"I think a good deal requires to be done in the way of sufficient cottage accommodation. I think two sleeping apartments, besides the kitchen, necessary, whereas here in the newest cottages there are only two rooms (a kitchen and bedroom) and in the old ones only one large apartment."

Rev. Matthew Burrell, Chatton, says,

"Many of the cottages are bad and the accommodation inadequate, but in various parts of the parish improvements have lately been made and are still in progress which will contribute greatly both to comfort and health."

Rev. John S. Green, Wooler, says,

"It is very desirable that each cottage should have at least two apartments." "There is a great deficiency of decent cottages."

Rev. James Allgood, Ingram, says,

"The cottage accommodation is generally speaking bad."

Rev. John Fraser, Lowick, says,

"The cottage accommodation here is in many respects very deficient. The effects upon morals, comfort, and health are most injurious when households of males and females, as many as seven or eight or even

more, are huddled together in one apartment, and their beds not far from the common fire-place."

Mr. George Pringle Hughes, occupier, Ilderton, says,

"Sufficient accommodation I believe has great influence both upon the health, morals, and contentment of the labouring classes."

Mr. Joseph Scott, National schoolmaster, Lowick, says,

"As the houses are at present the morals and education of the bondagers cannot be good, and certainly the health is affected."

Rev. P. G. McDouall, Kirknewton, says,

"The scant accommodation afforded in the cottages is necessarily prejudicial to morality, as it also is to the health and comfort of the inhabitants in time of sickness or when a death occurs: it prevents self-respect. The badness of many of the cottages and the scant accommodation, combined with the annual usual flittings, take away that interest which the labouring man ought to feel for his place of residence, and is an effectual check against any improvement, either socially or morally."

In North Northumberland.—In four cases this question is left unanswered. One witness states that the cottage accommodation is very good.

Rev. William Clark King, Norham, says,

"Increased cottage accommodation is being rapidly provided in this parish, with perceptible good effect on health. But it is not so clear that morals or education get benefit by it."

Rev. James Blythe, Alnwick, says,

"It is very desirable that on account of health, comfort, and morality each cottage should have at least two separate apartments. There has been much done of late years in the way of superior cottage accommodation, but much remains still to be done."

Mr. James Aitchison, farm steward, Embleton, says,

"I think that all cottages ought to have separate rooms for males and females to sleep in. Sleeping all in one room must affect the morals of the young."

Mr. Thomas Allan, chairman of the Rothbury Union, says,

"Some of the cottages are bad, and of course these have a prejudicial effect on the health and comfort of the inmates. This state of things retards education, though its effects on morality are not distinctly traceable."

Mr. R. S. Bainbridge, occupier, Woodhorn, says,

"Good cottages, with at least two sleeping rooms and one good living room, are becoming general in this county, where a few years ago such a cottage was the exception; and at the yearly hirings one of the first questions asked by our hinds is, 'What sort of cottages have you?' showing the appreciation they have of better housing, which must elevate their morals and be conducive to health, the old one-roomed cottages being the very reverse."

Mr. James Laing, occupier, Bamburgh, says,

"One good kitchen, two bedrooms, and a milk house is quite sufficient, and as much as they care for."

Mr. John Angus, occupier, Bothal, says,

"The cottages now built and building are good. Many of the old ones are bad, small, and badly ventilated."

Mr. Thomas Lawson, owner and occupier, Bothal, says,

"Cottages do not all possess enough of distinctive accommodation for morality and comfort. All new erections are an improvement on what prevailed before, and few of them have any unhealthy features about them."

In South Northumberland.—This question is left unanswered in 10 cases. One witness says that the accommodation is tolerably good.

Mr. L. Wilson Atkinson, J.P., occupier, Newbiggin, says,

"I think another room would be an improvement."

The Board of Guardians, Hexham, say,

"During the last 20 years a very great deal has been done towards increasing the cottage accommodation, both in numbers and in convenience, and if the same goes on as it is likely to do for some years longer, all will be attained that is needed."

Mr. Joseph Palliser Dods, Chairman of the Board, replies in the same terms, and adds,

"On my own farm I have six cottages with four rooms, scullery, and outhouses, one with three rooms, and one with two rooms."

Mr. William Henry Charlton, landowner, Hesleyside, says,

"Many of the old cottages in this Union were greatly deficient in accommodation, often consisting of only one room; but within the last 15 years many new cottages on an improved plan and containing two or more rooms have been built."

Mr. Joseph Lee, occupier, Corbridge, says,

"Good cottages of three rooms are a great advantage to both morality and health."

Mr. Edward Coulson, occupier, Bridgeford, says,

"The last 15 or 20 years has brought a great and general improvement of the cottages; but the old system where it yet remains of only *one* room for every purpose has an evil tendency in every respect."

Mr. Henry T. Thompson, occupier, Chollerton, says,

"The cottage accommodation in this parish is in part of an inferior order. But of late great improvements have been made, and the newly erected cottages have all two rooms and give plenty of accommodation; some three rooms."

Mrs. Isabella Colbeck, occupier, Warden, says,

"My idea is that the cottage accommodation in this parish is very bad, and the effect must be injurious as regards the morals of the rising generation."

Mr. W. B. Wilson, occupier, Blagdon, says,

"Cottages in this parish have mostly two rooms, with other necessary accommodation. I firmly believe that the morality and health of an agricultural population will be much increased by this improved accommodation."

APP. E.

Northumberland.

Mr. Henley.

b.

31. How many cottages per 100 acres are considered sufficient for the accommodation of the persons employed on the land in your parish?

32. Is there that proportion of cottages in the parish?

33. If not, what is the proportion?

38. If there is deficient cottage accommodation, is any progress being made towards increasing it?

SUMMARY OF ANSWERS.

Name of Witness.	Parish or Place.	Mode of Cultivation to which the Answer applies.	No. of Cottages per 100 Acres.		If Accommodation is deficient is it being increased?
			Sufficient.	Existing.	
IN GLENDALE.					
Mr. George Culley	Chatton -	Arable - -	2 to 3	2 to 3	—
„ W. Nicholson	„ -	Alternate husbandry.	2	2	Yes.
„ J. Borthwick -	Kilham - -	—	$1\frac{1}{3}$	$1\frac{1}{3}$	—
„ J. Ramsey - -	Eglingham -	—	2	Scarcely 2	Yes.
„ J. Hall - -	Chillingham -	—	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$1\frac{1}{2}$	—
„ J. Turnbull - -	Eglingham -	Arable - -	$1\frac{1}{4}$	$1\frac{1}{4}$	—
		Mixed - -	1	1	
„ James Grey - -	Kimmerston -	—	$2\frac{1}{2}$	$2\frac{1}{2}$	—
„ R. H. King - -	Wooperton -	—	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$1\frac{1}{2}$	—
„ C. Borthwick -	Kirknewton -	—	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$1\frac{1}{2}$	Yes.
„ T. Chartres - -	Wooler - -	—	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$1\frac{1}{2}$	Yes.
„ P. W. Purves -	Eglingham -	—	2	Not 2	Yes.
„ J. Marshall - -	Chatton -	Arable - -	2	1 to 2	—
„ J. D. Ogilvie -	Ford and Branxton.	—	2	$1\frac{1}{2}$	Yes.
„ G. Rea - -	Ilderton -	Arable - -	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$1\frac{1}{2}$	—
„ W. B. Boyd - -	Chatton -	—	2	2	—
Rev. J. R. King - -	Carham -	—	1·3	2	—
„ J. Fraser -	Lowick - -	—	Over 1	Over 1	—
Mr. G. P. Hughes -	Ilderton -	—	1	0·4	Yes (in a few cases).
IN NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND.					
Mr. J. Aitchison - -	Embleton -	Arable - -	$2\frac{1}{2}$	1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$	Yes.
„ J. Bolam -	Bamburgh -	—	2	Nearly 2	—
„ R. S. Bainbridge	Woodhorn -	Mixed - -	1	1	Yes.
„ J. Laing -	Bamburgh -	—	2	—	—
„ J. Davison - -	Hebron - -	—	2	$1\frac{2}{3}$	—
IN SOUTH NORTHUMBERLAND.					
Rev. J. Elphinstone Elliot	Whalton -	Tillage -	2	Less than 2	Yes.
Mr. L. Wilson Atkinson -	Hexhamshire Low Quarter.	—	1	1 on arable land.	—
„ J. F. Newlands -	Whittonstall -	—	2	2	—
„ H. T. Thompson -	Chollerton -	—	2	2 on arable land.	Yes.
„ J. Johnson - -	Allendale -	—	1	More than 1	—
„ T. Sample - -	Stamfordham -	—	2	2	—

NOTE—In the above summary the proportion of cottages described as sufficient is repeated in the column for the proportion existing whenever the witness states that there are enough.

No other witnesses answered questions 31 to 33.

34. Are the cottages conveniently situated with respect to (*i.e.* not more than a mile from) the farms on which the work is to be done?

IN GLENDALE.—This question is unanswered in 17 cases. In 23 cases it is stated that all live on the farms: in eight cases the answer is in the affirmative. One witness says there are a few exceptions, and one that the cottages are conveniently situated in some cases.

IN NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND.—This question is unanswered in two cases. Seven witnesses say that all are on the farms, and three reply in the affirmative. One says that the cottages are mostly on the farms.

IN SOUTH NORTHUMBERLAND.—This question is unanswered in four cases. Four witnesses say that the cottages are on the farms, and 10 reply in the affirmative. One says that the cottages are mostly on the farm, and one that they "are generally on the farm for men labourers, and there and in villages for women labourers."

35. Is there a sufficient number of cottages with two bedrooms, or three bedrooms and a sitting room for the larger families?

IN GLENDALE.—This question is unanswered in 18 cases. Four witnesses reply "none," and 17 answer in the negative. Four reply in the affirmative.

Mr. George Culley, landowner, Chatton, says,
"The greater number of cottages have only two rooms on the ground floor and small offices."
Mr. Matthew Tewart Culley, landowner, Coupland Castle, says,
"Not quite, but there is a great improvement in cottages. If the people have many bedrooms they do not use them."
Mr. Robertson, occupier, Chatton says,
"No, but they are in course of erection."
Mr. Thomas Stawart, occupier, Roddam, says,
"Comfortable cottages for the families that are in them."
Mr. John Turnbull, occupier, Branton, says,
"They have generally three rooms."
Rev. Matthew Burrell, Chatton, says,
"Not on the generality of farms."
Mr. Anthony Barber, occupier, West Weetwood, says,
"Scarcely, but they are much improved."

In North Northumberland.—In five cases this question is unanswered. Four witnesses reply in the negative and two in the affirmative.
Rev. James Blythe, Alnwick, says,
"Very few indeed have two or three bedrooms and a sitting room apart from the kitchen. I do not know any in this locality."
Mr. John Davison, owner and occupier, Hebron,
"Plenty of cottages with two rooms and some with three."

In South Northumberland.—In five cases this question is unanswered. In five cases the reply is in the negative, and in two in the affirmative. One witness states that "some have two rooms;" one answers "mostly," and one states that there are very many."
Rev. J. Elphinstone Elliot, Whalton, says,
"There are not many cottages with more than the single room, though they are gradually being built" with "increased accommodation."
The Hexham Board of Guardians say,
"They are now generally of two rooms, some of three and four."
Mr. Thomas Palliser Dods, Chairman of the Board, replies to the same effect.
Mr. Edward Coulson, occupier, Bridgeford, says,
"The improved cottages in this parish consist of one bedroom, and one room for all purposes, with a bed in it generally. The rooms are of good size."
Mr. Thomas Wilson, occupier, Shotley, says,
"Yes, the cottages are generally good, with ample accommodation."

36. Are the cottages crowded, either with members of the family or with lodgers?

In Glendale.—This question is unanswered in 16 cases. Three witnesses reply in the affirmative, one replies "both," three say "very frequently," one "very much." Six witnesses answer in the negative, two say that there are no lodgers, and two that there are few lodgers. Four state that some of the cottages are crowded, and 10 that they are crowded, but not with lodgers. One witness states that there will shortly be plenty of room, and one that the state of the cottages depends upon the number on the farm.

In North Northumberland.—In four cases this question is unanswered. One witness says the cottages are not often crowded, and two that they are crowded, but not with lodgers. One states that no lodgers are allowed, and four reply in the negative. One witness remarks that the people are too much inclined to crowd with lodgers.

In South Northumberland.—In three cases this question is unanswered. Two witnesses reply that some cottages are crowded, three that they are crowded but not with lodgers, one that they are crowded in both ways, one that they are not often crowded. One witness replies in the affirmative, nine answer in the negative.

37. Give a general description of the cottages in your parish in respect of,—

1. Construction (including size of rooms, ventilation, and drainage).
2. Accommodation (including number of rooms in proportion to the family, water supply, garden, out-houses, &c.).
3. Ownership; *i.e.*, whether by landowner, or by tradesmen with whom the tenants are obliged to deal, or by other person or persons.
4. Rent.

It appears from the answers to this question that the ownership of the cottages is almost invariably with the landlord, that they are usually situated on the farm, and that they are assigned to the labourer by his employer as a part of his remuneration.

The following summary will show the nature of the answers to the other parts of the question.

Name of Witness.	Parish or Place.	In Cottages.		Outhouses and other particulars.
		No. of Rooms.	Size of Rooms.	
			In Glendale.	
Mr. George Culley -	Chatton -	2	Ft. Ft. 20 × 16 and 16 × 14	Well built of stone and slated, have wash-house, milk closet, garden, and pig-house.
Mr. M. T. Culley	Coupland and Akeld.	—	—	In many villages there are no cottages with more than two rooms. The tenant's regular labourers occupy cottages free of rent. Such as are not occupied by his regular workers the tenant lets to other labourers who work for him occasionally: the rent is usually 2*l.* 10*s.* or 3*l.* The new cottages have outhouses.
Mr. James Ramsey	Eglingham	1	15	Little ventilation, no drainage, good supply of water, and garden.
Mr. J. B. Boyd -	Doddington - -	1	—	Drainage very bad.
Mr. James Hall -	Chillingham -	1	—	Little ventilation, no drainage, bad supply of water.
Mr. Thomas Stawart -	Roddam	—	—	All comfortable cottages, with gardens.
Mr. J. Turnbull -	Eglingham	3	18 × 20 8½ × 10 8½ × 10	Wash-up place 9 × 8, dairy 7 × 8.
Mr. R. H. King -	Wooperton - -	2	Good size	Well ventilated. Garden ground sufficient; outhouses none.

APP. E.

Northumberland.

Mr. Henley.

b.

Name of Witness.	Parish or Place.	In Cottages. No. of Rooms.	In Cottages. Size of Rooms.	Outhouses and other particulars.
			In Glendale—*cont.*	
			Ft. Ft.	
Mr. C. Borthwick -	Kirknewton -	2	15 × 15 12 × 12	Water supply good, garden large, outhouses fair. The kitchen is "fitted up with two large 'box beds,' which "form small bedrooms, as the occupant dresses there "in the morning."
Mr. T. Chartres -	Wooler -	2	15 × 15 12 × 12	Mr. Chartres replies in the same terms as Mr. Borthwick.
Mr. P. W. Purves	Eglingham	1	15 to 20	Drainage often neglected, water supply not good. Generally a garden, but no privy.
Mr. C. Atkinson	Rosedon -	1 or 2	—	When there is "only one large apartment the end is "partitioned off for some of the family to sleep in." One half of the cottages very deficient.
Mr. J. Marshall	Chatton -	2 or 3	18 × 14	Coal-house, store-room, &c. attached. Water supply frequently deficient. All have gardens and byres for the cows. Some old cottages have only one room, and are badly ventilated. These are rapidly disappearing.
Mr. Charles Rea	Doddington -	—	—	"With the exception of six cottages on my farm the "remaining 10 are old thatched erections, with mud "floor, and no ventilation beyond the door and "chimney; few having any internal partition to "separate the family, which is thus huddled together "without regard to the proper division of the sexes. "I look upon this and upon the holding of markets "for hiring farm servants as the principal cause of "the immorality existing."
Mr. J. D. Ogilvie	Ford and Branxton	2	—	Milkhouse and scullery; good gardens; water close at hand.
Mr. J. C. Langlands	Old Bewick - -	3	17½ × 15½ 15 × 15½ 7 × 15½	Outhouses and garden. Ventilation, drainage, and water supply good.
Mr. W. B. Boyd -	Chatton -	2	13½ × 16 14½ × 9½	Milkhouse and wash-up. The old cottages are of the same size but all in one room. Nothing but windows with hinges for ventilation; drainage, none, except a drain round the house to keep the walls dry. Water supply good.
Rev. M. Burrell -	Chatton - -	2 to 4	—	"Although bad cottages prevail to a great extent "throughout the parish, those erected within the last "few years on the Duke of Northumberland's estate "are exceedingly good, being composed of two, "three, or four rooms, according to circumstances, "and varying in size; well drained, with convenient "outhouses, &c. The water supply in Chatton "village is very deficient, but there is a prospect of "its being improved." "Some cottages have lately been built at Hazelrigg, "composed of kitchen and three bedrooms, the "latter 10 feet by 8 feet (in one of which four grown "lads are sleeping), and the arrangement is such "that were an adult to die in one of these, by no "means could the coffin be got downstairs except in "an upright position, nor could it be taken out at "the window without removing the stone mullion "and taking out the window frames. I understand "that 45,000*l.* and upwards is being expended upon "the Haggerston estate in building cottages upon "this plan."
Rev. J. R. King	Carham	—	—	"Of 150 cottages in this parish belonging to 18 farms, "100 in all are modern and afford tolerable and "generally good accommodation; 11 farms containing "81 cottages are thus satisfactory throughout. One "with six cottages has not a decent habitation on it; "four others have only good cottages for the superior "servants, and 39 bad ones out of 47."
Rev. J. Allgood -	Ingram	1	24 × 16	The one room "when occupied is divided into two "apartments by two box beds being placed across "the room, leaving space for a doorway in the "centre. This allows in some measure of the separation of males and females. A small pantry is "attached to some of them. The drainage is often "bad. "Some new cottages are built upon a much better "principle and have better accommodation."
Mr. J. Hudson -	Chillingham -	—	"fair"	"Accommodation insufficient in some cases." Ventilation often imperfect; damp.
Rev. W. Procter	Doddington -	1	"large"	A small croft or cabbage yard. "The cottages vary "much in size and construction. Little attention "is paid to ventilation or drainage. Most of them "consist of one large room divided into two compartments by close beds."
Rev. J. Fraser - -	Lowick	1	15 × 10	"They are too small; some about 15 ft. × 10 ft. and "about 7 ft. high. Several families with only one "apartment. Water supply pretty good." Gardens. "The houses generally belong to the landowner. "There are a few, however, taken from the landlord "by a kind of middlemen, and the poor tenants "under these are oppressively rented. The rents in "general are too high here, one room being rented "as high as 3*l.* per annum."

Name of Witness.	Parish or Place.	In Cottages. No. of Rooms.	In Cottages. Size of Rooms.	Outhouses and other particulars.
			In Glendale—*cont.*	
			Ft. Ft.	
Mr. G. P. Hughes -	Ilderton - -	2	12 x 12 12 x 12	"The usual construction is an oblong ground floor "divided into kitchen and sleeping room, of 12 ft. "square each, by frame partition beds. The ventila- "tion is often neglected by the inmates, but the "drainage is usually sufficient to keep the houses "dry, though the sewers are often inadequate. In a "few cases, there are upstairs rooms. Water is "abundant, and the gardens and outhouses are equal "to the necessities of the farm servant. In many "cases there is no provision in the shape of water "closets, entailing much inconvenience to the people, "and affecting in no small degree their sense of "decency and cleanliness."
Mr. J. Scott	Lowick - -	1	18 x 12	Garden to all the houses. Drainage bad. Pretty fair supply of water. "Small hovel, thatched roof; one window generally; "one room; some with three, and there are cases "where there are four beds."
Mr. A. Barber - -	Chatton - -	2	—	"Dairy and wash-house, plenty of water, and good "drainage."
Rev. P. G. McDonall	Kirk Newton -	1 or 2	—	"Seldom supplied with outhouses. Many are badly "ventilated, badly lighted, and the drainage very "insufficient; frequently no drains. Dependent "for water supply mainly on mountain streams, "frequently at considerable distance from their "dwellings and insufficient in dry seasons; gardens "generally too small and insufficient."
			In North Northumberland.	
Rev. W. C. King	Norham -	—	—	"Most old cottages miserably deficient in ventilation "and drainage. Even the new, faulty in the latter "point. They now build with sufficient accommoda- "tion and outhouses; they allow fair garden ground, "but water supply is still deficient."
Rev. J. Blythe - -	Alnwick -	—	—	"The drainage and ventilation of the cottages have "been greatly improved of late years. Generally "each cottage has a small garden with good water "supply; outhouses are now much more common "than formerly."
Mr. J. Aitchison -	Embleton - -	2 or 3	16 x 16	Living room; pantry 16 feet by 8. "The loft above "is over all. In some cases the loft is divided into "two bedrooms, one for boys, other for girls. "Garden and outhouses."
Mr. T. Allan	Rothbury - -	—	—	"The cottages vary very much." "Many of the most "miserable ones have recently been swept off, and "excellent ones erected in their stead."
Mr. T. Rodger -	Embleton - -	3	—	"The new and improved cottages on this farm have "all three rooms, milk house, pantry, and scullery, "with privy, ashpit, coalhouse, and pighouse, all "spouted and properly drained. A stream runs "within 50 yards, and there is a drinking spring at "the same distance from them." They cost 140*l.* "All have a good garden attached, and any amount "of manure or guano the men wish for supplied by "me. Such cottages with their privileges would let "in Embleton for 7*l.* per annum."
Mr. J. Bolam -	Bamburgh -	2	—	"Only two apartments, and one generally in use."
Mr. R. S. Bainbridge	Woodhorn - -	3	—	Rooms "lofty, well ventilated and drained. A garden, "privy, coalhouse, and pigsty. Allotted for no "rent, but as part of hind's wage, which is 15*s.* "per week at least in addition, and also his coals "led by farmer free of charge."
Mr. J. Laing -	Bamburgh	2 or 3	—	Garden and outhouses. Ventilation and water supply good.
Mr. J. Angus	Bothal - -	—		"I let four cottages, mostly to men employed in piece "work, such as draining, &c., for which I charge "from 30*s.* to 40*s.* a year, the cottager finding me a "woman to work in the fields, for which I pay her "1*s.* a day, and 2*s.* in harvest. They have a garden "and 450 yards of drill planted with potatoes. I "cart them all their coals."
Mr. J. Davison - -	Hebron	2	—	On ground floor, fire-place in each room. "I have 10 "hinds, who have each cow kept by their employer, "pig, &c."
Mr. J. Lawson	Bothal - -	1 to 3	15 x 18 to 14 x 12 (as living rooms) 15 x 18 to 8 x 8 (as bedrooms).	"Drainage always good; ventilation not specially "provided for, but is not perceptibly injurious. "The small bedrooms" (8 x 8) are generally "high, "viz., from 9 ft. to 11 ft. high." "Cottages are held by freeholders, by direct holding "from owners, and by holding from occupiers of "farms, and in no case is any restriction as to "their trading with any person. Rents vary from "20*s.* to 60*s.* Gardens are often included, and in "such cases rents are only estimated separately. "The district is well watered. Outside conve- "niences are not plentiful at all cottages."
Mr. G. Laing - -	Cornhill -	1	19 x 15	All have good gardens; few have outhouses.

APP. E.

Northumberland.

Mr. Henley.

b.

Name of Witness.	Parish or Place.	In Cottages.		Outhouses and other particulars.
		No. of Rooms.	Size of Rooms.	
			Ft. Ft.	
In South Northumberland.				
Mr. L. W. Atkinson -	Hexhamshire Low Quarter.	1 or 2	—	Ventilation and drainage good.
Mr. R. Pickering	Haltwhistle - -	—	—	"Convenient and healthy."
Mr. J. Lee	Corbridge	2	15 × 15	Ventilation and drainage good, with water supply, garden, and outhouses.
Mr. T. P. Dods - -	St. John Lee -	4	13 × 14 7 × 8 16 × 11 16 × 11	Scullery (in addition) 7 × 8. "Each with good sized "windows, all made to open." "Spouted and drained." "Water brought in pipes to back of cottages." "Each "a good sized garden, a privy, ashpit, coalhouse, and "pighouse." "Worse cottages, with only two rooms and garden, in "the village close by, are let for 4*l.* and 4*l.* 10*s.* per "annum."
Mr. J. F. Newlands -	Whittonstall -	—	16 × 16 (kitchen).	"Generally about 16 × 16 in kitchen, with back apart- "ments and rooms above." "Water at the wells."
Mr. G. N. D. Waddilove	St. John Lee	—	—	Ventilation and drainage tolerably fair; water supply good; generality have a garden attached.
Mr. E. Coulson - -	Bellingham - -	2	18 × 16	"Stone walls and slate roofs generally, about 18 × 16, "with sleeping room rather less, or above the room. "On the ground sometimes a milkhouse or pantry "attached; also a garden. The ventilation and "drainage without much fault. Water supply "good."
Mr. H. T. Thompson	Chollerton	—	—	"The old cottages are small, wanting ventilation and "drainage. In new cottages these matters are, I "think, fully remedied."
Mr. J. Johnson - -	Allendale -	2 to 4	—	"For the most part built on elevated land. Always a "good supply of water." Pig-house, &c.
Mrs. I. Colbeck - -	Warden - -	1	12 × 15	One cottage has three rooms. Cottages built of free-stone; a few roofs thatched, the rest slated. "I do not think the majority of windows in cottages "open, but the door generally stands open the "greater part of the day. Little or no drainage; "good supply of water." "Each of my labourers has "a garden attached to his cottage. I have six "cottages, for which I charge 1*l.* per annum rent, "let to women who work in the fields for me."
Mr. T. Sample -	Stamfordham	2	18 × 16 14 × 16	Scullery, pantry, &c. Generally a good garden. Water supply abundant.
Mr. Thomas Wilson	Shotley -	—	—	Stone, and slate roofs. Water supply good. Gardens generally.
Mr. W. B. Wilson -	Stainington -	2 or 3	—	Ventilation and drainage generally good. Each has a garden; and all well supplied with water.

38. If there is deficient cottage accommodation, is any progress being made towards increasing it?

(The answers to this question have been shown, in part, under question 31, *ante.*)

In Glendale.—Eleven witnesses answer in the affirmative, and four in the negative.

Rev. J. R. King, Carham, says,

"The quality of the cottages is being considerably improved, the landlords taking an interest in it, and tenants making such improvements a condition on taking new leases."

In North Northumberland. — Six witnesses reply in the affirmative, and one in the negative.

In South Northumberland. — Eight witnesses reply in the affirmative and one in the negative.

39. Is the Union Chargeability Act (28 & 29 Vict. c. 79., March 1866) having any effect in increasing cottage accommodation?

In Glendale. — Fifteen witnesses reply in the negative.

Mr. George Culley, landowner, Chatton, says,

"No, as there was no inclination in this neighbourhood to limit accommodation under the old parish chargeability."

Rev. John S. Green, Wooler, says,

"I think it will have."

Rev. J. R. King, Carham, says,

"No, it does not affect our agricultural population."

Rev. John Fraser, Lowick, says,

"Its tendency will be of course in that direction; as yet no very decided examples can be referred to."

In North Northumberland. — Seven witnesses reply in the negative.

Mr. John Angus, Bothal, says,

"None, it is a complete robbery on the agricultural parishes."

Mr. Thomas Lawson, Bothal, says,

"No. It might decrease its progress, as 100*l.* on cottages in a town will produce double rent of same sum on a farm."

In South Northumberland.—Fourteen witnesses reply in the negative.

The Hexham Board of Guardians say,

"It has had no effect whatever. There were no close parishes in the Union, and the previous law of chargeability did not hinder cottage building."

Mr. John Fewster Newlands, Ebchester, says,
"Less, the rates being doubled, and some cases more than three times the former amount in our parish and in local places generally."

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40. By the Act 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114., July 1864, the Inclosure Commissioners are authorized to advance public money for the improvement of land, including by s. 9. "The erection of labourers' cottages * * and the improvement of and addition to labourers' cottages." Have you any remarks to make upon this Act in regard to any additional facilities, or any reduction of cost, that might cause greater progress to be made in supplying the want of good cottages?

In Glendale.—*Mr. George Culley, landowner, Chatton*, says,
"If loans could be granted for improving old cottages, as well as for building new, a great impetus would be given to cottage improvement. I have, for instance, 20 cottages, which I would gladly improve at a cost of, say 1,000*l.*, but I would be very unwilling to contract a loan under the powers of the Inclosure Commissioners for 1,000*l.* to build half of these new, according to their plans, which are not altogether desirable, leaving me the other half to do at my own expense as I might think proper."

Mr. Matthew Tewart Culley, landowner, Coupland Castle, says,
"The requirements of the Commissioners as to the number of rooms, &c. in cottages interfere much with the facilities for cottage building that the Act would otherwise afford to landowners. At least such is my opinion."

Mr. Thomas Stawart, occupier, Roddam, says,
"Where walls are good, unroof and raise the walls another story, which would be cheaper than building new ones, and would answer quite as good a purpose."

Mr. J. C. Langlands, occupier, Old Bewick, says,
"Grants might be allowed for the permanent improvement of cottages already erected."

In North Northumberland.—*Rev. William Clark King, Norham*, says,
"The cottages are certainly on too expensive a scale."

Mr. R. S. Bainbridge, Woodhorn, says,
"I believe the Inclosure Commissioners will not allow old cottages to be raised, but all buildings to be rebuilt from the ground. Now some old cottages in this county have good or *better* walls than would be put up new, and by allowing cottages with such good walls to be raised a great saving of cost would be effected; and I would also suggest that the rule be relaxed as to three sleeping rooms being required for each cottage, two in most cases being amply sufficient."

In South Northumberland.—*Rev. J. Elphinstone Elliot, Whalton*, says,
"There is little or no money borrowed for this purpose under the Act."

Mr. Thomas Palliser Dods, occupier, Anick Grainge, says,
"A modification of rules as to advances for the enlarging of existing cottages. Many cottages only require to be raised a story to make them all that is needed, but this is an improvement not sanctioned by Commissioners."

Mr. G. N. D. Waddilove, J.P., occupier, Brunton, Wall, says,
"A modification of the rule is required."

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41. Can you suggest any mode by which good cottage accommodation could be provided on self-supporting terms, and involving no disadvantage to the tenant?

In Glendale.—*Mr. Christopher Atkinson, occupier, Rosedon*, says,
"When new cottages are built the tenants have invariably to perform the carriages free of charge. I see no other way of building cottages, except the landlord doing it with his own money, or availing himself of the Inclosure Commission Act. The tenant often bargains to pay 5 per cent. of the interest, and the landlord pays the balance."

Rev. John Richard King, Carham, says,
"No. The return for building new cottages will mostly come indirectly. Good accommodation enables the farmer to get better labourers, and makes them worth more, and more likely to stay on the farm; and so a farm with good cottages will be held in higher estimation when it comes to be let than one with inferior buildings."

Rev. John Fraser, Lowick, says,
"If parties could get ground to build upon at a reasonable rate more erections would be completed; but the absurd restrictions of landowners put a great obstacle in the way of buildings that are much needed. If freehold ground could be got or ground for feu duty of a reasonable kind, as in Scotland, various parties would make an effort to build. But at present private parties have little encouragement, as generally after a short period the buildings become the property of the landowner."

In North Northumberland.—*Mr. James Aitcheson, land steward, Embleton*, says,
"Land owners ought to erect the cottages."

Mr. Thomas Rodger, occupier, Embleton, says,
"Farmhouse, cottages, stables, byres, cattle sheds, and barns are all part and parcel of the farm; all ought to be built on the farm solely for the use of the farmer, labourers, horses, and cattle employed thereon, and included in the rent of the farm."

Mr. Thomas Lawson, owner and occupier, Bothal, says,
"Cottages are indispensable to the proper occupation of a farm, and up to this point they will pay for erection fully up to the wants of an agricultural labourer, but beyond this they will rarely yield more than 3 per cent., and if much increased they become a nuisance, by their lowness of rent tempting an indolent occupant, or one whose labour is not suited to local wants or profitable local increase of labour."

In South Northumberland.—*The Hexham Board of Guardians* say,
"The agricultural cottages being in this union always let with the farms, the landlord does not look for pay in rent direct from the cottages, but in the increased rent of his farms, for without sufficient cottages to accommodate the families necessary to work the farm, he will get neither so good a rent nor so good a tenant."

APP. E.

Northumberland.

Mr. Henley.

b.

Educational Statistics.

(Questions 42–44.)

Table showing the Schools, Educational Facilities, and School Attendance in Glendale Union, County of Northumberland.

[The List of Schools and the Table of Distances were furnished by Mr. Wightman.]

District provided for.				Name of School.	School Attendance.															
					Summer.								Winter.							
					On Register.				Average Attendance.				On Register.				Average Attendance.			
					Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.	
Name.	Area.	Population in 1861.	Miles from School.		Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.
Carham Parish	10,382	1,274	–	Wark (Carham P.)	30	15	26	10	28	10	20	8	30	24	25	20	25	22	20	18
Paston Township	2,336	189	1	Mindrum (Do.)	20	2	30	2	18	2	27	2	35	12	24	14	30	10	20	11·5
Branxton Parish	1,487	255	–	Branxton	8	10	10	5	7	9	9	5	10	17	12	8	9	15	18	
Howtell Township	1,145	141	–	Howtel	17	3	18	4	17	3	18	4	26	8	23	7	26	8	23	7
Kilham Township	2,855	209	1																	
Coldsmouth Township	1,415	30	3																	
Kirknewton Township.	2,217	79	–	Kirknewton	38	39	36	32	37	34	34	29	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Grey's Forest Township.	6,615	39	3																	
Heathpool Township	1,037	21	2																	
Yeavering Township	883	51	2																	
W. Newton Township	1,063	95	0½																	
Milfield Township	1,471	225	–	Milfield	12	3	4	4	11·4	3	2·6	3·1	15	7	8	7	14·5	6·5	6·3	5·3
Crookhouse Township	467	24	2																	
Lanton Township	983	74	1½																	
Coupland Township	1,428	109	2																	
Ewart Township	1,512	133	2																	
Ford Parish	11,464	2,072	–	Crookham Nat. Sch.	34	18	22	17	22·1	7·6	12·6	8·6	26	29	19	27	18·3	21·5	12·7	18
				Crookham Presb. Sch.	15	5	16	6	13	4	13	5	18	9	15	12	13	7	11	9
				Ford	34	26	28	22	27	18	22	15	41	32	27	37	30	22	20	27
				Etal	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lowick Parish	12,526	1,946	–	Lowick Nat. Sch.	23	21	10	13	20·3	18·2	7·5	12	31	23	11	15	30	22	10·5	14·2
				Lowick Rom. Cath. Sch.	9	11	14	5	9	6	10	4	6	11	9	18	5	10	8	13
				Lowick Presb. Sch.	14	16	20	18	10	14	15	16	"Average nearly 90."							
				Lowick ditto.	30	16	30	18	26	14	26	16	26	24	28	21	20	20	22	18
				Bowsden	13	15	13	14	13	12	8	15	9	31	10	32	8	29	9	30
Doddington Township	4,798	381	–	Doddington	35	10	28	7	30	8	25	7	32	20	35	10	30	20	28	12
Nesbit Township	776	62	1																	
Roddam Township	1,218	118	–	Roddam	17	1	9	2	17	1	9	2	16	8	11	6	14	8	7	5
Ilderton Township	3,640	124	2																	
Rosedon Township		68	1																	
Wooperton Township	923	67	0½																	
Wooler Parish	4,852	1,697	–	Wooler Nat Sch.	30	12	32	16	22	9	21	14	35	23	27	27	27	19	21	19
Akeld Township	2,208	162	2½	Wooler Infant Sch.	50	—	48	—	31	—	29	—	50	—	48	—	31	—	29	—
Selby's Forest Township.	11,853	55	5	Wooler Presb. Sch.	44	24	36	16	40	18	30	14	40	36	34	30	33	35	31	25
Humbleton Township	784	152	1	Wooler Rom. Cath. Sch.	18	5	16	6	14	4	13	5	25	15	15	10	20	11	11	8
Earl Township	1,240	67	1																	
Middleton Hall Township.	1,101	73	1																	
Chatton Parish	17,090	1,651	–	Chatton	27	9	29	8	19·7	6·4	21·3	5·5	27	26	24	17	23·4	18·7	20·9	12·4
				Hazelridge	15	9	17	6	14	7	13	5	15	25	17	15	11	22	14	14
				Fowberry New Hall.	16	8	11	12	14·6	7	10	9	15	12	9	12	13·7	10·3	8·2	11
Chillingham Township.	4,929	147	–	Chillingham	20	10	18	12	17	8	15	10	20	30	14	20	17	28	12	14
Hepburn Township		77	1																	
Newtown Township		104	1																	
W. Lilburn Township	1,965	245	–	W. Lilburn	32	11	20	9	26·5	8·2	16	6·4	32	11	22	13	23·5	9	16·4	10
N. Middleton Township	2,102	113	2																	
S. Middleton Township	1,609	75	2																	
E. Lilburn Township	868	85	1																	
Old Bewick Township	5,487	204	–	Old Bewick	15	7	9	2	14	6	4	2	12	17	6	10	10	16	4	6
New Bewick Township.	1,125	78	0½																	
Branton Township	1,147	106	–	Branton	15	26	9	15	13	25	8	13·5	12	13	9	7	11·5	10·5	8	6
Brandon Township	—	134	0½																	
Fawdon, &c. Township	2,082	62	1																	
Ingram, &c. Township	6,882	72	–	Ingram	4	4	8	1	—	—	—	—	8	7	11	4	—	—	—	—
Reavely Township	2,340	66	0½																	
				Totals of the above	635	336	567	282	531·6	262·4	439	236·1	612	470	493	399	493·9	400·5	384	320·4

Note.—From the above it appears that (exclusive of Etal School, from which no return has been received) there are in summer 1,820 children on the books of some school, of whom (making allowance for the imperfect return from Ingram) 1,483, or 81·5 per cent. are in average attendance. In winter it will appear (after a proportional allowance is made for three defective returns) that 2,252 children are on school registers, of whom the average attendance is 1,863, or 82 per cent. In summer, therefore, 1 in 7·3 of the population attends school, and in winter 1 in 5·9. As might be anticipated the younger children attend best in summer and the older ones in winter.

In 1858, according to the Report of the Educational Commissioners, of the whole population of England 1 in 7·7 was at school, while in two specimen agricultural districts the attendance was 1 in 7·46 and 1 in 7·39 respectively.

Summary of Statements as to School Attendance of Agricultural Children in certain Townships and Places in Glendale.

[Returns from Schools are included in the previous Table.]

Place.	School Attendance. Summer. On Register. Boys. Under 10.	Summer. On Register. Boys. 10 to 13.	Summer. On Register. Girls. Under 10.	Summer. On Register. Girls. 10 to 13.	Summer. Average Attendance. Boys. Under 10.	Summer. Average Attendance. Boys. 10 to 13.	Summer. Average Attendance. Girls. Under 10.	Summer. Average Attendance. Girls. 10 to 13.	Winter. On Register of some School. Boys. Under 10.	Winter. On Register of some School. Boys. 10 to 13.	Winter. On Register of some School. Girls. Under 10.	Winter. On Register of some School. Girls. 10 to 13.	Winter. Average Attendance. Boys. Under 10.	Winter. Average Attendance. Boys. 10 to 13.	Winter. Average Attendance. Girls. Under 10.	Winter. Average Attendance. Girls. 10 to 13.	Statements as to Number of Children neither at School nor Work.
Roddam Township	—	—	—	—	7	—	2	1	—	—	—	—	6	—	2	1	—
Paston Township	5	9	8	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Branton Township	16		12		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kimmerston (Ford)	6	—	3	—	6	—	3	—	6	4	4	2	6	4	4	2	—
Wooperton Township	2	—	5	—	2	—	5	—	2	2	5	1	2	3	5	1	—
Mindrim (Kirknewton)	4	1	6	—	4	1	6	—	4	1	6	—	4	1	6	—	None, either in winter or summer.
Turvelaws (Wooler)	3	—	6	2	3	—	6	2	3	—	6	2	3	—	6	2	Ditto.
Ilderton (Township)	15	17	16	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

In addition to the statements tabulated above, the schedules contain the following information as to "the number of children of "the agricultural labouring class neither at school nor at work:" –

Mr. Peter W. Purves, occupier, Eglingham, says—"Very few when old enough."

Mr. Joseph Hudson, occupier, Chillingham, says—"There are few or none, either boys or girls."

Rev. William Procter, Doddington, says—"Very few above seven years of age."

Rev. John Fraser, Lowick, says—"Scarcely any in this district."

Mr. George Pringle Hughes, Ilderton, says—"In my township four boys are at school this summer, the others are working. "In winter the entire population between seven and 14 are at school, and there is a Sunday school in my little village "summer and winter."

Summary of Statements as to School Attendance of Agricultural Children in certain Places in the County of Northumberland (exclusive of Glendale Union).

Place.	School Attendance. Summer. On Register of some School. Boys. Under 10.	Summer. On Register of some School. Boys. 10 to 13.	Summer. On Register of some School. Girls. Under 10.	Summer. On Register of some School. Girls. 10 to 13.	Summer. Average Attendance. Boys. Under 10.	Summer. Average Attendance. Boys. 10 to 13.	Summer. Average Attendance. Girls. Under 10.	Summer. Average Attendance. Girls. 10 to 13.	Winter. On Register of some School. Boys. Under 10.	Winter. On Register of some School. Boys. 10 to 13.	Winter. On Register of some School. Girls. Under 10.	Winter. On Register of some School. Girls. 10 to 13.	Winter. Average Attendance. Boys. Under 10.	Winter. Average Attendance. Boys. 10 to 13.	Winter. Average Attendance. Girls. Under 10.	Winter. Average Attendance. Girls. 10 to 13.	Statements as to Number of Children neither at School nor Work. [*Also remarks on return.*]
N. Northumberland.																	
Norham	35	36	53	25	22·6	20·3	41·3	18	29	42	38	25	23·1	31·8	31·8	21	[*These figures refer only to schools under control of vicar.*] "I have made careful inquiry, and am glad to report only 3." (Rev. W. C. King.)
Embleton	90	20	80	20	90	20	80	20	90	54	80	53	90	54	80	53	"None, unless ill." [*This is apparently a schoo return.*]
Woodhorn	10	11	6	7	10	11	6	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	"None on this farm."
Hebron	25								35								
Bothal	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	"None in this locality." (Mr. Lawson.)
Cornhill	21	4	26	3	18	3·5	21	2	19	17	21	18	13	13	17	12	—
S. Northumberland.																	
Whalton	30 to 40	5 to 6	15	5	—	—	—	—	30 to 40	10	19	5	—	—	—	—	—
Hexhamshire LowQuarter	10	3	11	3	—	—	—	—	10	3	11	3	—	—	—	—	—
Bellingham Parish	67	54	58	29	56	51	53	22	74	65	61	34	66	62	54	25	"There are not many." (Mr. Charlton.) "About 1 in 5 in summer, and 1 in 9 in winter, absent from school." (Mr. Coulson.) [*The return is for the school; "about half the children are of the agricultural class."*]
Corbridge	77	22	58	25	70	20	50	20	84	29	84	23	75	23	70	18	—
St. John Lee	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	3	3	4	2	3	3	4	2	3	Two boys between 8 and 10; one girl between 10 and 13 "kept at home to let mother work (winter and summer) [*The return probably refers to one farm.*]
Ditto (Wall Township)	8	10	10	12	6	6	8	8	12	14	12	14	10	12	8	12	"Number very small."
Old Ridley Farm (Bywell St. Peter).	3	2	2	1	3	2	2	1	3	2	2	1	3	2	2	1	None.
Warden	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	"All either at school or work." (Mrs. Colbeck.)
Matfen (Stamfordham)	14	6	22	14	12	4	18	10	17	11	22	15	14	8	19	11	[*A school return.*]
Stainington	—	—	—	—	36	14	26	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10 boys and 6 girls in summer.

APP. E.

Northumberland.

Mr. Henley.

b.

45. Approximate of young persons (*i.e.* between 13 and 18 years of age) of the agricultural labouring class growing up with insufficient education.

In Glendale.—*Mr. William Nicholson, occupier, Hazelridge*, says,

"I find that in general they can read and write, but in a very insufficient way."

Mr. Thomas Stawart, occupier, Roddam, says,

"Very few indeed but receive a plain useful education."

Mr. James Grey, occupier, Kimmerston, says,

"They are all taught to read."

Mr. Richard Huntley King, occupier, Wooperton, states that there are two females.

Mr. Charles Borthwick, occupier, Mindrim, states that there are none.

Mr. Christopher Atkinson, occupier, Rosedon, says,

"It would be scarcely possible to find a youth who does not receive a plain education. As a class they are well educated, much more so than they were formerly."

Mr. J. C. Langlands, occupier, Old Bewick, states that there are none.

Mr. George Rea, occupier, Ilderton, says,

"All can read, write, and for the most part know arithmetic fairly."

Rev. John Fraser, Lowick, says,

"All get some education, but in the case of most it is by far too scanty. Only about four or five in the hundred get a satisfactory education, and even these few might be trained more if they could be kept at school for a longer time."

Mr. George Pringle Hughes, occupier, Ilderton, states that one-third of the population of males and half of the females are growing up with insufficient education. He adds, "I have done much to encourage "the taste for mental improvement among my work-"people by procuring a teacher, giving lectures, and "prizes for proficiency."

In North Northumberland.—*Rev. William Clark King, Norham*, states that there are three females.

Mr. John Bolam, occupier, Glarorum, says,

"All except very young children can read and write well."

Mr. R. S. Bainbridge, occupier, Woodhorn, says,

"Number not great."

In South Northumberland.—*Mr. William Henry Charlton, landowner, Hesleyside*, says,

"Not many."

Mr. Joseph Lee, occupier, Corbridge, says,

"Very small number."

Mr. John Fewster Newlands, occupier, Ebchester, says,

"Most get able to read, write, and cast accounts."

Mr. Edward Coulson, Bridgeford, says,

"Very few not able to read, and at least three-fourths able to read, write, and do arithmetic."

Mr. Henry T. Thompson, occupier, Chollerton, says,

"It is quite the exception to find a labourer brought up in this parish, not more than 20 years of age, that is not able to read and write, either male or female."

Mrs. Isabella Colbeck, occupier, Warden, says,

"None."

Mr. Thomas Wilson, occupier, Shotley, says,

"The whole of the children in this parish with one exception can read and write, and those above 10 years of age have a tolerable knowledge of arithmetic."

Mr. W. B. Wilson, occupier, Blagdon, states that there are eight male and eight female young persons growing up with insufficient education.

APPENDIX F.

APP. F.

Durham.

Mr. Henley.

Abstract of Returns to the Commissioners' Circular of Inquiry as to the County of Durham.

1. *Mr. Thomas H. Bates*, Wolsingham, chairman of the Weardale Board of Guardians.—There are no "private gangs" in the union. Only a limited number of children, young persons, or women are employed. They are occupied in "ordinary field labour," and live either on the farm or at no great distance. Their usual hours of work are from 8 to 6. A sufficient time is allowed for meals. Their work is not injurious to them and they are not subject to ill-treatment. The employment of females in agriculture is not ordinarily supposed to be injurious to their morals or to their proper training for domestic duties. No legislative restriction seems necessary. Attendance at school in this union is obtained without any statutory requirement, it is very little affected by the distance the children have to travel, and not much by the pecuniary resources of the parents, as the deficiencies are supplied by parochial aid. Some efforts are being made for the industrial training of girls. Cottages are not territorially apportioned, but there is no particular deficiency of accommodation. The cottages are not distant from the farms nor crowded to excess. The cottage accommodation is not inferior to what it is in other parts of the North of England. The facilities for education in this union are considerable.

2. *The Guardians of the Poor of the Durham Union.*—There are no private gangs. Children, young persons, and women are employed in spring in gathering weeds and setting potatoes; in summer in weeding the growing crops, hoeing potatoes and turnips, winning, gathering and stacking hay; in autumn in harvest work; and in winter in pulling turnips and in work connected with the thrashing of corn. They live on or near the farms and work from 8 to 12 and from 1 to 5. For meals, one hour is allowed at noon. Their work is not injurious to them and they are subject to no ill-treatment. No effect injurious to the morals of the women or to their domestic training springs out of their employment in agriculture. Boys are rarely if ever employed under the age of 13 years. No legislative restrictions are recommended. It would serve the interests of the employers and children if the latter worked six months continuously and were educated during the remaining six months. The schools are easily reached and the school attendance is not affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents. Schooling is cheap. Girls are trained in sewing, knitting, and cutting out their own clothes. Farms here are mostly small and the servants generally live with their masters in the farm houses. On the large farms there is generally adequate and proper cottage accommodation. Cottages attached to the farm are rent free. There is no obligation on the part of tenants to the owners. Cottages attached to farms have been greatly improved of late.

3. *Mr. Hislop*, chairman of the Chester-le-Street Board of Guardians.—Children, young persons, and women are employed in spring in weeding and clearing the land; in summer in hoeing turnips and haymaking; in autumn in assisting in securing the crop; in winter in barn work. They live on or near the farms. They usually work for eight hours. They have for meals, one hour for dinner, ¼ of an hour forenoon and afternoon. Their work is not injurious to them and they are subject to no ill-treatment. The women who work out are generally more industrious and make better housewives. No boy should go to work under 10. Either three or four miles distance to go to work is far too great; in no case ought it to exceed two miles. Except in this respect would not recommend any legislative restrictions.

4. *Mr. Rowland Burdon*, occupier, Castle Eden.—There are no "private gangs" in this parish. Children, young persons, and women are employed in spring in barking wood, planting potatoes, and picking weeds; in summer in hoeing turnips, weeding, and haymaking; in autumn in harvest work, pulling turnips, raising potatoes; in winter, in pulling turnips, feeding cattle, and working in the barns. They live on and near the farms, and their usual hours of work are 8 or 9. They are allowed for meals, one hour for dinner and half an hour in two periods, at 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Their work is not injurious to them, and they are not subject to any ill-treatment. The female servants in farmhouses are more generally immoral than those who go out to daily field work, owing to the habits of farmers and their men servants. No restrictions are necessary in this parish.

Neither half-day nor alternate day school attendance will suit either children or farmers. Farmers must be sure of getting their work done; half work and half school will not suit either party. School attendance for six months seems the best possible plan. School attendance is not affected by distance, and the wages are such as to enable parents, if they choose, to pay for their children's schooling without difficulty. Girls are taught plain work, but not cooking, cleaning, washing, or milking. Two cottages per 100 acres are considered sufficient, and there are more than this. They are conveniently situated, but some of them are scarcely large enough. Some are crowded both with members of the family and with lodgers. They have generally three rooms, some four, some only two, 12 ft. by 14 ft. or 15 ft. The ventilation and drainage are good. Most have gardens and outhouses; water supply good. All belong to one landlord, but some few are let with farms. Most pay no rent. When let, the rent is from 50*s.* to 60*s.* The cottages are being gradually improved. The cost of erecting proper cottages for labourers is such that their rent could not pay ordinary interest on the expenditure. The only mode of meeting the difficulty would be by Government advancing money at a low rate of interest, if the object is considered of sufficient national importance.

5. *Mr. Robert Graham*, occupier, Staindrop.—Not more than from six to twelve persons, old and young, are employed on each farm together. Children, young persons, and women are employed in spring and summer in cleaning tillage, hoeing turnips, hay; in autumn and winter in harvest, pulling turnips, and the barn. They live on the farms, or within one mile, and work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. One hour is allowed for meals (12 to 1 o'clock). Their work is not injurious, and they are subject to no ill-treatment; no harm to morals; teaches them industry and to be able to do farm labour when they marry farm labourers, whose helpmates they have to be. The female labourer is willing to do her share in assisting to maintain her family. Girls assist their mothers at work; the younger they begin to learn the cleverer they always turn out. There should be no legislative restrictions.

As to education, the provisions of the Print Works Act might be adopted to a certain extent. Parents as a rule are wishful to have schooling for their children, and get them some, but no rule can be laid down, as it is well known agricultural pursuits depend upon the weather, and can only be done when that is suitable. School attendance is not at all affected by distance, and little or not at all by them eans of the parents; 2*d.* or 3*d.* per week is the payment, and assistance, if wanted, is generally rendered. Cottages in many instances want improving as to more rooms. There should be one cottage per 100 acres in this parish; being mixed, there is that quantity. Cottages are conveniently situated. There is in nearly every case a sufficient number of cottages with two or three bedrooms. There are no lodgers; the cottages are not crowded. They belong to the landlord, and are well constructed: water, garden, and plenty of accommodation, as a rule. The rent is paid by tenant with his farm, none charged to the labourer, nor any rates or taxes. Besides, each man has from 14*s.* to 16*s.* per week regular wage, as many potatoes as he can consume, 2 to 4 bushels of wheat at Christmas, coals led. His wife has 10*d.* a day, except at harvest, when she has 2*s.* per day, and takes the turnips to hoe, and also to pull, earning on an average 2*s.* per day.

6. *Mr. William W. Hawdon*, occupier, Staindrop.—Children, young persons, and women are employed in spring in cleaning and preparing land; in summer in putting in turnips, hay, and hoeing turnips; in autumn in harvesting; in winter in storing turnips, barn work, waiting on cattle. They all live on the farm. Men work 10 hours; women, 8 hours. One hour is allowed for dinner. The work of women and children is not injurious to them, and they are subject to no ill-treatment. A female slightly out of health generally wishes to get work in fields for the summer months. Children generally go to school until 13 years of age. It is not necessary for the legislature to interfere with the agricultural labourer in this district.

The school is two miles off. Children cannot walk so far till they are about 6 years old. Without some endowment to the school, so that the weekly pence does not exceed 2*d.* each, a man cannot educate a large family. Cottages with more than four children are crowded. Cottages have one sitting-room, one bed-room, pantry, wash-up place, no lodgers; 16 ft. by 14 ft; pump, garden, and potato ground. Landlord lets them to tenant with farm; tenant keeps them in repair. There is no evening school, owing to the want of teachers; one is much wanted in the winter months.

7. *Mr. Simpson Walker*, occupier, Cockfield.—Children, young persons, and women are occasionally employed in spring in cleaning meadow and pasture land; in summer in hay, &c. They live near the farm, and work for 7½ hours daily. One hour is allowed for meals. Their work is not injurious to them, and they are subject to no ill-treatment.

8. *Mr. John Feetham*, occupier, Houghton-le-Skerne.—There are no private gangs here. Children, young persons, and women are employed in spring in weeding, &c.; in summer, in hoeing turnips, haymaking, &c.; in autumn, in harvest work and taking up potatoes; in winter, in pulling turnips and barn work. All live near the farm. They usually work from 8 a.m. to noon, and from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. One hour is allowed for meals. Their work is not injurious to them, and they are subject to no ill-treatment. There is nothing in the employment of females in this neighbourhood detrimental either to their morals or proper training. No *young* children are put to labour in this township. There is nothing here requiring any restriction. New schools have recently been erected in the parish, and the labourers show every disposition to avail themselves of the improved advantages offered thereby. Nearly all the children in this township are sent to school at an early age, the distance is three-quarters of a mile. Efforts are being made for the industrial training of girls. One and half cottage per 100 acres is sufficient here, and that proportion exists. The cottages are conveniently situated; there is a sufficient number with two or three bedrooms; they are not crowded. They are principally occupied by hinds, who live rent free and receive 14*s.* 6*d.* per week wage, ten bushels of good potatoes, a boll of corn at Christmas; and, in the case of Mr. Feetham, are supplied with corn for the use of themselves and their families at 13*s.* per boll (2 bushels), which is now about 6*s.* per boll less than the market price. "I know of no "children here growing up with insufficient educa-"tion, except two children of parents who have come "here temporarily to supply the place of a hind who "left during his year of service, and these are people "of improvident habits, who will never settle long "anywhere."

9. *Mr. W. Steward*, occupier, Bourne Moor.—No boys are employed and no females under 13. Women are employed in spring in weeding, gathering stones, &c.; in summer, in haymaking, hoeing turnips, &c.; in autumn, in harvesting, pulling turnips, &c.; in winter, in pulling turnips and in the barn when the

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threshing machine is at work. Their homes are all upon the farm; they usually work eight hours daily. One hour is allowed for dinner. Their work is not injurious to them, and they are subject to no ill-treatment. All the young and most of the adult labourers can read and write. Restrictions are not required in this neighbourhood; as the mining population is great and sufficient female labour is to be had in the immediate vicinity of the farms, and they always return to their own homes after work. Children should not go out to work before the age of 10, and afterwards should be educated during the winter at night schools. The children are all within one mile of the different schools. Sewing is taught to the girls. The cottages are generally good, several have been built recently and others enlarged. The accommodation in the new cottages now being built is as under, viz., front kitchen in which a bed is generally placed, back kitchen (with fireplace) and pantry on the ground floor; two bedrooms above. Two cottages per 100 acres is sufficient, and there are that number. They are conveniently situated and not crowded. Rent free and coals free. No children who are of age to attend are absent from school, except those at work. There is an evening school, open from October to March for two and a half hours per night, on five nights a week. It has 21 scholars. The subjects of instruction are reading, writing, grammar, arithmetic, geography, &c.

10. *Rev. W. Featherstonhaugh*, Edmundbyers.—There are no private gangs. Very few children, &c. are employed, except in harvest time. None under 13 are at work. They are not employed in spring; in summer they are employed in the hay harvest; in autumn, in the corn harvest, and in winter, in manuring and ploughing. They live on or near the farms. Their usual work hours are from 6 to 6 with two and a half hours allowed for meals. Their work is not injurious to them, and they are subject to no ill-treatment. No restrictions are necessary. As to school attendance, plan No. 3 would seem most applicable. A continuous attendance is better than intermitted. Young children cannot travel any distance, especially in winter. School attendance is not at present affected by the means of the parents, as the rector assists and the Board of Guardians puts pauper children to school. Want of decent clothing sometimes hinders attendance. The effect of the cottage accommodation is not satisfactory as to morality. The cottages have generally two rooms, no drainage. Nearly all the children attend school. The statute fairs are a great evil, but the remedy is difficult to arrive at. In this parish the farmers' children all attend school; when growing up, the boys generally take up farm work with their father, the girls often learn dress making, or remain at home, saving a servant.

11. *Rev. James W. Hick*, Byers Green.—The farmers hire girls and women by the day. No boys are employed and no girls under 10. The females are employed in spring in cleaning the ploughed land; in summer in weeding corn and hoeing turnips; in autumn, in harvest; in winter, in pulling turnips. They go from half a mile to two miles to work, not more, and are usually employed from 8 to 6. One hour is allowed for meals. The demand on their physical powers does them good; they are not subject to any ill-treatment; they would not put up with it for a moment. The worst employment is the brick works. Pulling turnips in the winter (in bad weather) is also injurious. The state of education among them is very low indeed. The women working out in the fields are generally the oldest daughters of a family who, from having had to nurse their rapidly increasing family of brothers and sisters, have never been at school. This is the usual thing with the oldest girls in a family, whether agricultural or pit people. It is doubtful whether any regulations could be carried out as to education amongst private gangs; unless it were that no girls under 14 or 15 years should be employed, and then not unless they could read and write. This age might allow them to get a couple of years of schooling after the younger children were old enough to do without the girls' nursing: but it would be very difficult to carry out. It would be well that no girl (boys seldom work out) under 14 should work in private gangs or as private labourers for farmers unless she had a certificate from the clergyman or schoolmaster of the parish that she could read and write. Out-door work (with young men), and even with many together of women, is prejudicial to morals. Of course it is so much time taken away from domestic duties. The class of girls that go out are sometimes, indeed often, of a low standing. Most could attend school during the winter months. You could not make a general rule, but there might be some arrangement with the schoolmaster that these children should attend a certain number of days in the year, say year 1867, or not be allowed to work in the year 1868. School attendance is not much affected by distance or by the pecuniary resources of the parents. The cottage accommodation in this parish (and indeed in all pit parishes) is very bad: great crowding and mixing of the sexes. What is worse almost no privies are provided. In this parish, and it is much the same all round, there are not above a dozen privies, though there are 500 houses. The cottages are most of them within a mile from the farms. The pit cottage generally is one sitting-room and one bedroom; often 15 people in these. Sitting-room about 14 feet square and nine feet high, bad ventilation. Very little drainage, bad water supply; few gardens, no outhouses. Built by speculators and let to the pit owners; rent about 5*l.* per annum. In pit districts (from which agricultural labourers come also) a government inspector (as Mr. Tremenheere) should have the plans of all houses passed by him, else no improvement will be made in the sort of houses.

12. *Mr. Henry Chaytor*, Witton Castle, Darlington.—Children, young persons, and women are employed during spring in gathering stones off grass seeds and meadow, hoeing thistles in corn; in summer, in hoeing turnips; in autumn, in harvest; in winter, very casually indeed. They generally live within a mile of the farm and work from 8 or 9 a.m. till dark, or 5 p.m., not later. One hour is allowed for dinner. Their work is not injurious, and they are subject to no ill-treatment. In the county of Durham and North Yorks, the employment of females is in no way injurious to morals. The field work in Durham and North Yorks of women and girls is on the whole so little and casual that it is not possible to restrict it. It is much less than it was, owing to altered systems of husbandry, and since reaping machines children are seldom seen in the fields. It is very rare to see girls under 15 or 16; if there be any they are the children of small farmers on their own farm; no one would hire them. No restrictions are necessary. There are no difficulties as to time for school. Children are rarely employed, and women and girls are not employed on an average of the year two days in the week, sometimes not for months together. Children will go two miles to school, but it does not answer. Schools are pretty general and good, and well attended, but there are some parishes without *efficient* schools. The charges seldom exceed 2*d.* per week, and this is no bar to attendance. Cottage accommodation is generally pretty good and cottages clean, very superior to the south generally in these respects. Pitmen's cottages, two rooms and pantry, sometimes three and four rooms, houses seldom crowded together, plenty of ventilation, water supply pretty good, but at times, in places, deficient. Cottages owned by everybody; occupiers independent: gardens. Iron-workers more in towns or dense villages. The wives and daughters of both classes supply agricultural labourers when you can get them to work. Wages 1*s.* per day, was 8*d.* 20 years since. Cottages are always being built on speculation.

Mr. Chaytor appends the following statement as to education. "In the richer parishes, schools are promoted by large employers of labour, and they are well attended. In the poorer parishes having no mining or manufacture, the schools can scarcely be kept alive for want of funds, and probably get no grant from Government. There are many rural parishes in this position, and the question is how to relieve them from this state of things.

"The present system of grants is very unfair, for these poor parishes while they get no grant and can hardly support a school actually by it, contribute to the teaching of wealthy places. Hence it may be supposed that grants should either be universal according to payment to the State or entirely discontinued.

"The better way perhaps may be entirely to relieve the Imperial Treasury, and empower magistrates in petty sessions to order an education rate to be paid out of the poor rate, according to the wants of each parish, the Government still finding inspection of the schools. Such rate not to be compulsory, but at discretion, on application by any sufficient number of parties interested, on a proper notice published, and after duly hearing all parties both promoters and opponents.

"A rate however should be only *in aid*, 2*d.* and in rare cases 3*d.* should be the maximum, for it is not desirable to kill charity or relieve the parents from all payment. Funds too amply afforded would lead to quarrelling, jobbing, and dissatisfaction.

"It may perhaps be fairly expected that a system of this kind would lead many persons to feel a more direct interest in the school and in the proper application of the funds, than they now evince in educational matters. This would be greatly productive of good, and while 2*d.* or 3*d.* in the pound would not prove an onerous impost, it is probably enough to ensure success in almost every parish in the kingdom. This perhaps requires to be tested by experience; it is usually easier to increase than to diminish expenditure, and no two parishes are alike in their wants."

SUMMARY of the ANSWERS as to the NUMBERS and AGES of CHILDREN working in the FIELDS in the COUNTY of DURHAM.

Name of Informa .	Place.	Males.					Females.						
		Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Un-married.	Total Females.
Mr. Rowland Burdon -	Castle Eden -	—	—	5	2	7	—	—	3	6	16	19	44
Mr. R. Graham -	Staindrop	—	—	—	4	4	—	—	—	6	20	8	34
Mr. Hawdon	Wakefield, Staindrop -	—	—	2	2	4	—	—	—	2	6	1	9
Mr. Walker -	Cockfield -	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	2
Mr. J. Feetham -	Great Burdon, Darlington	—	—	—	5	5	—	—	—	—	7	3	10
Mr. W. Steward - -	Lambton Office -	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10	3	9	22
Rev. W. Featherstonehaugh -	Edmundbyers R.	—	—	—	4	4	—	—	—	8	—	—	8
	Total of the above -	—	—	7	17	24	—	—	3	32	54	40	129

APPENDIX G.—EVIDENCE.

DURHAM.

LIST OF WITNESSES.

Nos.
1. Mr. John Mitchell, Medical Officer, Teesdale Union.
2. Mr. Sheriton, Medical Officer, Sedgefield Union.
3. Mr. W. Boyd, Medical Officer, Durham Union.
4. Mr. Anston, Surgeon, Stanhope.
5. Mr. William Lowes, Relieving Officer, Sedgefield Union.
6. Mr. William Wastell, Relieving Officer, Darlington Union.
7. Mr. Butterfield, Relieving Officer, Castle Barnard.
8. Mr. William Banks, Relieving Officer, Middlesborough District, Stockton Union.
9. Mr. Richard Langley Pearson, Relieving Officer, Stockton District.
10. Mr. John Gregson, Relieving Officer, Durham.
11. Mr. John Benson, Relieving Officer, Stanhope.
12. Mr. John Thompson, Relieving Officer, Bishop Auckland.
13. Messrs. Hodgson and Dickinson, Relieving Officers, Chester-le-Street.
14. Mr. Parrington, Agent to Lord Boyne.
15. Mr. Flavel, Auctioneer and Farmer, Sedgefield.
16. Messrs. Bamlett, Parkin, and Noddings, Occupiers of Land, Stockton Union.
17. Mr. Charlton, Occupier, Sedgefield.
18. Mr. Isaac Allanson, Farmer, Bishop Auckland.
19. Mr. James Taite, Agent to Mr. Burdon, Castle Eden.
20. A. B., Farmer, Bishop Auckland.
21. Messrs. Stobbs, Gill, and Hutchinson, Guardians, Bishop Auckland.
22. Church of England School, Sedgefield.
23. The Master, Hartwell School, Stanhope.

Nos.
24. Mr. W. C. Robinson, Master of the Hatfield Colliery School.
25. Mr. Grey, Master of the New Harrington Church School.
26. Miss Margaret Unwin, National Schoolmistress, Castle Eden.
27. Brancepeth Girls' School.
28. Brancepeth School.
29. Mr. John B. Johnstone, Master of the Esk National Schools.
30. William D., Schoolboy, Esk.
31. Mr. Mathew Fawel, Master of a Roman Catholic School, Esk.
32. Mr. Foster, Master of Castle Eden National School.
33. A. B., Ploughman, Aycliffe.
34. Mr. Nixon, Hind, Aycliffe.
35. Mrs. Thomas Forester, wife of a Hind, Hill Farm.
36. Wife of a Hind, Aycliffe.
37. Mrs. James Lawson, wife of a Hind, Bishop Auckland.
38. Mrs. Edger, wife of Steward, Castle Eden.
39. Mrs. MacMurdo, wife of a Scotch Hind, Castle Eden.
40. Mrs. Francis Waller, wife of a Hind, Bishop Auckland.
41–48. Schoolboys, Wingate School and Castle Eden School.
49. C. D., hired Boy.
50. Joseph Elliott, son of a Byreman.
51. E. F., a hired Girl.
52. Anna Angus, daughter of a Hind, Brancepeth.
Report of the Guardians of the Auckland Union, Statement as to the remuneration of Hinds, &c.

1. *Mr. John Mitchell*, Barnard Castle, medical officer of the Teesdale Union.—Women who work out in the fields are of two kinds. The wives of hinds who live on the farms and women from this town, mostly Irish, who go out occasionally. As a rule they are very healthy, though occasionally the work is

prejudicial to women who are nursing. The work of children in the fields is quite exceptional, but very young girls are hired into cottages to nurse the children so as to set the hind's wife at liberty for field work. They go to do this as young as 10. Of course this prevents them from going to school. At 11 years the girls are physically as strong as the boys. Among the adult agricultural class there is a great want of education. They are not nearly so far advanced as the same class in Scotland. The children attend the schools fairly when they are not required by their mothers at home to attend on younger children. The cottages in the district are usually good. The sanitary arrangements fair. They have in general two rooms and a kitchen. There is no separation of the sexes, but the children leave for service at an early age.

2. *Mr. Sheriton*, surgeon and medical officer to Sedgefield Union.—Has been in practice about nine years. The women do not work long hours, they have only from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with an hour for dinner. Their work is not hard. The only work that can be considered injurious to their health is pulling turnips in the winter season, at which they sometimes get wet, but they are a far more healthy class than townswomen. The greater number who work are married women, and they take the eldest girl sometimes from school to look after the house and family. Children of the labouring class never go out to work before 12 or 13, at that age they are sometimes hired to go into the farm houses as servants, both the boys and the girls. The children who go to work at the earliest age are the children of small farmers. They are kept at home to do small jobs of work, carrying dinners at 1, but that is only during the summer. They return to school in winter. The people mostly live in the villages. There are very few hinds' houses. The hinds' houses are the most crowded. Those in the villages can shift when the space becomes insufficient for their accommodation. The sanitary arrangements are defective, want of drainage, pig-sties too near, ash-heaps crowded in, but the ventilation is not bad, and they have privies. Water supply good. Wages here are high, but the people make little or no provision for old age.

3. *Mr. W. Boyd*, medical officer of the Durham Union.—Has known the district all his life. The children in this neighbourhood do not go to farm-work at an early age; say 13. If there is an exception it would be that of the small farmers who employ their children in the summer. It does not interfere with their health. The youngest boys are employed as "milk barrel boys," but they are about 14 when they do that. He considers the children attend school pretty well. The women do not work long hours or do hard work, from 8.30 a.m. to 5 p.m., with one hour for dinner. The Irishmen now take very much the place of women in unskilled labour. Most of the women are married. They are not at all injured by field work. The construction of the cottages in the villages is poor; there are few on the farms. The servant lives in the farm-house. The cottages are not crowded. The drainage nil; other sanitary arrangements defective, but not injurious to health in his opinion. The people live with open doors which makes them healthy. The hiring fairs are much amended since the railway days, which compel the people to leave early, and in this town dancing in public houses is discontinued. Mr. Boyd, as certificated surgeon under the Factory Acts, finds that the parents are not unwilling to have their children prevented from working. It is the child as a rule who rather prefers and presses to go to work. The most of these parents are settled Irish.

4. *Mr. Arnston*, surgeon, Stanhope.—Does not consider the work of women and children prejudicial to them. They are a most healthy class. Children are seldom employed before 14 years old, very few children are hired into the houses under 16 or 17. He has never heard any complaints of hours, or kinds of work that women and children are put to. Children are but little employed, as they can get higher wages at other kinds of work. Very few girls work out before 14 or 15. The cottages are not crowded.

5. *Mr. William Lowes*, relieving officer, Sedgefield Union.—The women in this district go out to work at 8 a.m. in summer and work till 5, with an hour for dinner. They gather weeds and hoe turnips, occasionally assist in thrashing. They very rarely do any hard work, such as filling manure carts, pitching corn, &c. Both married and single women work in the fields, but perhaps the bulk are married. The single go to service. He does not consider that any work to which women are put in the fields is unsuitable or injurious in any respect. The women who go to charing in houses have a harder time. The children go out to work at about 12 years of age. They go to drive milk carts, herd cows, keep stock, &c. &c. They work the same hours as women when they are doing the same sort of work. Nothing they do is too hard for them. The farm servants altogether do not work nearly so hard as they used to do. There are sufficient schools in the district, though in some very small villages they have some way to go. In the agricultural villages the children attend at school very well. He cannot say as much for the collieries and iron-works. The guardians pay the school fees for out relief. He does not believe that any children are kept from school from the poverty of parents. The day-tale men here get about 15*s.* to 18*s.* a week. The cottage rents would be at 3*l.* or 4*l.* a year. The women generally earn about 1*s.* a day and 2*s.* at harvest. Cottages are usually in villages and not on the farms. Some men may have to go three miles to their work, but that very rarely, about two miles is the average. The men prefer the village cottages to the detached ones; they feel more independent. They are pretty good houses, and generally have two or three rooms, &c. The sanitary arrangements are not bad; they mostly have privies. He does not think there is any want of cottages in the district.

6. *Mr. William Wastell*, relieving officer, Darlington Union.—Has been in this position three years; before this was a farmer. Children as a rule go to work at 12 or 13 years old, but in exceptional cases they may go out as early as 10. This only refers to boys. Girls never go before 12 or 13; generally 14. Women work from 8 a.m. till 5 p.m., with an hour for dinner; in winter shorter time. Boys who drive ploughs go from 7 till 5, with an hour for dinner. The others work with the women.

A great number of boys and girls hire into the farm houses. They never hire before 13 years of age, and girls about 15. There is very little trouble taken with them about education after they begin to work on the farm. Women only do the light work, nothing unsuitable to them. Almost all the women who work on the farm are married, with the exception of the girls hired into the houses.

Hinds' wages about 13*s.* 6*d.* in money; coals led; house free; potatoes, about 15 bushels; corn at a fixed price, about 12*s.* a boll, *i.e.*, two bushels. Daytale men have 15*s.* a week. Cottages are of two kinds, on some estates very good, on some very bad. The best cottages as a rule have two rooms with conveniences; bad ones single rooms on the ground floor, many without conveniences; about a third in this state; as to number, they are sufficient. Labourers prefer living in the villages to the cottages built on land, for the sake of the shopping, the schools, and to avoid the loneliness. There is only one place in this district where he is aware of any deficiency in schools. The masters are good, and the people avail themselves of them, but complain of the certificated masters giving the children too much singing and play. The children are not prevented attending from want of funds, and the guardians pay for pauper children. The sanitary arrangements are pretty good; most of the bad cottages belong to small people who have bought them on speculation and let them go to ruin. The rent of the bad ones from 30*s.* to 2*l.*; the good ones 4*l.* There are some cases of agricultural labourers who cannot read or write; about a third, and these are the old people; very few young people but can read and write. He cannot call to mind any family who have not sent their children to school. Parents are anxious to edu-

cate their children, and have the opportunity. Some children go as far as three miles to school, though not many. They do not mind that distance. Farms run from 100 to 400 acres. A man of 25 years of age in a farm house will get 25*l.* a year and all found.

7. *Mr. Butterfield*, relieving officer, Castle Barnard.—There were many cottages in this district pulled down after the passing of the new Poor Law. Some men have now to walk three or four miles to their work. They prefer living in villages, but this distance is too great. The cottages are not much crowded in the country, but they are in the towns. Farm labourers seldom come to the relieving officers; they all belong to benefit societies. Of education they all have a smattering, but as registrar he finds that many women cannot write. They say they once could do so, but have forgotten it.

8. *Mr. William Banks*, Middlesborough District, Stockton Union.—Has been relieving officer 22 years in March. The district is mixed; ironwork and agriculture. From his experience the children of the agricultural class are better educated than those in the iron works. In the town of Middlesborough hundreds of children are running about bare legged, without any education; they are mostly Irish and Welsh. Thirty-six years ago the borough was only one house, now there are about 33,000 inhabitants of all nations, and a great mixture. The schools in the agricultural district are sufficient in number and instruction, and the people avail themselves of them. The farms are about 150 to 200 acres. The farmers and their families do not work on the land. The work of women is not too hard; the only hard work he has ever seen them do is forking corn. He never saw them forking dung in his life. They mostly live in villages; they never go beyond two miles to work; the average would be a mile and a half. The rent in the villages for a two or three roomed house would be about 50*s.* a year, with a small garden. Some few live upon the farms, but he thinks there will be a change from Villiers' Act in this respect. The bastardy returns in the towns are kept down by the people living together as man and wife, though unmarried. Most farmers hire one or two servants into their houses.

9. *Mr. Richard Langley Pearson*, relieving officer, Stockton District.—Has been in this position for two years, but was deputy in this union for 14 years previously. He relieves both in the agricultural and manufacturing district. The cottages in the manufacturing district are of a better class, but neither in one or the other are they overcrowded; there are many empty in both districts. The women work very little out in the fields; they are mostly married. The girls who live in the house and are hired only work out in hay time and harvest. Boys go out to work about 12. Girls do not work out; they go to service. As far as he knows most children go to school. Parents who apply for relief do not receive it unless their children go to school. There are some excellent schools. He does not know of any children who have to go more than a mile to school. The guardians at present are not paying any fees; they only do so in cases of destitution. The agricultural population as a rule avail themselves of the school. Day labour men get about 15*s.* a week; hinds get abont 10*s.* in money, a cow kept, house free, coals led, and some potatoes found. The women, 1*s.* a day; they do no work which is unsuitable to them, nor are the hours too long. Men only work from 7 a.m. till 5 p.m., winter and summer. They breakfast before they go out. Hinds mostly live on the farms; the others in villages. The outside distance they go to their work is two miles. It is very rare that any of the settled poor come for relief. They avail themselves to some extent of sick clubs, more so than formerly. There are several instances of labourers in this neighbourhood who have raised themselves by their industry to the position of farmers.

10. *Mr. John Gregson*, relieving officer, Durham.—Has relieved for five years, and has known the district for 30 years. Children do not go out to work for wages before 12 years of age; generally they go to school up to that time. Their work is weeding, &c. &c. A limit by law of 10 years as the commencement would have no effect in this district. Girls go out earliest. Boys seldom go out till they are hired; about 12 or 14; they go to school up to that time. The district is well supplied with labourers. The schoolmasters are mostly certificated. The guardians do not pay direct school fees, but allow for them in the relief. Women work from 8 to 5; an hour for dinner. They are mostly married, and only do light work. The school fees would be from 2*d.* to 4*d.* A good many hinds are kept in the district; they mostly live in cottages on the farms. Some in the villages go as far as two miles to their work; that is the outside. Cottages vary very much; most of them have not less than two rooms; many have three rooms, including a kitchen. They are not crowded; as a general rule the sanitary condition is pretty good. Few men get less than 3*s.* a day. The rent of cottages is from 3*l.* to 4*l.* Women are paid 10*d.* and 1*s.* a day. Mr. Gregson, as registrar (*and he is confirmed by Mr. Gowland, the other registrar*), has observed that not one in six of the mixed population can sign his name, but among the agricultural population nearly all can. It is quite an exception when one cannot do so.

11. *Mr. John Benson*, relieving officer at Stanhope.—Has known the district all his life; he is now nearly 70. Children usually go out to work at about 15 or 16 years of age. Women's wages are 10*d.* or 1*s.* As registrar, he finds that delicacy prevents women signing their names especially at marriages, more so than at births and deaths. Marriages at the office are on the increase. He cannot say that in this particular there is any difference between agricultural and miners in the matter of signing their names. He does not think that any children of agricultural parents in this district do not go to school. The guardians pay the school fees in all cases of paupers when applied for. The women who work out are mostly single. He never remembers an instance of women filling dung carts since he was a boy, when a woman used to boast that she could drive a draught at harrow, but she was very stoutly built.

12. *Mr. John Thompson*, relieving officer of the Hamsterly district, Bishop Auckland.—Has been relieving officer for six years. There are very few hinds' houses in the district. The farms are generally very small, and are worked by the farmers and their families. He does not know any farmers' children kept from school and made to work.

13. *Messrs. Hodgson and Dickinson*, relieving officers, Chester-le-Street Union.—Boys in this district seldom work in the fields, but they go direct to the pit banks at about 9 or 10 years old. Girls go out to work for farmers at about 13 years of age, or even sooner in the summer. The hours of work for women and children are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. They consider driving carts an unsuitable employment for women. The hinds send their children far more regularly to school than the colliery people, as the latter are very careless about it. The guardians do not pay direct school fees, but consider it in the relief, but they (the relieving officers) have to ascertain the school attendance of the children. Mr. Dickinson was formerly a National schoolmaster, and started an evening school. He got 50 or 60 scholars the first winter from the pit villages. They could mostly read and write, but the long hours of work were against them, and they could not keep awake.

14. *Mr. Parrington*, agent to Lord Boyne, county Durham.—Does not consider that any legislation is required for the prohibition of either women or children from unsuitable farm labour, or from too long hours of work; in fact children rarely, if ever, work in the fields, except occasionally the children of the very small farmers during the summer months. Boys and girls are seldom hired into farm-houses before 15 years of age, and the women only work from 8 to 5 in summer, with an hour for dinner, and are so indifferent about working at all that they would not

stand any injurious work or go far to it. The farm labourers are mostly supplied from the villages. They have not long distances to go to their work. The wages of women are generally 1*s.*; none under 10*d.* The men, as hinds, have as good as 1*l.* a week. Day labourers 15*s.* to 18*s.* There are sufficient schools in all the districts with which he is acquainted. The teachers are sufficient, and the people avail themselves fairly of the means offered. The farm labourers are not so well instructed for work as formerly, by not being so much hired into the houses of the larger farmers, who not only had them taught the whole work of the farm, but also looked after them at other times. Men consider their hours from 7 to 5 in summer. They rarely commence work before 7.30. The men are very willing to work extra hours in busy seasons, and rarely touch beer at work. There was an old benefit society in this place, but it was found necessary to wind it up in consequence of the disinclination of the young men to join it, principally from the refusal of all out-door relief to those who are in the club.

15. *Mr. Flavel*, auctioneer and farmer, Sedgefield.—Considers that the labourers prefer living in the villages to the detached cottages or a farm. He has himself a cottage on a farm to let, in good order, which is still empty. He cannot get a tenant. The rent would be very moderate. Four rooms on the ground floor, with garden and out-houses. He would take 3*l.* for it. Thinks that the pleasures of the village keep people away. Men do not object to walk two miles to their work. Children are not employed before they are 12 or 14. Women do only the light work of the farm, and work from 8 o'clock a.m. to 5 p.m. The great majority are married. Children do not do any weeding or herding. They merely go out at hay time. The children of the small farmers are as a class the worst educated, as they have to assist on the farm when they are young. The cottages in this district are mostly two-roomed. The new ones are of a better construction. It is the custom of the country to hire by the year enough servants to go with the horses and do the cattle. They either live in the house or farm or in the hinds' cottages, though not usually in the latter. The other work of the farm is done by daytale men (that is, day labourers), who live in the village and walk perhaps a mile or so to their work. His present hind left his last place because he wanted to live in the village for the sake of his children attending the school. A great many of the farmers in this neighbourhood began life as working men.

16. *Messrs. Thomas Bamlett, William T. Parkin*, and *Robert Noddings*, occupiers of land (Stockton Union).—Women work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. They breakfast before they come, and have one hour at 12. They have 1*s.* a day; 2*s.* at harvest. They only do the light work of the farm. The bulk of women employed are married. The distance to their work is not more than a quarter of a mile. Children on an average remain at school till 12. Then the boys go out to drive the plough. The girls do not work in the fields. The majority of the labourers on their farms can read and write, and all the hinds can sign their agreements. It is not necessary to limit in any way the work or hours of women or children. The larger occupiers do the farm work by hinds, hired by the year. Their wives work out, but there is no compulsion, though it is customary to do so. The cottages are sufficient in number. There ought to be between two and three cottages for 100 acres of tillage. The cottages have three bed-rooms and a sitting-room. The young members of a hind's family do not remain at home after 16. They go out to place and service. The hiring fairs in some respects might be amended. The young people want better accommodation. The railway has done away with much immorality by taking the young people home earlier. Hinds' wages in this district are about 16*s.* a week, house free, coals led, two bushels of wheat, and 12 bushels of potatoes, with their meat at hay time and harvest. The schools are plentiful and the masters good. In general the attendance is not affected by the means of the parents. Sewing classes are established for the girls. The labourers altogether are far better dressed than 20 years ago. The hinds' wages are worth 19*s.* a week to them.

17. *Mr. Charlton*, of Sedgefield, occupier of land.—No children go out to work before 10 years old. Most of the agricultural class go to school. Many of the small farmers' children go to work at an early age in the summer, returning in the winter to school. The women leave home for their work at 8, and get back by 5. One hour is allowed for dinner. Labour is very scarce here on account of its being a mining district. Women's wages in winter 10*d.*; in summer 10*d.* to 1*s.*; hay and harvest 1*s.* 6*d.* Not much beer given except on leading days, but it is not common. The women only do the easy work of a farm. The great bulk of those who work are married women. There is no occasion to limit the age of children in work; they do not go out too young. There are sufficient schools in the district. Some children go two and a half miles. The children are never prevented from attending school by parents' means. The wages here would be about 18*s.* a week for daytale men. The hinds are hired for the year. Free house, coals led, potatoes from 10 to 15 bushels, and two bushels of wheat, 15*s.* a week of wages, and no bondage. Single servants, male and female, are hired for the six months. Cows are rarely kept by the hinds hereabouts. There was a benefit club here, but they broke up by consent, and divided 17*l.* each. There are Odd Fellows. The cottages are sufficient in numbers; indeed many are not occupied.

18. *Mr. Isaac Allanson*, farmer, Bishop Auckland.—Keeps a hind, to whom he pays wages as below: House rent free, a small garden, two bushels of corn, 16 bushels of potatoes, coals led, and 16*s.* a week. Women are paid 1*s.* a day from 8.30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Daytale men work from 7 till 5. Breakfast before commencing. Their wages are from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* a day. He has a hired boy and girl in the house. Does not know if they can read and write. He went to work himself at 8 years old, and got little education after that, but what he picked up himself at odd times, and not much of that.

19. *Mr. James Taite*, Castle Eden, (from Dumfriesshire,) agent to Mr. Burdon.—Has a large farm in hand. He has engaged some hinds in Scotland. The wages here are much higher than in Scotland. There they would have 12*s.* a week, a house free, coals led, and potatoes. Here 16*s.* and the same privileges. Some men have come here from Cumberland. They are very hard workers, but very careless of their children's education and religious teaching, though they are close to the Border. Women go out to work at 7 or 8 a.m. till 5 p.m. Those who go out earliest get an extra 2*d.*, that is, 1*s.* instead of 10*d.* Children work with the women, and seldom go out before 10 years of age; then only for a few months in the summer. He does not know any farm labourer who cannot read and write. He may say with a considerable degree of confidence that they all can do so. The cottages are included in the men's wages, and not crowded.

20. *A.B.*, farmer, Bishop Auckland.—Keeps no servants or labourers. Works the farm with his own family. His children have to go out very young to work, aye before eight years old, but many times they can do a bit of work before going to school and after it too.

21. *Messrs. Hale Stobbs, Thomas Gill, John Hutchinson*, guardians at Bishop Auckland.—Women go out from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., but they are seldom out before 8.30. Their wages are 10*d.* a day, and 2*s.* at harvest. These women are generally drawn from colliery villages, and are chiefly single. Children seldom work out, and never before 13 years of age. Boys are hired into the houses about 14, girls hired between 12 and 14 years old. Men's wages are from 3*s.* a day. They work from 7 a.m. till 5 p.m., having breakfast before they come, and resting an hour for dinner. Agricultural labourers, as a rule, educate their children far better than the colliers.

22. *Church of England School for boys*, Sedgefield Union, under Government inspection.—The fees are 6*d.*, 4*d.*, and 3*d.*, paid weekly, infants, 2*d.*, girls, 4*d.* and 3*d.* Thomas Brailsford, master, has been a schoolmaster in Sunderland and in Lancashire in an agricultural district. On the whole, the children are better educated in Lancashire than here. The boys usually go out to summer work about 10 years old. They come back again in the winter. If they are away three months it would take as much time to put them back into the same state as when they went out. The small farmers' children are taken away the most from school. As far as the school is concerned, looking at the question of school attendance as a schoolmaster, the half time would be the best, but not practicable in an agricultural district. The only method would be the *third* one mentioned in the Commissioners' circular, that is, attendance during the winter, about 88 days would be a fair attendance for the winter. The attendance is not much affected by distance, but children sometimes come to the infant school as late as 7 or 8 years of age not knowing their letters. They always remain big boys in a low class. The attendance is in some degree affected by the earnings of the children being wanted by the parents. He took great trouble to set up a night school, but though in the first year he got 25 it dwindled down the second to 10, and the third to six. He wrote and called on each young man individually within two miles. The night school certainly does not supply the deficiency of the day school. Of the 25 who came the first year five might be called good, five fair, and the other 15 deficient scholars. In the evening of holidays Mr. Brailsford takes some pupils out to teach them land measuring.

23. *The Master of Hartwell School*, Stanhope.—Some farmers' children go to work from this school as early as 9 or 10 years of age. Their after attendance at the school is uncertain and irregular. The small farmers as a class are most careless of their children's education. They are usually very poor men. The fees in the school are 3*s.*, 4*s.*, and 5*s.* quarterly. The attendance or quarterly payment is the best, but for the certainty of getting the fees weekly payment is preferable.

24. *Mr. W. C. Robinson*, master of the Hatfield colliery school not under inspection.—The fees are 6*d.*, 4*d.*, 3*d.*, and 2*d.*, paid fortnightly. There are very few agricultural children. The third child is free.

25. *Mr. Grey*, master of New Harrington Church school.—A colliery village. The fees are 3*d.* a week, and 2*d.* for infants. Two hinds' sons are now in the school, 13 years old. Agricultural labourers' children attend better and pay better than any other class The agriculturalists are far more anxious for their children's education than the colliers.

26. *Miss Margaret Unwin*, certificated mistress of the girls' National school, Castle Eden.—Came from North Tyne. The Catechism is not enforced in this school. Fees are 2*s.* 6*d.* a quarter. Girls do not leave so soon to work here as in Northumberland. Only two children have been working out this summer, who are now at school; both are the daughters of farmers. They make a bad attendance compared with other children.

27. *Brancepeth Girls' School.*—Few girls go out to work before 13 years of age, but they are kept much away from school for nursing. About 10 would be an average age for this employment, but some much younger.

28. *Brancepeth School.*—Ages of boys who have worked out:—William Fletcher, 14, began work at 11 years old, still at school except in hay-time. Thomas Franks, 12, son of a painter, worked one summer. James Palmer, 10, son of a groom, worked three months this summer in a nursery (garden). Thomas Fletcher, 10, son of a farmer, worked at hay-time.

29. *Mr. John B. Johnstone*, master of the Esk National school.—Says that the fees are 2*d.* a week. The farmers' sons are the worst educated. Their school attendance is miserable. They cannot be educated as they will not attend. Eleven would be the average age for farmers' children leaving school. Hinds' children remain longer.

Mr. Johnstone finds that evening schools do not answer. The population is too scattered. The average attendance at his day school is 30 or 40.

30. *William D.*, a boy in the above school, son of a farmer.—Is 12 years of age. Has worked out three summers. He cannot read an easy passage or write his name. "Jesus Christ made the world." He does not know who Jesus Christ was. He cannot say who Adam, Eve, Moses, or St. Paul were.

[This boy had only attended school for five weeks in the past year.—J. J. H.]

31. *Mr. Mathew Fawel*, master of a Roman Catholic school, Esk.—The fees are 3*s.* and 4*s.* a quarter. Some children go out as soon as they can handle a tool; as early as 8 or 9 they go out for weeding. They return in the winter for a quarter.

32. *Mr. Foster*, master of the Castle Eden National school.—The fees are 3*s.* or 4*s.* a quarter, and two children of one family come for 2*s.* 6*d.* Some children come two miles. Their attendance is as good as others. There is no difficulty about fees. The average age for first work would be about 10 and that only for a short time. Children leave the school finally at 12 years of age. Most of the children know their letters when they come to school; there is no evening school; it was tried but failed. The population is too limited. There are no houses in the parish of less than two rooms.

33. *A.B.*, Aycliffe.—About 20 years of age. Has been hired since 10 years old; first into a gentleman's house, since that into farmers' as ploughman. "Can read poorly;" write a little, and thinks he could keep a book.

34. *Mr. Nixon*, a hind living close to the Hadfield Colliery school.—Has five children; a child of 13 at school, a girl of 9 and a boy of 6 are at home. He cannot afford to send them to school. The fees are too heavy.

35. *Mrs. Thomas Forester*, Lambton Farm, a hind's wife on the Hill Farm near Houghton-le-Spring.—Has two children at school, pays 4½*d.* each for them at the Presbyterian school. She has one boy working out aged 13; he began work at 12. She took her boys away from the National school, though it was cheaper and nearer, because she did not like the way the boys were taught. The master never teaches each child, and they learned nothing, it is all in classes; and no school work to bring home. She comes from Northumberland and her husband from Cumberland. It was not because of her being a Presbyterian that she took her children from school, as she learnt the English Catechism herself and liked it.

36. *Wife of a Hind* at Aycliffe, Darlington.—Her husband came from Yorkshire and she from Northumberland. He has 14*s.* a week, a house free, coals led, 60 stones of potatoes, and two bushels of corn. She hired a girl of 12 to nurse when she worked out. "It did not pay."

37. *Mrs. James Lawson*, wife of a hind in the service of Mr. Allanson, near Bishop Auckland.—Has now got nine children, eight of whom are at home; three of them are now at work; their ages are 16, 14, and 12. She hopes to send the girl of 14 and the boy of 12 to school as soon as turnip pulling is over, "that "is if she can afford it, but times are bad just now." The boy of 12 went to work at nine, and a little girl has been at home keeping the house all the summer. Mrs. Lawson works out herself, and has never missed a harvest for the 20 years of her married life, though one year she only got 14 days' harvest work from having a child born, but that is now as much as they can make from the machine. The little girl of 9 cannot read an easy passage, write, or answer any question in figures or Bible.

38. *Mrs. Edger*, wife of a steward at Castle Eden farm.—Has eight children, three at school, of the ages of 10, 8, and 6. She pays 6*d.* a week for the

APP. G.
Durham.
Mr. Henley.
b.

three. She has two at work, one 13 the other 15; a girl is at home as nurse; she is 11 and has not been at school for two years, as she was kept at home to look after the house while the mother was out at field work or engaged at home.

[This girl cannot read and cannot write, is quite ignorant of religion and has never been six months in a school. This family came from Cumberland.—J. J. H.]

39. *Mrs. MacMurdo*, wife of a Scotch hind at Castle Eden.—Has eight children, three at school. The fees are 3*d.* a week, no reduction for the third child. The children learn very badly at this school and she quite grudges the fees. They bring home no school work as they do in Scotland.

James MacMurdo, 12 years of age, at school at Wingate (son of the above) worked out when he was 11.

40. *Mrs. Francis Waller*, wife of a hind, Wadsworth, Bishop Auckland.—She has four children, two *out* and two at school. Those at school are a girl of 13 and a boy of 10. The girl was at school till June, and then worked on the farm till October. The boy was away from school in the summer for odd jobs, helping to single turnips and mind the geese. Her elder children went to school till they were 14 or 15. She never got any schooling herself, as she had to be nurse at home, but after she went out to service she taught herself. Her boy goes to a Government school, but she does not like it, as the master never teaches the younger children himself, and her boy says that on many days he is not heard his lesson, and they did not even teach him how to hold his pen properly.

41. *William Grey*, 12, Wingate school, son of a farmer.—Has worked out for four years. Reads pretty fairly. His copy good: he answers simple Bible questions.

42. *Charles Grey*, brother of the above, went to work at 8.

43. *Robert Smith*, 12 years of age, Castle Eden school, the son of a widow.—Went to work at 9, carrying bark for about a month in the spring. He went to school in the summer till the next spring, when he went to work again at the bark. He has made 85 days at school the summer half year.

44. *Thomas Smith*, Castle Eden school, the son of a roper, 11 years of age.—Worked at the bark last spring. He had beer and 10*d.* a day. Worked at hay time, again at harvest, at 10*d.* for both. Boys carry the bark. The women and girls help to strip it. He was again out at potatoe time. Boys go out as young as 9 carrying bark.

45. *Ralph Todd*, 10 years of age, Castle Eden school.—Worked at the bark. His father works in a brewery.

46. *George Inglis*, 13 years of age, Castle Eden school.—Has worked for two years only, making bands. His father is railway station master.

47. *George Graham*, 11 years of age, Castle Eden school.—Has worked out this summer. His father is absent. He has been 63 days at school in the summer half year.

48. *Mathew Miles*, 13 years of age, Castle Eden school.—His father is an engine driver. Went out to work when he was 12, at the bark. His work was weeding a little about the hay and hoeing turnips. Was 78 days at school in the summer half year.

49. *C.D.*, hired boy in Mr. Allanson's farmhouse.—Was one of 11 children. His father was a shepherd in Yorkshire. He went to work at 7 years of age. Only at school four months. He "can "read 'nont' not to call read." Can only write so that his mother can understand. Can't tell his age; may be 20.

50. *Joseph Elliott*, son of the byreman, Lambton farm.—Is now 11 years of age. He left school at 9; but has attended night school. He has not been there this winter (December 10, 1867). His mother has six children; three of them at school. Fees are 3*d.* each; the third child goes for 1*d.* The mother says she would have liked to have kept her boy longer at school but could not afford it. The younger ones will be able to remain longer there.

51. *E. F.*, a hired girl in Mr. Allanson's farmhouse.—Will be 17 in February. She is the daughter of an engine driver to a mine. She went to Stanhope school for a year, but her father taught her sometimes. Has been at service two years. She can read but poorly and cannot write; but can knit and sew as well as anyone. She went to the Sunday school, but has forgotten all about it now. She does not go to church or chapel, having no time.

52. *Anna Angus*, daughter of a hind near Brancepeth, Durham, is 17 years of age. Got a bad education because she was taken away from school to nurse. Her father came from Wolsingham, but has lived here 11 years come May. Her mother is dead and left 11 children. Her brother who is at school *meats* the house, coming home at 11.30 and going back in time for afternoon school, so she is able to work out in the summer and fine weather.

Auckland Union, Feb. 13, 1868.

The employment of children, young persons, and women in agriculture (1867).—Report of the Guardians of the Auckland Union.

1. There are no "gangs," either public or private, in this union.

2. Generally in agriculture no children are employed under 13 years of age.

3. There are numerous schools in this union, and wages are much higher than in some southern counties, being from 16*s.* to 20*s.* per week in agriculture. The children have every opportunity of attending school, and very generally this is done.

The Guardians of Auckland Union are of opinion that no compulsory legislative enactment is necessary for this union, either as regards the education or the employment of children in agricultural pursuits.

(Signed) W. Edgar,
Presiding Chairman.

Bishop Auckland,
Feb. 1868.

Statement as to the Remuneration of Hinds.

Robert —— with Sussex Millbank, Esq.—Has 8*s.* a week in cash; two bolls wheat; 10 bushels potatoes; rent and rates free; coals for leading, will save about 3*l.* 5*s.* yearly; offal of pigs, and sheep killed for his family's use; and has all his own food found him, say 8*s.* per week. Estimated total, 53*l.* 17*s.*

Thomas Lenneard with Mr. Powell, West Layton.—15*s.* weekly in cash; rent free; coals for leading; boll wheat; one cow kept; also pigs, geese, and hens kept for him. Estimated yearly value, 71*l.*

I have not been able to procure a copy of the club rules, but nearly all the labourers are in clubs; they pay from 3*d.* to 5*d.* weekly into the club, and receive in sickness from 7*s.* to 10*s.* weekly.

Geo. Butterfield,
R. O., Teesdale Union.

EVIDENCE ACCOMPANYING MR. STANHOPE'S REPORT.

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LINCOLNSHIRE.

Lincolnshire.

Mr. Stanhope.

c.

1. LINCOLNSHIRE CHAMBER OF AGRICULTURE.

AT the adjourned meeting of the Council held at the Corn Exchange, on Friday the 6th day of December 1867, at 11 o'clock in the forenoon (Lieut.-Col. Amcotts in the chair), to further consider the employment of women and children in agriculture, the education of children so employed, and the proposed legislation thereupon.

The questions submitted by the Honourable Edward Stanhope, Assistant Commissioner, at last meeting having been considered, the following resolutions were agreed to:—

1st. That as it does not appear to this meeting that the present hours of work of women and children employed in agriculture are excessive or injurious to the physical condition of either, this meeting is of opinion that no limitation by legislation should be placed on their present hours of work.

2nd. That no restrictions should be placed on the distances to which it should be lawful for them to go to work, inasmuch as the supply and demand of labour must regulate this; and also, should the erection of cottages become general, such restrictions would be totally unnecessary.

3rd. That the Government be requested to assist in the building of cottages in agricultural districts by a loan of public money upon terms similar to those in the "Labouring Classes Dwellinghouses Act, 1866," or by a loan of money to be repaid at the rate of 5*l.* per cent for 35 years for three-fourths of the expense of the cottages.

4th. That no boy or girl should be employed at agricultural labour under the age of 9 years, except during harvest time, and that after that age no legislative restrictions should be imposed on any boy or girl producing a certificate that he or she has attended a sufficient number of days at school (as mentioned in the Act) during the two preceding years, and that no unmarried woman shall be employed between the ages of 14 and 20 in field labour.

5th. That boys and girls be not allowed to work together at field labour, except under proper supervision of both sexes where more than six are employed.

6th. That instead of the provisions of the Factory Acts being applied to agricultural districts, Government be called upon to grant aid, either by capitation fees or otherwise, to the schools of country parishes, although not under a certificated master, and to make the examination applicable to the class attending those schools.

It was ordered that a copy of the foregoing resolutions be forwarded to the Assistant Commissioner.

2. MEMORANDUM addressed to the Commission by 17 Magistrates for the parts of Kesteven.

We, the undersigned, justices of the peace for the parts of Kesteven, in the county of Lincoln, having considered the questions circulated by the Royal Commissioners on the above-named subject, are of opinion,—

That but little legislative interference with the employment of adult women in field work is necessary or desirable. In their case the question of education is not involved; their employment is not of very frequent occurrence; they are not subjected either to compulsion or ill-usage; and it would be hard to deprive them of the chance of thus adding to their earnings.

With regard to children the case is altogether different. Their education is of paramount importance, and we think a Bill somewhat similar in its provisions to the "Agricultural Employment Bill" (House of Lords, 147) of Lord Portman, in the last Session of Parliament, might advantageously be passed into law.

We would therefore suggest,—

1st. That no child under the age of 8 years be employed in agriculture for hire.

2nd. That no girl be thus employed under the age of 13 (except byhe special permission of justices in petty sessions, in cases where the labour seems essential to the proper cultivation of the soil, and then only under careful female supervision). This restriction would tend not a little towards the gradual entire abolition of female labour in field work; for if women were not accustomed to it in youth they would be physically incapacitated for it later in life.

3rd. That no unmarried woman under the age of 21 be employed in any mixed gang.

4th. That all children between the ages of 8 and 13 be obliged, as a condition of their employment in agriculture, to attend school for not less than 400 hours during each year.

We believe that this rule might be enforced without the inconveniences inseparable from either the half-day or the alternate day system; but if thought too oppressive, some relaxation might be permitted in favour of boys who could produce a certificate from a specified authority (*e.g.*, clergyman or schoolmaster) of having attained a given degree of proficiency in reading, writing, and arithmetic, &c.

It should not, however, be forgotten that in agriculture children can be extensively employed during one-half only of the year, instead of as in many manufactures during the whole, by which they are effectually precluded from availing themselves of the benefits of a day school. In Lincolnshire, moreover, schools are numerous, wages high, and the cost of education low. There is, therefore, no excuse for its being neglected, and we believe that if such an amount of education as we have suggested were rendered compulsory, it would not entail any injustice on employers, parents, or children; and, supplemented as it would be by Sundays and night-schools, would in a very few years infallibly raise the standard of the agricultural labourer generally.

With regard to the other points of the inquiry, restrictions as to distance appear to apply more to public than to private gangs; and as to hours of work, it seems scarcely necessary to interfere; but if they are to be prescribed by Act of Parliament perhaps a limit of eight hours for boys under 11 and girls under 13, and of 10 hours for boys from 11 to 14 inclusive; in all cases an interval of one hour for dinner might be desirable.

[Signed by Sir John Trollope, Bart., M.P. for South Lincolnshire (now Lord Kesteven); Sir Montague Cholmeley, Bart., M.P. for North Lincolnshire; W. E. Welby, Esq., M.P. for Grantham; Colonel Packe, M.P. for South Lincolnshire; Ven. Archdeacon Trollope; Christopher Turnor, Esq., late M.P. for South Lincolnshire, and other magistrates.]

Lincolnshire.

Mr. Stanhope.

c.

THE WOLDS DISTRICT.

(From Barton to Horncastle and Spilsby).

3. Table showing the Employment of Women and Children at different seasons.

January - - - - - -	Boys of from 10 to 13 top and tail turnips. Sometimes girls, women, and big boys drag them out of the ground. Women and children pick stones. Knocking manure.
February - - - - - -	
March - - - - - -	
April - - - - - -	"Tenting" birds for boys and girls of 7 and upwards; a few go at 6 years old.
May - - - - - -	Weeding and twitching (pulling up twitch or couch grass) for women and boys and girls over 8; public and private gangs formed. [Planting potatoes.]
June - - - - - -	
July - - - - - -	Same, with turnip-hoeing and singling.
August - - - - - -	Harvest, gleaning.
September - - - - - -	
October - - - - -	Tenting. A little weeding. [Taking up potatoes.]
November - - - - - -	Same as January.
December - - - - - -	

Stone picking, commonly done in gangs or families, takes place at any time, when the hands are not otherwise engaged.

A great many women go with threshing machines (two to each machine), whenever working. Tenting pigs and sheep often lasts all the summer.

4. *John Iles, Esq.*, Binbrook Hill, Chairman of Louth Board of Guardians.—I farm 1,000 acres of wold land; for the cultivation of this, I require a foreman, shepherd, gathman (for the beasts), carpenter, blacksmith, seedman and married head waggoner. These are all "confined" labourers, are hired by the year, and live in cottages on my farm. Their wage (part in money and part in kind) amounts to 40*l.* or 45*l.*, exclusive of the cottage and garden. Besides these I have five young lads (waggoners), of 14 and upwards, who are hired by the year; these lodge with the foreman, and are found by him. Then I require 9 or 10 other labourers, who live at Binbrook. In the winter I want boys of 11 or 12 to top and tail the turnips for the sheep, and women to "drag" them (out of the ground). These boys I employ also in the summer at leading horses and so on. My weeding is done by a (public) gang under a man called Neale, who never goes elsewhere. I pay him and not the children. His work is done mostly by contract. I want also younger boys to "tent" for a week or two in spring and autumn. I never make them come on Sundays. I let the crows have a day of rest too.

Women come to my farm with a threshing machine. They are employed on the "stage" of the machine to cut the bands. There is a man at Binbrook who owns several machines, and hires men and women to go with them to the different farms. The women are hired, because they go cheaper; but they are very ready to go, being better paid than at other work. They get 1*s.* 6*d.* a day; but it is dangerous, especially to the younger ones of 16 or so, because they are so careless; and it leads to great immorality. The lads who come by the day can go to night-schools very well, but the real difficulty is in the case of the young lads whom I hire by the year as waggoners. They have often to be up at 4, and they don't finish suppering their horses till 8 at night. And feeding can't be done at too long intervals, so that they could not get away for any time.

5. *Mr. T. W. Calthorpe*, Horkstow Hall, large occupier.—I employ a good many boys and a few girls in a private gang for singling and weeding. I send my foreman with them, and his orders are to keep them always in sight, even at mealtimes. I employ them from 10 upwards; and I want as many boys in winter as in summer, because they must come to top and tail the turnips for the sheep. I think I could get enough to spare them at school a good deal till they're 11; but after that I could not. Labour is much scarcer and dearer than it was; women won't go out as they used, except sometimes the wife of one of my "confined" labourers. I don't think much immorality results. I admit their moral feelings are a good deal blunted, but that comes from the crowding in the cottages. That's getting better about me: some landowners feel it a moral duty to build more cottages; and besides this, there is a growing feeling among the labouring class to look before them when they are entering into an engagement. They ask now (1), what sort of a master? (2), what wages? (3), what sort of a cottage? (4), how far from work? and I am quite sure that the increased difficulty in getting labourers will oblige some of us—farmers or landlords—to provide better cottages and more of them.

6. *Mr. J. Higgins, jun.*, Claxby.—I am a farmer of 1,000 acres, and have been an employer of labour in my neighbourhood for 20 years, to a maximum of 1,300*l.* a year. It is almost an invariable rule in these parts for boys to go to school until 9 years of age, and never afterwards, for then the labour demand eagerly takes them out, and the parents are willing to let them go; in short, after 9 the demand for labour and the necessities or the selfishness of the parent prevail over the attractions, however good and encouraging, of the village school. There are no public gangs in my part of East Lincolnshire. The boys are hired by the farmer and placed generally under the superintendence of a trustworthy labourer chosen for the purpose, merely to see that they attend to their work. Were a boy to be ill-treated, he would come home and shelter beneath his parents' sympathy at once. Last year there was a report of a boy having been ill-used near Spilsby, and on the market day much indignation was expressed.

Weeding and taking up and storing of root crops are best done—that is, more cheaply and with less trouble to the farmer—by boys and girls under a man who contracts by the acre or ton, and himself engages the children. But girls do not work much in the fields here; it is almost a rule that they do not. There is no good in encouraging such work. I consider it demoralizing and lowering to the sex. Domestic servants make better poor men's wives than those whose time has been spent in outdoor manual labour. Except in the Lothians, where young women do not seem to consider working in the fields to lower them in the social scale, I do not call to mind any district where girls do field work, and yet do not give the idea by their appearance and manner that they only do it because some necessity compels them. There is much danger in the employment of women in proximity to machinery. It is a common practice for women to go from farm to farm with a portable thrashing machine, to untie the sheaves and pass them to a man who is

feeding the machine. There is danger of the dresses being caught in the machinery, as I can bear sad testimony, having had fatal accidents on my farm. In prohibiting the employment of women, whose loose dresses are liable to be caught, much good will be done indirectly, because women who go to work as described are placed in company with eight or ten men, and their moral condition is not one calculated to be improved under the system. Very few women will do this now.

The farmers would be (I may say, are) willing to allow that an uninterrupted attendance at school until 9 or 10 years of age for boys, and 12 or 14 for girls, would be for their good and no inconvenience to the community. But after this age there is no plan for keeping up their education but by night schools. There seems to be no reason why certain teachers should not have a district, containing two or three small villages within a radius of four or five miles, and attend certain evenings at each place. Amateurs very soon weary of this work, because there are few who are so disinterested as to be willing to give up their evenings after their own day's work. Wages of men here are 15*s.* a week, except in harvest, when they are nearly double. Labourers who are strong and clever can at the present rate of pay earn 18*s.* a week on an average all the year round.

7. *Mr. T. B. Dring* (occupier of 2,000 acres), Claxby.—I farm at Claxby, and also near Long Sutton. Here the ketlucks are almost got rid of, and we have no need of gangs; we used to have them. At Long Sutton we want them, but girls learn bad things in them, and could well be spared if more cottages were built. That is the great want, and a supply of cottages would not only supply us with labour and keep our best labour in the country, but help to raise the character of the population. Now our labourers live in the towns, subject to temptations, and among bad characters. Build us cottages on the farms; we don't then tolerate bad characters; we only have really useful men, who can bring up their children away from temptation. It is true that, unless you built a great many, people would get turned out as they grow old, because their house room would be wanted; but, on the other hand, there is not the same objection, on the ground of temptation, to the older people living in towns. And how does the case stand now? I was offered a farm of 400 acres the other day (in Yorkshire). There was a house on it worth 3,000*l.* at the best, and not a single labourer's cottage. Another one of 600 acres elsewhere I went to see; here again very expensive buildings, and not one labourer's cottage. I rent a farm under Mr. Cardwell, M.P., at Gedney, of 400 acres; he had just bought it. There was one cottage, the village being three miles off. He has built some free, and after a certain number I pay him 5 per cent. on his outlay. That is really the best plan. You ask whether Government might lend it on better terms. Well, but suppose it to lend money to be paid off in 50 years, by paying 5 per cent. My landlord borrows money to build a cottage. I pay the 5 per cent., and in 50 years the landlord gets the freehold of a cottage for which he has not paid a shilling. Nevertheless, I say let us have them in that way, for have them we must. I farm here under Bethlehem Hospital, without a lease or agreement. I built two cottages myself on their land. If I left next day, I should not have been entitled to anything for them. That was not enough, I applied for more, and I said, "Here are four plans, look at them fairly, and tell me "which you think the most reasonable, and I will "carry it out." The four plans were,—

(1). Landlord to build, tenant to pay 5 per cent. on his outlay.
(2.) Landlord to find materials, tenant labour.
(3.) Tenant to build, and have 25 years' tenant right in the cottages.
(4.) Tenant to build at his own expense and have no claim.

They chose the first plan, and are building upon that footing.

There ought to be a double cottage for every 100 acres; and I must say that, in districts where there are now no cottages, it is better to build bad ones than none. I think cottages more important than the tenants' house. There is a group of six brick cottages at Willoughby station, three bed-rooms in each of them, small it is true, but enough for decency, which were built (leading and all) for a little over 40*l.* I rent one of them for my farm, and pay 4*l.* a year for it. That couldn't be done now, and certainly better provision should be made for drainage; but I will undertake to build six such cottages in a line, outhouses and all, for a little over 300*l.* Bricks are cheap here. I admit that a gentleman would say that they were not fit to look at, but I say that they are better than nothing. There are plenty of bad ones about; there are some at Willoughby with one room only (three beds in it), and not fit to put a pig in. So it is at Welton and Skendleby.

8. *Mr. Harwood Mackinder*, large occupier at Halton Holgate.—The main object of your education is defeated unless you have three-roomed cottages. The building of cottages might be encouraged. Many tenants would build if they had a tenant right in them. I know that I would do anything to get them; I would readily pay 6*l.* per cent. on any outlay for them. In the first place it could not be much loss, if any. I reckon that two three-roomed cottages, quite plain, cost 140*l.* For each of these a labourer will pay 4*l.*, if a little bit of garden is thrown in. But if there be any loss, the advantage to me and the labourer would counterbalance it. Where my labourers live now, neither my wife nor I can take any real interest in them or in their families; put them on my farm, and we shall feel it our duty to look after them, and do what we can for them.

9. Extracts from return sent in by the Rev. R. Parker, Rector of Well and Claxby, and Magistrate.

If an age be fixed below which it shall not be lawful to employ a child on a farm I would suggest 10 years. Then a certain amount of instruction would be secured beforehand; after that age employment is constant, and parents can ill afford to lose the earnings of their children. The farmers are greatly averse to a general rate for the purposes of compulsory education, from a conviction that land is already overburdened with the charges upon it. And it appears to me that if attendance at school were stimulated by a system of substantial prizes, it might in a great degree supersede the necessity of compulsion. If boys attended regularly between the age of 6 and 10, and at intervals from 10 to 12, they would acquire as much useful knowledge as would enable them creditably to fill their station in life. But after 10, it would not be desirable to compel attendance, for when once a boy has commenced farm work, the employment is pretty constant, and unless his whole time were given to it, the feeling would be strong that he could never become a good farm servant. A certificate that the boy has attended annually—days at school between 6 and 10, might be required before he could be legally employed.

The school at Well is supported, with the exception of the children's payments, by Lady Mary Nisbet Hamilton. It has only a schoolmistress from the Westminster Training Institution. To stimulate the attendance at the close of every year, one-third of the whole number (the average being 21) receive rewards simply for attendance, consisting of winter frocks for the girls and slops for the boys. Besides which, to promote regularity of attendance in winter, warm cloaks are lent to the girls, and dry slippers for them when they reach the school. The children are received from 4 years old and upwards; the girls are found to remain till 13, the boys seldom as long as 12. Some come from a distance of three miles, and two-thirds of the school a distance of two miles. Half the children attend 100 days on an average every year. The child occupying the 32nd place on my list has thus voluntarily attended 100 days in the year, or 50 days in half

Lincolnshire.

Mr. Stanhope.

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the year, *i.e.*, 250 hours, or 100 hours more than is required by the Print Works Act.

Besides the customary needlework every afternoon, one girl is always employed in the domestic service of the schoolmistress. Others are engaged in cleaning the school-room, the grates, the outhouses, and generally, the work required in the school premises. Then the oldest girls take it by turns one quarter of the year, and one day in every week, to prepare a dinner for eight or 10 of their school-fellows. The cook for the day remains behind the night before, and comes early the following morning, to prepare for it. The girls are responsible for all the arrangements, the dishing up, the service, washing up, &c.

The chosen few sit down together to dinner in the presence of the schoolmistress, who keeps order, and attends to their manners and behaviour, she herself dining at the same time at another table. By marketing herself, by ready money payments, the schoolmistress is enabled to provide this meal at a small cost, yet supply them with a good dinner, and the result is, an increasing demand for these girls as domestic servants.

We have no evening school; I have tried more than once to introduce it, but always failed; the boys in service have to be up at 4 in the morning, and are engaged often till 8 in the evening, and are then quite ready for bed. For girls it is unnecessary. Once a person was employed to visit the cottages by turns every evening (Sunday excepted), and either to read to the people or instruct them in reading, writing, or summing, as they liked best. His visits were acceptable, but the man gave up, and it was found difficult to supply his place.

I consider the distance to be travelled to the school, the weather in winter, the fatigue undergone during the day, the demand on the labourers' time as long as the light lasts every day, the late hour before farm servants have completed the feeding and dressing of horses and cattle, and (in some cases) indifference about education after finding full employment without it, prevent the establishment of night schools in purely agricultural parishes. It is not desirable to abridge the hours of sleep and rest, which must be done by many, if a night school is to be attended. The cottages here, with one or two exceptions, are very good; the farmers, however, say that they are too few for the labourers employed on the land. Besides economizing the physical strength of the men, it would add greatly to their comfort, and enable them to live at a cheaper rate, for they would obtain hot instead of cold dinners, with the addition of cooked vegetables from their gardens, and not have to subsist wholly on bread and cold meat. It is found that they work better, more cheerfully, and with greater spirit on a hot meal. Besides, the farmer would have a greater command and influence over labourers resident on the farm than over those drawn from a distance. Cottages should be built of different sizes; some for large families, others for a widow keeping house for a son, or for an old couple.

It should be borne in mind that the poor have not the same horror of overcrowding as those above them, and will often prefer a small cottage at a small rent even with inadequate accommodation.

10. Extract from a letter to Mr. Stanhope from Edward Heneage, Esq., M.P., Hainton Hall, Wragby. Dated Feb. 8, 1868.

Children should go to school until 9 years of age, and be taught reading, writing, and arithmetic, and after that it should be optional, unless it is possible, without affecting the labourer, to have a certain amount of education afterwards. If education after 9 years of age is insisted on by Parliament, it will and must be the ruin of all our best labourers, and will drive them either to the workhouse or out of the country altogether; if statutes were abolished, and a proper number of cottages built by landlords to hold the necessary labourers, they would become more settled, less poor, and more able to educate their children as they are desirious of doing, and which the most steady parishioners do now; the clergy will then have more influence over them, and would take more interest in their education, spiritual and temporal; and if Government would place the licensing of beer-houses in the hands of the magistrates, the labourers would have more money to spend on their children's education.

With respect to girls they ought not to work in the fields, but might be kept at home till 12 years old, and I would have all public gangs prohibited by law, and no children allowed to go above one mile to work under 10 years of age, and who could produce a certificate of being able to read, write, and do simple arithmetic.

If the labour of boys under 11 years of age is prohibited, the labourer will in some cases lose half his income, as where a man has three boys of 11, 10, and 9, earning respectively 10*d.*, 8*d.*, and 6*d.* a day.

11. *Mr. Thomas Randell*, agent to W. Angerstein, Esq., North Owersby.—No attempt should be made to dispense with girl labour altogether. No girl should be employed before 13 years of age, nor employed in joint work with males, except of her own family.

No boy should be called to farm work till 10 years of age. From 7 to 10 he might attend regularly at school, but whilst at school he might be trained to his future employment by taking part in the cultivation of ground attached to the school. From 10 to 12 he might be at work in the fields for 8 hours; from 10 to 14 for 10 hours, exclusive of meals; and up to 15 it would be as well that he should not be engaged in night work, so that he might have an opportunity of attending an evening school. Neither man nor boy should be compelled to walk more than two miles to work. To countenance the evil by making any sort of provision for a distance of three or four miles, would be to encourage the standing disgrace arising from want of accommodation for the labourer.

The Legislature might fairly secure a labourer's cottage for every 100 acres; and I say that Government inspection would be salutary. In many cases it is essential, the present system not being effective. Very large farms (by which I mean cultivated land, not sheep-walks) would not require a cottage to every 100 acres. This would meet the case, viz.:—

1	cottage for	100	acres.
10	,,	1,000	,,
15	,,	2,000	,,
20	,,	4,000	,,

12. Extract of a Letter to Mr. Stanhope from Mr. W. M. Epton, large occupier at Langton, near Wragby.*

Every year more labour is required. Turnip cultivation has increased; corn crops are generally better; and although a deal of land has been underdrained, a very great deal more still requires to be done, and all will require to be continually renewed; and woodland is in course of being reclaimed. These and other causes make more work, and consequently more hands are required to do it; and although machinery is to some extent employed, it tends more to increase production than to save labour.

To meet this demand for labour but few new houses have been erected on the large estates. The deficiency has, however, been to some extent supplied by speculators, where there is available land; but the houses so built are often bad and insufficient, scarcely fit for families to live in, and are generally dear rented. For instance, in this small parish several houses were some years ago built upon some leasehold land in the middle of a wood. They cost not more than from 20*l.* to 25*l.* each, and, with about a rood of land, are let at an average rent of 5*l.* per year, but free from rates. I need scarcely say that they are very small and bad.

* This and some of the succeeding evidence is ill placed in the "Wolds" district, but seems to follow naturally what precedes.

There ought always to be sufficient houses upon the spot to provide labour for the regular work of the farm. This would require about one cottage to every 50 acres of arable land.

As to the choosing of labourers to occupy these farm cottages, I most decidedly say that the farmer ought to be the person to select, deal with, and change, when required, the labourers employed upon the farm. There are some men wanted for special duties, such as foremen, shepherds, &c., and others, where there is machinery, who must be selected; but the labourers generally must belong to the farm, or there would be no security that they would work upon it; for, until every farm is fully supplied with labour, there would be nothing to prevent those who had avoided the cost of erecting cottages from availing themselves of the labour provided by those who had incurred such cost. Further, it is to the interest of the farmer to get as good men as he can, and when he does get some good men he is always very anxious to keep them. For instance, in my case, I have nine cottages at my disposal, and I have had one man 19 years, another 15, another 11, and two others 10 years each, so that in this plan there is but little change, and the men are content and independent. Then, again, the tenants in this part of the country are for the most part yearly tenants; so that if they abused their influence, it could soon be put right. The farmers are also on the spot and can keep a look-out after the moral bearings of the men (and this is a point of some importance), whereas landlords are often at a distance and can exercise no efficient control of this kind. There are also many men to whom no objection can be taken as tenants, but who are objectionable as labourers; and there are men who are always looking after a continual change of masters. The plan suggested of allowing farmers in the first instance to choose the occupiers of these houses, without giving them any further control, would not be of any real use to them. They would have to apply to the landlord every time they wanted a change. This would sometimes be considered troublesome, and might not always be agreed to. It would also create a jarring of interests between the farmer and the labourer, and destroy that mutual good feeling which ought always to exist between them. Also, where new houses have to be erected, they would, most likely, have to be let at a less rent than the interest of their cost would come to, and this loss would, by the arrangement here suggested, properly fall upon the farmer as the price he would have to pay for the advantage of having labour at home.

13. *Mr. J. Searby*, large occupier at Strubby, and Frith Bank, Boston.—I agree with Mr. Epton's views. In my opinion the way to keep good men in the country, and to secure good labour, is to teach the men to speak of "our" not "your" farm, and to get them to identify themselves with it; they must be induced to come to a farm with the intention of staying there, if possible, and not of wandering from place to place. Good cottages are the only means of doing this. But it is an essential point that the tenant should have some security that the cottages built for the accommodation of his farm will really be availble for it. The foreman, shepherd, gathman, and waggoners on a farm are required for special work, and may be described as domestic cottagers. Should any one of them be unfitted for his post, it does not necessarily render him an unworthy tenant to the landlord; but what means has the farmer to provide himself with another man to supply his place (there being often no other suitable house at hand)? To secure good and efficient schools, I think the whole of the inhabitants of a parish ought to have an interest in it, and co-operate in its management. The contributors to each school fund ought to share in the election of managers to assist the clergy in the management of the school.

14. *Mr. John Martin*, farmer.—The advantage of having to go a less distance to his work does not present itself so clearly to the mind of the labourer, as the question of rent, therefore I say that, although it is important to build cottages, it is no use to do so unless you can charge a low rent for them; 1*s.* 6*d.* each is the utmost. If you charge more the labourer will rather live in his bad cottage a long way off. Take Mr. Dear's cottages, built just in Thimbleby parish to supply labour to Wispington, where there are no cottages. He has built six good cottages for 600*l.* He tries to get 5 per cent. for his money; but his men won't come there, they prefer living at a longer distance in a bad cottage and paying less money. One has always been vacant.

15. *Mr. Charles North*, occupies 1,400 acres at South Thoresby.—I employ no girls and only a few women. I should like women for weeding, but they don't care to come. I had three lately for two days' harvesting. I employ all boys that come to me; I have none so young as 8, and I don't use little boys for tenting. All under 12 can get their winter at school. I recommend that system. Masters and clergymen hate the desultory system of schooling; I am an advocate for a mixed system of work, mental and bodily. We tried a night school lately, and got some big boys and grown-up labourers. I went and helped, but the teaching could not be good. There ought to be some further help given to them. Cottages are the great want. I am building some, and my landlord is bound by agreement to give me a certain value for them if I leave; but this is a very exceptional case. It is impossible to make it a profitable investment; and as to borrowing under Government, they clog it with so many restrictions, that it is very expensive to go to them. Statute fairs have been partially abolished hereabouts, by the employers requiring characters; they are quite unnecessary. Register offices are being set up, and I subscribe to establish them. But there is a growing independence about the labouring population; they don't like standing like beasts to be sold. They begin to inquire about their master's character. They are beginning to combine a little for some purpose. I notice it at the threshing machines, and they combine for extra holidays. I had to give one the other day.

16. *Mr. T. H. Vessey*, large landowner, agent, and occupier, Welton Manor.—Labour is very scarce in this district at weeding time. I employ Kenney's (public) gang from Louth. He brings both boys and girls. He is kind to them, and I have no reason to complain of him. If we could not get girls, we should find great difficulty in getting light work, such as pulling "ketlocks" and picking stones, done. I should not like to see their labour interfered with at that season of the year; but they might go to school in the winter. My harvesting is done in a manner almost peculiar to myself. The whole work, leading and stacking and all, is done by contract. My men seem to like the plan. I object to women working with threshing machines. I don't see how they could be fenced, without inconvenience to the working.

17. EXTRACTS from a letter to Mr. Edward Stanhope, from Mr. F. Walwyn Iles, large occupier at Wold Newton. Dated 8th January 1868.

This is a close parish (pop. 189), the Earl of Yarborough being sole proprietor. It has an area of about 1,900 acres, and is divided into two farms of nearly equal extent.

The number of cottages is 26; two of the larger are occupied by the foremen, who each board and lodge about five farm servants, varying in age from 15 to 22.

The married labourers earn on the average 16*s.* a week, exclusive of harvest; have half a rood of garden ground attached to each cottage; pay from 4*l.* to 5*l.* for both, and generally contrive to fatten two large pigs during the winter. There are 12 boys and young lads at home with their parents, but employed regularly day by day in agriculture, of whom six are between 10 and 13, and six between 13 and 18; one is deaf and dumb, the remaining eleven are fairly

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proficient in reading, writing, and the first four rules of arithmetic, which they have no difficulty in keeping up by an attendance twice a week during the winter at the night school.

Three girls worked in the weeding gang last summer; the eldest (16) has since gone to domestic service, the second (14) is almost certain to do likewise during the spring, and the third is only 13, and has regularly attended school, except while at work in the summer.

Two or three women go to work, but only on the average perhaps two days a week, to help upon the stage of a private threshing machine, or occasionally to shake manure, in addition to the weeding. They, as well as the girls, only work on the one farm on which their respective husbands or fathers are employed.

The greatest part of the weeding is done by gangs from Binbrook.

The school is a mixed one taught by an uncertified master, the girls' sewing being superintended by his wife. There are this winter 18 boys and 19 girls in regular attendance. These numbers have only a balance of three children in the parish between the ages of 4 and 10 years in non-attendance. As a rule, the children are not sent to school until they are 4 or 5 years old, and it is exceptional for a boy to leave off before 10.

I would remark, in conclusion, that the wives of such labourers as occupy cottages in Wold parishes in this district, and of which I believe this to be only a fair example, are a grade higher than the class from which public gangs are recruited, and to get them to work regularly in a private gang could only be accomplished by an amount of coercion, which they would resent as oppressive; nor does it seem probable that a young family can be left daily by the mother, without being the worse for her absence.

The young girls of 12 and upwards are, however, sent to find work by their parents during the summer months, and the consequent emancipation from such labour seems to act as a strong inducement to them to go to domestic service as early as possible. It would, in my opinion, be better for boys to attend school altogether until 10 years of age, and they might perhaps, without its being considered a hardship by the parents, attend school half the following year, but beyond that, I should deprecate any interference with their daily labour.

Night schools seem just to supply all that is necessary to enable them to keep up what they have already learnt.

18. *Mr. Joseph Hopkins*, farmer and guardian, Howsham.—I employ children over 10 years of age in singling turnips and potatoes, setting potatoes, and weeding. If girls, they come with their mothers. Their mothers bring them younger at harvest. They would go out boys and girls together, under my foreman; this would be in the summer. In the winter I want boys to cut up turnips for stock. They would be between 10 and 15. At 15 they are hired by the year. Children might go to school all the year till they are 10, we don't want them; from 10 to 12 they might go all the winter; after that they might go a quarter of the year. We won't have them stray days, we must have them regularly; but sometimes we want them six days a week very badly, sometimes only one day.

Parents don't value education. We tried to make our school self-supporting. They wouldn't send their children at all then. Now we say, "unless you come "regularly, you shan't come at all." Night schools don't answer; we tried one, and they were all too tired to come, and lived too far off. Lord Yarborough's estate here is well served with schools, but to some are rather dominant affairs, in the hands of the Church.

19. *Mr. Daniel Mundy*, large occupier, Wootton.—What I say is the great want here is education; the system ought to be changed. There's lots of young lads growing up without any; and then they marry and teach their children nothing. We want the children—I mean the young ones under 11—only three months, and they might go to school the rest of the year. They are now not only ignorant of book-learning, but of everything. I sent a lad to travel by railway the other day, and the moment he got to the line, he set to work and ran after a train which passed him. The cottages here are not what they should be. There's lots with one or two rooms only; and if they have more than one bedroom, they are passage rooms, and when the people get old, they are turned out, because there is no room for them in the place.

20. *Mr. John Brooks*, landowner and occupier, Wootton.—I farm 750 acres, and have five or six lads regularly, not the children of my own labourers. I never do employ those, because, if I'm short with them, I offend the father. I have very little weeding to do; we haven't a tithe of the twitch we had. Women weed for me, sometimes boys and a girl or two. Boys over 10 can top and tail turnips in winter. They work every day, but on Sundays I put the sheep in a fresh fold to eat the tops, and then the boys can get away a little.

21. *Mr. Richard Chatterton*, large occupier at Hallington.—Boys and girls go to weed here at 6 years old, with their families, and stone picking too. Weeding is easy work in the light land. I let it out to one of my labourer's families to do when they like, and even the little ones help. I've a boy now (at harvest) leading horses, who is only 6. Then we let them tent too. And about 10 or 12 they get into regular work on the turnip lands.

22. *Mr. Caswell* (occupies 1,300 acres), Ormsby.—I employ two gangs of women and children to pick twitch, &c., altogether from 25 to 30 of them. They are pu tunder a picked man, the boys on one side, the girls on the other, and are not allowed to mix.

*[Out of six boys leading horses at his farm, three (ages 13, 11, and 10) couldn't read or write. Two (brothers) read and wrote fairly. One could read only.]

23. *Rev. F. T. Wintour*, late rector of Hawerby.—I have seen the great evil of "Statutes" and have often cried out against them. There are several during April in the neighbourhood of Louth. The farm lads and servant girls from 12 upwards will go from one to the other; and, if hired at the first, will often stipulate to go to the others. They have just received their years' wages, and have therefore plenty of money. It is degrading to the servant to be chosen as you would choose an ox, and the immorality that ensues is frightful. Public-houses open early, and by 10 a.m., there will be dancing in all of them, and the lads half-way to drunkenness. Then the next morning will find them repeating it somewhere else. I have never heard any tenable argument for them, and I think them entirely vicious and unnecessary.

24. *Mr. Hibbitt*, innkeeper, Hainton.—At May-day statute some 1,500 people come to Hainton. They are all farm and domestic servants, but I don't believe 50 come to be hired; the rest come for a spree, having been previously hired, but they stipulate to come all the same. I think the statutes in all respects objectionable. We get over some of the evil here by shutting up the public-house at 10, but at Rasen they are kept open half the night. Of course all the bad girls in the country come. The truth is, the farm servants look upon it as a holiday, and even if the hiring was not done at all at that time, they would still come. The farmers might stop them, if they chose, by giving the holidays at different times.

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25. *J. J. Mackintosh, Esq., M.D.*, medical officer to union.—I have practised my profession for 20 years in this neighbourhood, and have paid attention to the working of the gang system and its effects upon the

* All passages enclosed within brackets [ ] are notes made by me.—E. S.

health of the young. Large farmers employ gangs here, small farmers look out for labourers with large families and employ their children. Boys and girls go out at 7 years old to tent, they then go singling or weeding. No physical injury results to them from this work. Their earnings enable them to get better fed and clothed. Comparing them with our workhouse children of the same age, who are equally well fed, equally well (if not better) housed, and nearly as well clad, or even with children of persons in the same rank of life who are not employed in the fields, the comparison is decidedly in their favour as to robustness of health, and vigour. Girls so employed enjoy more robust health, and a greater immunity from the complaints incident to the age of puberty, than girls who are employed in in-door service. I know of no disease which prevails among them attributable to field work, though I have seen boys injured from having to drag turnips for sheep before they were strong enough. From 7 to 8 hours a day, or from 8 till 5, with an hour or an hour-and-a-half at dinner time, I should consider sufficient for the day's work of a boy or a girl between 8 and 13. But I do think that the mental and moral condition of children is injured by their employment at so early an age at 8; they ought not to go before 10. After 10 and till 13 they ought to go to school all the winter, and work all the summer. The farmers could get their work done. Lots of women, who don't go now, would have to work. I think that would be a good thing; the families are always much better off when the wife works a little. There is a chance of their neglecting their young children, but then a better education and training would soon put an end to that. As it is, the labourers don't care for education for their children; if they can earn 6*d.* a day, they send them out. Boys who begin to learn work at 10 learn it well enough; and a boy with education can learn as much in six months as one without it in six years. When a farmer says that too much education spoils a lad, it is because so few have it, and a man who has much of it reads letters and so on for all the village, and is made a village "god." This is sure to make them "uppish" and above their work. One of the greatest sources of evil is gleaning. Young and old are congregated together in one field, and the greatest immorality results. Cottages are being built about here, but the tendency at present is only to replace old ones which are decaying and not to build new ones.

26. *James Dixon, Esq.*, large occupier.—When I have any stones to pick I don't employ a gang, but I contract with a large family to do it for me, and they do it by themselves without strangers. Women won't work here as a rule; I have only two working for me now. I employ no gangs, public or private.

27. *Mr. T. Kirkby*, land agent and large occupier at Cuxwold.—I employ a private gang of six or seven boys about 10 years of age. If I could get 15 or 20, I should like to do so, because a man can look after that number as well as six, presuming I have the right man in his right place. If we have a very small number of boys in the gang only, there is but little (if any) profit, as the expense of keeping a man to be a looker on to so small a number of boys, is too great.

The above gang (if gang it is) is overlooked by one of my own labourers, who has a boy in the gang.

I occasionally employ another gang of 12 or 20 more boys from Caistor. These boys vary from 10 to 12 years of age. They walk from Caistor (four miles) and are upon the farm at 8 o'clock; they remain here until 4 in the afternoon, and then walk back to Caistor. They are cheerful and happy, and appear to like their overseer (Goff Johnson) much; and I am satisfied with the work they do for their wages. They are tradesmen's and mechanics' sons. In the summer holidays our number increased by three or four, who wished to earn a few shillings to buy a new hat or something else. This I heard from the parents themselves.

My clerk is time-keeper, etc.; we take an account of the boys through the overlooker, and the boys' wages we pay the overlooker, who pays then to the parents. It might probably be as well to take every boy's name down from the boy himself, and pay his wages to him or to the person whom his parents might direct to receive them. But while all parties are satisfied with the overlooker's conduct, I should not recommend the boys to be put too much in advance upon him; for although the boys have a good long walk, they take some managing, and never appear to be tired; and some of them say they prefer very much coming here to work to running about the streets at Caistor.

I do not employ girls at all but in the turnip-hoeing season; each man sometimes engages a girl (when boys are scarce) to go with him to single out the turnips left in the rows by his hoe.

There is more inclination on the part of the women and children here to work in the house than in the fields, and there is more domestic work done than formerly.

This being a turnip county, boys, when they get to 10 or 11 years of age, are much wanted in the winter. It's not good work for women, and must be done by boys.

I think that Cuxwold, being in the Caistor union, and rated to it, should, in common with all the rest of the parishes, work in the union to employ their own people as much as they can. I think a little encouragement to the young people, to get them employed out of the union house is better than giving too much encouragement in the house, which makes some of them lazy.

28. *Rev. I. G. Overton*, rector of Rothwell.—I have lived here a good many years, and I am certain that the only way to strike at the evils of field work is to forbid all female labour in the fields. First, I'm against all girls working, because they never make respectable servants afterwards. Then I object to mothers going, because they ought to look after their children. But for all women it's nasty, wet, and demoralizing work. Of course, I make an exception for hay and corn harvest.

Four pairs of new cottages have been built here by Lord Yarborough within 15 years; a rood of land let with each.

29. *Charles Winter*, schoolmaster, Caistor.—The children from 8 to 12 years old all leave the school here in March, and don't came back till November, except for an odd day or two sometimes. I'm an advocate for irregular schooling. Even if they come only one day in the year, it's some good; it gives them a bit of discipline. But there are lots of families here who never send their children at all, and they can all afford to do it.

A gang master is looked down on here almost worse (I think) than a policeman.

30. *James Harrison*, labourer.—I was a gangmaster here for many years, but I have not been out with one for six years. What I mean by a private gang is where a farmer gets a lot of women and children, and puts them under one of his labourers, but pays them himself. They are as bad as the public gangs in some ways. One thing is, that the man who is put over them has no reason for caring at all about them or behaving well to them, and the farmers are very negligent as to the sort of man they choose. The children hear a great deal they had better not. Nobody can tell half what goes on unless he's been with them. Plenty of them go four miles from here; some are only 6 or 7 years old, and they are quite tired out before the day's half over. I say put all ganging down; don't let the children go so young as they do. Don't let girls go at all; if you do, it's easy to separate them from the boys. But I say the lasses ought not go. It's in the fields and nowhere else that they learn what's bad. Children ought not to go till they're 10; there are plenty of men out of work, who can do any work that must be done.

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31. —. *Colbeck*, gangmaster.—I take out a public gang, but I don't know whether I shall any more, as I don't know how it's to pay me without mixing them. I can't get boys enough. But mine isn't all "ta'en" (contract) work. I only do stone picking by ta'en work. That lasts all the winter. But weeding, pulling swedes, and so on, I do by the day. The farmers pay me by the day, and I take the children. I give the farmer a book with the price in it which each boy has cost me, and he pays it. I do this for Mr. Davy and Mr. Marris, of Thoresway, Mr. Brooks, of Caborn, and Mr. Brooks, of Croxby.

[Colbeck described as "a swearing, blustering fellow," "going on in too indecent a sort of a way "with them, swearing and using bad language." His gang composed of "women, men, boys and girls." He "gallops home on a galloway, and leaves them to "come home by degrees." They go to Thoresway and Stainton Top (five miles).]

32. *Mrs. Colbeck*, wife of above.—The farmers want hands and solicit the poor people to send their children. My two youngest bairns went out to pick twitch very small. They were no more than 5, perhaps 6. Not in a gang. They went to the farmers. We all like our children to go out so soon as they can "addle" (earn) a few pence.

33. *John Taylor*, labourer.—I take out Mrs. Baker's private gang. I have seven or eight boys, never any girls or women, and I stay with them all day till they leave. They would be 10 or 11 years old. They go at 6 and come back by 6. They have a good hour for dinner, but no "andrew" (time for lunch). I have a "leader" (boy to lead the work) sometimes, to show them how to work, but not often. My boy there (12) goes with the public gang. I don't take him with me, because I have said I never will take any more of my own children. The other boys think I favour them, and it makes bad blood.

34. *George Porter*, labourer's son.—I'm 13. I go with Goff Johnson's gang to Cuxwold, and sometimes with John Taylor's to Cabourn [both private gangs]. They don't pay me themselves, but I go with them. Some gangers are hard, but Johnson is kind to us, and don't beat us; nor does Taylor. I've been three seasons, and my brother John (11) has been two. We get an hour for dinner, and don't have to make up no time then. I got 8*d.* a day. There are no girls in either gang. We had a leader sometimes in Taylor's. I've been to school a bit very winter. [Both these boys could read and write fairly.

35. *Maria Waller* (13), Rothwell.—I've been with Mr. Skipworth's (private) gang here. He's two or three girls and some boys. We have different men to look after us. The man sometimes has a stick. We never have a "leader." We are paid by Mr. Skipworth. I go to school every winter.

36. *Mrs. Mackerill*, labourer's wife, Swallow.—My boys went out last year to Mr. Boreman's, to weed and pick stones. There was seven with them; I believe there was a girl or two. Gilbert Tyson, the gathman, looked after them; but he did'nt pay them. This year one of them has been to Mr. ——, and one of his labourers looked after them. I never heard any complaint; he liked going.

37. *Mr. J. Kirwan*, relieving officer, Caistor.—Down this hill I see hundreds of labouring people pass at night, coming back from Swallow, Thoresway, Cuxwold, and so on. Some of them go four, five, or even six miles. There is a great want of cottages in the surrounding villages. In the parish of Clixby (which, however, is not far off), there were three farmhouses and no cottage, till Mr. West built a double cottage lately.

LOUTH, AND NEIGHBOURHOOD.

38. *Mr. W. R. Flint*, relieving officer, Louth.—Out of 105 women confined of illegitimate children during 1857-1861, in the Louth union, no less than 57 were farmers' servants. I attribute this very large proportion to :—

(1.) The male servants in farmhouses being without any effectual control, and being at liberty to do as they like after supper.

(2.) The statute fairs, and I only wonder that these do not produce worse results.

(3.) The requiring corroborative testimony as to the paternity of a child, which I look upon as an injustice to the female, and a direct advantage to the male.

(4.) The low state of moral government at home, mainly owing to the crowded state of the houses. In a house at Spital Hill, Louth, I found one bed-room only, with two beds three feet apart. In one of them slept a boy of 14 and two girls of 15 and 11. It is needless to state that both girls turned out badly.

39. *Mr. Thos. Sowerby*, occupier of 2,400 acres in one farm at Withcall (P. 121.)—I employ both public and private gangs in spring and summer. Nearly all are women and young girls. They come from Louth, four miles; they work from 8 to 6, with one hour for dinner. In my private gang none of the children are under 10. They are looked after by a man with one arm. I have 17 cottages on my farm, but three are taken up as lodging houses for the farm lads, eight in each; that is not nearly enough for my requirememts. I have 11 or 12 boys in regular work all the year, besides the young waggoners. Their education is not good. For those children living in cottages on my farm there is Welton school not far off, to which they might go.

40. EXTRACTS from return sent to the commission by Mr. Sowerby.

Number and age of persons employed in private gangs on my farm :

Males :	
Between 10 and 13 - - -	4
„ 13 and 18 - - -	4
Over 18 - - - - -	4
Females :	
Between 10 and 13 - - -	4
„ 13 and 18 - - -	12
Over 18 : -	
Married - - - - -	4
Unmarried - - - - -	4

They go four miles from their homes to their daily work.

41. *Rev. Henry Hall*, Roman Catholic priest, Louth. —Private gangs are, as I hear, as bad as the public. One reason is that the private gangmaster has no interest in the children over whom he is put; it is nothing to him what they think of him; and their employment depends on his good word. I am told that they will often use very bad language and even excite the boys to talk badly before the girls and women. But of course, they won't tell you much about it; it's bread to them to go. As to compulsory education, I can only say that it is a question of clothes and especially of shoes; and I don't see how to get over that difficulty.

42. *Catherine Cummings*, 17, labourer's daughter, Louth.—There are lots of bad girls go in Meredith's (private) gang (to Tathwell). I've never been there; I never could go. I go to Withcall (four miles) with Foster or Carey. Carey's a nice man; he won't take bad girls. Those Tounleys, he wouldn't take them in his gang, because they're bad girls. I am sure no harm would come of it, while he's there. I used to go to school, and can read and write a little. [Fairly.]

43. *Jane Ellis*, 13.—I go to weed to Mr. Meredith's. There'd be 20 girls and women. The youngest about 11; only one boy, Bill, he's 15. Mr. Bonnet looked after us. He had no whip. I first went when I was 10. I can't read or write; nor can brother (15).

44. *Annie North*, 15.—I go in Kenney's (public) gang. I can't read or write.

45. *Martha Arlis*, 13.—Went stone-picking at Mr. Meredith's. Bonnet looked after us. One boy there. Can't read; can write [very badly].

LUDFORD, P. 818.

46. EXTRACT from return sent in by the Rev. Warren B. Hastings, rector.

Private gangs are universally employed in this parish, but it would be impossible to give the exact number so employed. The extreme distance they go is 2 miles. Fifteen or 16 women over 13 are pretty regularly employed. All the boys here over 8 are at school or at work; but in winter about 11 young girls are at neither. The mass are, however, practically not being taught at all. We have no night school, owing (1) to want of teaching power, (2) to the distance of some farms, (3) to the indifference on the part of the farm-lads.

This is an open parish, and the ownership of the cottages is mostly in the hands of persons of the lower middle-class. A good cottage is quite the exception, although on two or three of the larger holdings there are good ones.

46. *Mr. W. Wingate*, farmer.—I employ eight or nine boys for weeding in the spring, and the same man generally goes with them; but as it is not always so, it would be a considerable inconvenience to me to have to get a licensed gangmaster. I pay them myself. I never employ a girl. In my opinion no girls under 13 ought to go; at any rate, if they do go, the principle should be that no girl shall be employed in the fields along with a boy or man, except her father. I should, of course, except harvest work, and all "family" work.

Few boys are fit to do the winter work with turnips before 12, but then they are wanted regularly all the year, and we could not do without them.

One important point to consider is the day and hour when they are paid. They ought to be paid on Friday, and I always do so; but it is often done on Saturday night, which leaves them no time to buy what they want.

47. *George Brown*, labourer.—I took care of Mr. Drake's gang this year. There were 23 in it, boys and girls, two grown up. I did not pay them. One of these was worse than any of them in learning them foul discourse and encouraging them to be chaffy. I wouldn't have them two any more after three days, I told master. They was all bad to keep in order, and used bad talk; but how can you wonder? it's what they hear at home from their parents, many of them. If you'd heard their talk, and seen their ways, you'd say it's a bad thing for boys and girls to go together. That's what I always say.

48. *Mrs. Cooke*, labourer's wife.—My boy George went to Drake's this year and was put under George Brown. He's turned 7 now, he wasn't when he went weeding. He went to pull ketlocks. There was others as young as him. He got 6*d.* a day, and had to go from 8 till 6. My other two children (9 and 12) went to Mr. Child's to weed with the shepherd. He always took them. There was 15 of them, boys and girls, and women. Mr. Child paid them in this way. He sent the money to Spurr's (a grocer in the town) once a fortnight, on a Saturday, and the children fetched it. It was often 11 at night before he got it. They had no "leader" (boy to show the work to the others), but I have known a leader sometimes. My boy of 7 can't read. The one of 9 can't either. The one of 12 reads middling but can't write.

49. *Jane Evlin* (14).—Went to Drake's this year. Master paid us; Mr. Drake. There was lots of boys and girls. Brown carries a stick. We went at 8. [Could read tolerably, and write her name.] I went to school last winter.

50. —. *Riggle* (10).—Went to Mr. Wingate's with James Oliver to weed. Mr. Wingate paid us. There were only boys. Oliver carried a stick. Never went before. [In neither case was there the least complaint of ill usage.]

51. *John Kingswood*, labourer.—I don't like the lasses to go to work so much; nor boys or women. There's lots of men out of work, when women and boys can get it. It's because they're cheaper. At weeding time it is so, and at turnip-dragging time in winter; women do it.

TEALBY, P. 863.

52. *Rev. Field Flowers*, vicar.—Fifty or 60 women and children (including those in occasional work) are employed in field work here. Of the females over 18 so employed, 16 are married, two unmarried; one between 13 and 18 is in regular work. The work for the younger ones is occasional only. The average distance to their daily work is two miles. In one family the boys go quite four miles. It would be well if the hours of work were limited, including the walk to and fro in the day's work.

The largest families get into the worst houses. My next-door neighbour has seven children. His mother, who is well off, has offered to pay the rent of a larger one; but, though there are such untenanted, he cannot get one. Landlords dread families. The houses generally have two bed-rooms and two rooms below; a quarter of them are under tradesmen, but with no obligation to deal. Labourers seem to prefer them. Rent from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* About 25 are unoccupied.

The young persons of the labouring class now growing up are, except about 8 or 10, insufficiently educated. They read decently, write with difficulty, sum a little, but they are insensibly losing it. Only seven boys over 10 in winter, and four in summer, are on the register of my day school.

53. *Miss Boucherett*, Willingham House, near Market Rasen.—My experience is derived from the parish of Willingham, where I have always lived. The whole of the land belongs to Mr. H. R. Boucherett, my brother, and there are here no public-houses and no gangs. In Tealby, the adjoining parish, from which my experience is also derived, there are three public-houses, and public gangs in a flourishing state. I believe the public-houses are the feeders of the gang system, and of half the overwork and hardships of the women and children. The men are not bad, but when the bottle is held to a man's mouth "he cannot help but drink."

Field work is often rough for girls, but it is not necessarily at all immoral; still, even in private gangs, women and girls should work apart from boys, and be superintended by a woman. What has given it a bad name is, that it is the only means girls who have lost their character have of getting an honest living. Field work is very good for health, except when corn and high turnips are weeded in cold weather. But this is still more unpleasant than unwholesome, and they often leave it. It is very little gain; it ruins their unsuitable clothes. They might dress much better; they might wear leather gaiters stuck in their skirt, as the Scotch do. It is bad unprofitable work, but hunger is worse. They don't go unless poverty drives them to it. The amount of field work they do in general does no harm to their morals or their training. Where the husband drinks, or the family is very numerous, they must do more or starve; but even then girls often make good servants who have worked all their childhood in the fields. No restriction should therefore be placed on their employment. Do not imagine that the immorality of these country places depends on any sort of employment. It depends on bad laws which leave young girls and women of the labouring class without protection, which is enjoyed by all who have a little money. The farmer or shopkeeper who ruins a girl may be made to pay; there is really no way of making a labouring man pay. The girl and the parish officer is not allowed to prosecute. In all these cases when an order is made on the father, the relieving officer should be bound over to prosecute if the allowance is not regularly paid to him, and through him, to make sure of his knowing. For a man to leave the country under

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such circumstances without making provision, through the parish, for the child, should be made severely punishable, and in that case the child should have a claim on the parish. But women ought not to go to threshing machines at all; our farmers have found that out, and they hardly ever do.

Children should be employed during the summer months at 10 years old; it makes them stronger and hardier; they may even do a little tenting at 8 or 9 years old. The hours of work are from 8 to half-past 5 or 6 for women, from 6 to 6 for boys. They are little complained of, yet I think a woman's day's work should be legally two hours less than a man's, that she may get the meals ready, and do the household work.

A penny a week for schooling can be paid by the very poorest, even for five children at once. The charge here is usually 2*d.*; most people can pay that.

The guardians give out relief extensively to orphans under careful supervision. These children are being industrially educated by the cottagers' wives, under the supervision of ladies, who hope thus to produce a high class of servants in time from those who, when when brought up in workhouse schools, were often lost to the respectable classes. About 17 girls are being so taught. We have a good village library; the book which wears out quickest is "Keith on the Prophecies."

I consider the great defect of English village schools to be the junior class. All children should read at 7 years old, and read well by 9. It is as easy to teach them to read at 5 or 6 years as at 7 or 8, and the advantage is immense. An infant circulating library should be placed in every school consisting of pure nonsense, and fairy tales in large letters, Cock Robin, Mother Hubbard, nursery rhymes with prints; then half the children will teach themselves and each other.

No sink or other communication with drains ought to exist in labourers' houses. The inhabitants have not intelligence enough to keep such things in order. The more intelligent of our poor know this, and beg not to have sinks; all refuse should be carried out by hand.

54. *Mr. George Pilley*, farmer.—I employ two boys regularly; one of 11 has been three years with me, all the year through. He tents corn, leads horses, chops up thistles, and does odd jobs. He earns 5*s.* a week. He's a son of one of my labourer's, who has a large family, and I employ him because the father wishes it. I don't have them so young, except in such a case as that. I think we ought to have them regularly at 12.

Boys and girls ought not to be allowed to work together under any circumstances, except for family work; it's just the same with the private as it is with the public gangs; it's as bad in one as in the other to mix the sexes. As for not allowing them to go before a certain age, it would be a good thing, but very difficult to carry out. Parents would make the children out to be older than they are, just as they now make them to be younger, when they come before us at the union. And how is an employer to know the truth, unless you've some register or list somewhere, which any one could refer to at once. It will be very hard upon employers unless you have it.

55. *John Woolley*, labourer.—I took a gang to Mr. Brice's this spring. There was girls as well as boys. I paid them myself on Saturday nights. But I used to tell Mr. Brice that one was worth 6*d.* a day, another 8*d.*, and then he'd add it up, and give it me with my own wages. I consider children are fit to do ketlock pulling at 7 years old. And how are we to live, if they don't go? I pay 6*s.* 8*d.* a week for flour for ourselves and five little children; and if a wet day comes, or two or three, how are we to get on?

Women's better at home than with the threshing machines I say. They get so careless, and they get hurt and cut about just from crossing the "drum" corner for a little bit of gameness. Sometimes the "stage" is no wider than that door for two women to stand on, two feet and-a-half perhaps. That's because the stacks is so close together. The man here often takes five or six women with a machine. They get 1*s.* 6*d.* a day, and do men's work upon the stacks as well as upon the stage.

56. *Mrs. Naylor*, labourer's wife.—My boys George (8 next birthday) and John (6 next birthday) went singling turnips, weeding, and making bands this year. They went with John Wooley's gang (private) to Mr. Brice's; there was girls too. And they went to Mr. Pilley's to weed.

My boys get 6*d.* a day. The biggest has been at school a few days; t'other hasn't. He'll do in one year to go upon the turnip lands all the winter. He won't do yet, so I want him to go to school this winter. My husband works at Stainton (three miles off).

57. *James Barnetby* (7), labourer's son.—Please, Sir, I don't know (how old I am). I went with Mr. (Stephen) Wooley to Mr. Drake's and Mr. Young's at Thoresway (five miles) to weed; girls went too. I'm going potato picking at Mr. Harrison's next week. Mr. Frow will gang us; he's a labourer. Mr. Harrison will pay us. Barnetby's where I live. [Could read a very little, not write.]

58. *Mrs. Barnetby*, mother.—Don't know how many children I have at home. There's Jem *—*—I can't tell. It may be eight; it may be six, no, its more than six. [The house they lived in had one bed-room only.]

BINBROOK, P. 1,334.

59. *George Neale*, labourer.—I am gangmaster to Mr. Iles. I go to no one else. I pay the children, not Mr. Iles. When I have many, I generally let my wife take half. I don't know of any private gang in the parish; they are all public gangs. I've heard of the new law. I shall take women and girls only now, because I can't get boys enough. But it's a hard thing not letting boys go with girls sometimes. I've a boy of my own 9 years old, and I shan't be able to take him under my own eye, but shall have to send him with some one else. Then there are cottages built on this farm on purpose to supply the labour for it; but the boys living in them can't come to me, but have to go a long way to get other work, therefore their sisters will be with me. Besides this, I've had some experience in gang work, and the best way to work boys is with a goodish woman between every two or three to look after them. Now I can't do that. And it is no use keeping them apart; they will come together on their way home just the same.

I'm obliged to keep a good 'count of work, because the children at the fortnight's end can't remember how many days they've been to me.

I keep a night school in winter. Boys and girls come to me, up to 16 years old, five nights a week. The people's well off here, and could all afford to send their children to school. I often find them's the worst off that's addling the most wage; they'll draw their money from me every night and spend it. I get so much support in my school, that I think I shall give up work, and start a day school. [This man was not much of a scholar himself. He taught reading, a little writing, and summing. There was a very small National school in the parish, charging only a 1*d.* a week. "The other schools were entirely conducted "by the working class, whose education did not "exceed reading, writing, and a mild attempt at "figures."]

THE CLIFF AND HEATH DISTRICTS.

(North and South of Lincoln.)

[The employments of women and children in this district are much the same as on the Wolds.
A few public gangs, especially on the Heath. Many private gangs. Boys and girls sometimes go as young as 7 to weed; boys of 8 or 9 lead horses at harvest.]

60. *Colonel Amcotts*, landowner and magistrate, Hackthorne.—The whole moral tone of farm servants in Lindsey, at all events in the neighbourhood of Lincoln, where I act as magistrate, is deplorably low. They know nothing of delicacy, little of decency, and are not in the least aware of incurring degradation by standing in the market place at statutes to be hired. Bastardy is not looked upon as a disgrace in woman, nor is any discredit thrown upon the offending man. For character many farmers care nothing, or next to nothing. Many years ago—say nearly 20—a "Servants' Amalgamation Society" was founded for Lincolnshire, of which I am President. We have, nominally at least, register offices in every town in the county, and it has done good by keeping some women away from statutes; but the institution is, I might almost say, moribund, though still supposed to be in existence. The statutes have not been superseded by our register offices, and where hirings take place they are chiefly for domestic, and not farm, servants. By the old law of Elizabeth the parish constable brought the farm servant to the statute to be hired, with his character; but now all this is at an end, and character is not considered an essential, nor does the State any longer take cognizance of it. Undoubtedly the hiring system might be much improved, but unluckily the demand for labour is above the supply, and men must be had, whether with character or without. The farmers do not exercise a proper moral supervision or influence over their men in most instances. I think there is too little sympathy between them; and it is becoming more and more the fashion for large farmers to place their servants entirely with their foreman, thus losing all sight of them (morally) themselves.

61. Letter from Rowland Winn, Esq., landowner and magistrate.

Appleby Hall,
August 24, 1867.

"Dear Mr. Stanhope,

"In reply to your question about the 'statute' system, I am confident that the immorality caused by it is far greater than by the gang system as practised about here; a large proportion of the illegitimate children date from the statutes. The objections to it as at present practised are, I think, amongst others—

"1st. That the system of men and women standing in the street to be hired is a degrading one; they are judged of, like horses, by their points, and character is seldom, if ever, taken into consideration.

"2. That it creates a kind of vagrant population, who lose all home ties, and, as a general rule, never remain more than one year in the same place.

"3. That it increases very much the difficulty of education, as after they come to a fresh place it is some weeks probably before the clergyman or school authority can get hold of them (if, indeed, they are ever able to do so), and they never can have the same influence they have with ordinary parishioners.

"4. That it is a decided discouragement to landowners in building (as I contend they ought to do) sufficient houses to contain the population necessary for the ordinary work of each parish, as if hired servants can be got from large villages or small towns fewer cottages are necessary. I should like to see statutes abolished, and in place of them—

"Register offices to be established (perhaps licensed), as is now commonly done for household servants.

"Hirings to be made legal at any time of year or on any day.

"No hiring to be legal or enforced by justices except it be made in writing on some form to be established by law.

"Such form to be accompanied by a certificate of character from preceding master or masters.

"None to be able to hire themselves out who could not read and write, or could not produce a certificate to show they had attended regularly at school for a time to be fixed.

"I think the effect of some such regulations as these would be, in the long run, that men would not have the same temptations to change, that they would continue where they were if they had no real cause of complaint, and that a farmer would hire only when a servant left him, and not change his whole establishment regularly on a particular day in the year.

"I would let them hire for six, nine, or 12 months, or perhaps even longer if thought necessary, but the service to continue for a month after the fixed term unless a previous month's notice was given, and after the term to go on from month to month until notice was given. I think the effect of this would be that men who had nothing just to complain of would remain on indefinitely.

"Yours, &c.,
"Rowland Winn."

62. *Captain Philip Bicknell*, chief constable for Lincolnshire.—It has always been the custom to attribute the immorality and all the bastardy in the county to the statutes. For this reason I have for six years had a return made of all affiliation cases, showing the place where the intimacy is alleged to have taken place.

Year.	No. of Applications to Justices.	Where alleged Intimacy took place.		
		In Service.	At Statutes.	At other Places.
1861	280	117	1	161
1862	275	101	5	166
1863	280	103	2	173
1864	272	116	1	155
1865	287	105	2	179
1866	247	88	4	155

I attribute a great deal of the bastardy to the lads and girls being herded together in farmers' houses without any control; and also to the annual feasts, when all the members of a family come together with nothing to do, and crowd into the cottages. From the police reports I receive, I believe the statutes to be uniformly well conducted. The public-houses are always closed at 12. One advantage of statutes is that it enables the farmer to see the class of men and women whom he is about to hire; their health and strength being very important, as they are going to be bound to him for a year. Besides this, it gives the servants the chance of getting clear away into fresh service, away from a bad set, or from bad masters, whereas the register offices are far too local in their effects. I am afraid the having had a child is not in the way of a woman's getting married afterwards, among the poor.

63. *Mr. Charles Bramley*, Fiskerton Hall.—I am farming about 2,300 acres of land, chiefly arable, and employ about 20 boys between the ages of 10 and 14 about 20 between 14 and 20 (who lodge with the foreman), and 20 married women and widows. I object to employing boys under 10, as I think they should be at school; I also refuse to employ unmarried

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women or girls, as they ought to be in domestic service as soon as they leave school. Although I have practised this some ten years, I doubt whether it would be applicable to all districts, especially those where potatoes are grown, as in those parts there appears to be a necessity for the employment of girls; but on no account would I allow any girl above 15, or unmarried female, to be employed in the fields, except at harvest. I have found that when a mother keeps a daughter of that age at home instead of at service, the girl is almost sure to go astray.

Want of cottages has given rise to the gang system, and also to increased employment of women and children, as it has drawn the young married men into the towns. Most of the land I occupy, up to last year, belonged to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and by arrangement with them I have a full supply of cottages for my labourers, nearly two to 100 acres. These cottages are in my own hands, and let by me at a rent averaging 4*l.*, with one-sixth of an acre of garden.

The employment of children necessitates constant attendance at certain times, and these vary in different districts, according as they are turnip-growing or not. Therefore, to apply the principle of the Factory Acts, would be simply to prohibit the labour of these children, a result much to be deplored by the labourer with a large family. I think, therefore, it would be better to prohibit their employment under the age of 10 or even 11 years (if deemed necessary), as they would then have time to obtain sufficient instruction to suit their circumstances in life. All, I think, they require is reading, writing, and arithmetic, that is, as far as books are concerned; but the principal part of education is (I conceive) teaching the child habits of industry, and truthfulness and quickness. It is not necessary to educate those children in agricultural districts as if they were going to be mechanics; but should any boy show great aptitude, there are facilities for him to obtain what he requires. Every parish ought to have its night-school, and these ought to be encouraged by Government aid. Give a lad these advantages to start with, but the true education after all for his calling in life, is when he begins to whistle after the plough and learn how to handle the tools of a farm labourer. Yet the lad will whistle no less cheerfully, nor handle the tools less well, by reason of his being able when at home at night to read the Bible or calculate the little household accounts. The existing machinery of schools appears sufficient, but their maintenance is another matter, and there must be a great alteration in the Government grants before any great progress is made in country parishes. They must be given even where there are not certificated masters; and secondly, the examinations must be made applicable to the class attending country schools. But I would not allow children of even 10 or 11 to go to work unless they could produce a certificate of having attended a school the previous two years, for I fear, if this is not the case, that some parents will let their children run about the streets in preference to paying for them at school. Some of the parents think they are conferring a favour upon you if they let their children go to "your" school as they call it. You may, however, regulate the employment of or educate these children as you will, but unless something is done with the present system of licensing, and the number of public-houses lessened, any efforts for improvement will still receive continual checks to the advancement of the morals of the adult population.

64. *Mr. R. G. F. Howard*, large occupier at Temple Bruer.—The register offices have had one bad effect; they have unsettled the minds of the servants. The keepers of the offices write to servants and say, "If "you don't like your place I know of another that "will suit you," and so they induce them to change, pocketing another fee of 1*s.* by the transaction. I have been served three times in this way. Indeed, it is getting to be the understood thing that if masters pay the offices only the regular fee they are not to be supplied with good servants. Whoever pays best fees is to have the best servants. I don't want the hiring at statutes brought back, but good servants need never go there to get places. Most of them who go there now, go to amuse themselves, and not to be hired.

In this turnip country we require the labour of a large number of boys of 10 and upwards, in winter. In fact, we cannot do without them, and as restriction ought to be placed on their labour after that age at the latest. The great want of the Heath is cottages. My labourers come, many of them, three miles. It is hard upon the employer, and hard upon the men, because as soon as they get old they are turned out of their homes to make place for younger men.

KIRTON.

Population, 2,058.

65. *Rev. J. F. Stuart*, vicar.—I object to the employment of women in field labour, especially to their employment on threshing machines. Only two or three days ago, a girl 16 years old was killed at Yaddlethorpe* on one. Besides the danger, it is very demoralizing for them.

66. *Mr. Robert Askew*, schoolmaster of grammar school.—Most of the parishes round are "close" parishes, such as Grayingham, Northorpe, and Redbourn, and many of the labourers employed in those parishes live here. There is a great demand too for children's labour; those now at school have to resist solicitations. They attend pretty well here from November to March; then work begins, and we see them no more, and at 10 boys will often leave school altogether. There are two or three gaffers (gangers) at Kirton who take out lots of children from 8 upwards; girls, if they can't get boys. "Stone-picking" is done by them, and is "ta'en" ("taken" "contract") work. Weeding, &c., is often done by day-work. The farmers also employ children directly, who are often the children of their labourers. In harvest each labourer takes out a woman and a child to help him.† It is more the small tradesmen's children that go with the gaffers. Women go here, but it's mostly

* Extract from the "*Stamford Mercury*" of Sept. 6, 1867.

Fatal Accident.—At Yaddlethorpe, near Brigg, on the 6th inst., the steam thrashing-machine belonging to Messrs. Foster and Lockwood, of Messingham, was working on the farm of Mr. John Harley. A girl named Eliza Stocks, aged 16, the daughter of John Stocks labourer of Yaddlethorpe, had been cutting bands upon the stage, and when they had just finished a smart shower of rain drove the men to take shelter, and some loose straw was thrown over the drum-hole and the steam partly shut off. The girl had forgotten her knife, and on returning for it it appears that she put her foot upon the straw, which immediately gave way, and her foot was caught by the drum, which dragged in her leg, smashing it to atoms, and the machine was not stopped until it reached her thigh, then it brought the works to a stand. Assistance was on the spot in a moment, but it was more than 10 minutes before the poor suffering creature could be extricated. Every attention was shown to her by the neighbours, and messengers posted off for medical assistance, and the limb was amputated. Medical aid was, however, unavailing, and the poor sufferer died at 3 o'clock on the following morning. The house in which the parents live is a mere hovel, and their only dwelling-room is not more than 10 feet by 12. The family consists of nine persons, who have to live in this room, where all the cooking, getting their meals. and other household transactions have to be done; and in this room, not more than five or six feet from the fireplace, the corpse was obliged to remain. The body became so offensive on Sunday morning that it was absolutely necessary to remove it; and on the return of the six young women from bearing a daughter of Mr. Linley to the grave at Messingham church, they proceeded to take the corpse to Bottesford church, when part of the funeral service was read by the Rev. F. Moon, and the body then left for the inquest on the following morning. The inquiry was held at 12 o'clock at the house of Mr. John Barley, at Yaddlethorpe. The verdict of the jury was that Eliza Stocks, aged 16, died from an accident caused by a steam thrashing machine; that no blame whatever attaches to anyone; that the jury are of opinion, and recommend that women should not be permitted to work on the stage of the machines.

† At a reaping-machine there will sometimes be five men, five women, and five boys or girls. The children make the bands, the women put the sheaf in the band, and the man binds.

only the rough ones that go. The gangs often go to the Trent side (eight miles) in October, but then a cart is sent for them. Many boys are employed here to tent at 7 years old, as soon as they can shout. Girls don't go out so young to anything. The only winter work for them is topping, and tailing, and dragging turnips. Boys of 10 or 11 will do that, and women sometimes, or even girls. There are whole families growing up here in total ignorance, though our school costs only a penny a week, and we find books. There's a population of 2,000, and never more than 80 in the school. It is an endowed school, managed by trustees. Besides this there are infant schools for children under 6, but no other school for the older children. Our register shows the attendance of the children during the whole time they are at school from 7 years old.

The following Table shows the attendance of some who have left the school lately:—

—	Years of Attendance.	Total No. of Weeks.	Average per Annum.
1	5	33	7
2	5	55	11
3	2	50	25
4	2	58	29
5	2	38	19
6	2	38	19
7	5	54	11
8	2	25	12
9	1	13	13
10	4	53	13
11	6	78	13
12	2	15	7
13	3	47	16
14	2	37	18
15	2	28	14
16	3	53	18
17	5	84	17
	50	759	15

Average number of weeks attended by each child during their school career - - - } 45

67. *Mr. Fowler*, farmer.—I get a gang from Kirton, of boys only. I never let girls come in it. George Beverley brings it; he puts down in a book the names and the wages of the children, and I pay them to him. I have always found that what he charges he gives to them. At 10 I take boys all the year, if they are strong; they drag turnips in winter. Then at 12 I teach them ploughing, and they can go out to service at 13 or 14.

68. *George Beverley*, ganger.—I take out boys, never girls, in gangs. I get work for three or four months at weeding time, and then in autumn to take up potatoes and such like. But for one "ta'en" job I get I take 20 day jobs. At weeding time I go mostly to Mr. Fowler's. At other times I go to the Trent side, but then the farmer sends a cart and I take my own too; we start at the same time, and come back as usual. Parties send to me and say, "Could you get us so many?" and I take them as many hands as they want. Then I tell them how many hands I have, and what I pay them, and they give me the total with my own wage besides. I often get 3*s.* 6*d.* a day; Mr. Fowler gives me this. I look after the children all day. Sometimes I get a constant job, and pay the children what I like; but I've only had a week of that this year. I have seen the new Bill, and I don't think it will touch me. I don't know if I shall take out a licence. I've often thought about the education of the children. I've looked after myself since I was 11 years old, and I put myself to school out of my own earnings. They all ought to go, but I knows lots about here growing up quite ignorant. I've had some of 16 and 17 in my gang who didn't know a letter from a haystack.

69. *Mrs. Bland*, labourer's wife.—I have four children, and only one chamber here. My husband's gone harvesting, and won't come back till Saturday night. One of my children goes out to weed a little; she's going 11. Has been a little bit at infant's school; can read a little, can't write. Write her name? No. None of the others have been at all. They shan't go in gangs. I've been in the fields at Mr. Fowler's and heard Beverley's gang at work. They talk dreadful, and insult folks as they pass along the road. Besides, they seem to be working for him and not for themselves.

70. *Mrs. Rhodes*, labourer's wife.—I've nine children, and two chambers to live in. I'm a scholard. My children ought to go to school; they don't, none of them. My daughter in service (14) can't read nor write. My husband takes contract work and employs other labourers. But I can't afford it.

[Her husband was far better off than an ordinary labourer.—E. S.]

WILLOUGHTON.

Population, 620.

71. *Rev. E. C. Wilshere*, curate.—Cottages here are as a rule very bad, badly built, and badly cared for; they are chiefly old. There are 60 with one bedroom, 38 with two, and two or three with three bedrooms. The ventilation is almost universally defective. In many cases a ladder, instead of a staircase, leads to the bedroom, to the danger of children. The drainage, though better, is still bad. At least 12 of the occupiers take in lodgers. I object very much to the May Day holiday; the cottages are then crowded beyond belief.

72. *Mrs. Brown*, carrier's wife.—Children from 8 upwards go to work in the fields here. They begin early in May to weed and to pick stones; this lasts till the end of June. Then in August there's harvest, and after that gathering potatoes for three weeks in October. Besides these there is tenting, and odd jobs, and dragging turnips in winter for the boys after they're 11. For weeding, a farmer will send out a gangsman or "staged" (steady) woman to collect children, and to mind them at work. They have to get to work at 8 and go on till 5. An hour for dinner; no "andrews" (time for lunch). They don't have to go more than two miles ever. Boys and girls will get from 5*d.* to 8*d.*, women 10*d.* Sometimes women will be by themselves, sometimes with the children. My boys were always in the gang; I am not afraid of their going. They go to Mr. Little. His gangsman is not a converted man, but a steady man. He carries a little whip. I dare say he uses it; but it's mostly for fright, to get the upper hand of them. Mr. Little pays the children himself, not the gangsman. Women get a great deal of work; they sort potatoes in the "pies" (heaps) in winter. Mr. Nicholson has three regular women all the year. Fanny F. goes; she's 70, and an old "standard;" but he gives her full pay. They go to the threshing machines; I never will go, I don't like them. In potatoe gathering the field is divided into "stints," the biggest boy has the biggest "stint," and so on. Every "stint" must be clean picked before the horses, which are turning up the potatoes, come round again.

73. *John Andrews*, labourer.—Children from 8 upwards go in the gangs here. The farmer sometimes pays the gangsman at the end of the week, but the wage of each child has been agreed on. The gangsman gets 2*s.* 6*d.* a day; it's a tiresome job. He's obliged to hit some of them, and he carries a whip, or else a leather strap. When that little one of mine grows up she shall go, and if he hits her because she's saucy, as some are, he will be right. I don't mind the gangs so long as the gangsman is strict with them; it's good for the farmer and its good for the children. The gangsmen are middling strict with them; they generally put the girls on one side and the boys on the other. Farmers pick out a regular man to be gangsman.

Lincolnshire.

Mr. Stanhope.

C.

BLYBOROUGH.

Population, 209.

74. *J. G. Little, Esq.*, landowner and occupier of 1,700 acres.—We want all the children as soon as they are old enough to be available. In May, June, and July we want them to weed. The October weeding, not being so careful, is generally done by a few women. When we want children to weed we send out a steady man to collect the wives and children of our labourers and others; he looks after them all day, working with them. Sometimes men, women, and children work together. More often the women and girls are separate; over them we should not put any one, but every girl would be between two women. The children would be from 8 upwards, but sometimes none of them are girls. We pay them ourselves. We have three or four such lots for weeding. They want a little more discipline, but it's difficult to get men who have sufficient authority over them. They don't like to touch them because the parents would complain. Turnip hoeing is piece-work. Each man brings a boy to help him. In the spring boys are wanted also for leading horses. A boy can lead a single horse at 9; I've seven boys doing that now. After 10 years old boys are wanted as much in winter as in summer, for topping and tailing turnips for sheep. Without those boys we should not have labour sufficient. Their only chance of education is in night schools. My son teaches our boys two or three nights a week. Girls are not wanted at all in the winter. I like girls to work; I don't think it spoils them for being household servants.

75. *John West*, labourer.—I am one of Mr. Little's labourers, and sometimes take a gang for him. We have few girls; mostly boys from 8 upwards. I take a stick, and use it sometimes. They come at 6, girls rather later. Leave at 6; one hour for dinner. No "andrew."

76. *Charles Torry.*—I'm 12. I work regular for Mr. Little at 8*d.* a day. I dragged turnips last winter. Before that went weeding three or four seasons with George Pickering's lot. [Reads and writes. An orphan brought up by strangers.] Can't sum. Live in Willoughton. Don't know England.

HIBALDSTOW.

Population 775.

77. *Rev. F. J. Jeremie*, vicar.—There is no school here, the nearest is at Redbourn, 1½ miles off. I object very strongly to the employment of women, and sometimes very young women, to assist at the threshing machines. From this cause accidents are of frequent occurrence, their dress in most cases getting entangled in the machinery. Last year in this parish a young girl, working for the first time in that way, was drawn into the machine and died two or three days after from the terrible injuries she received.

78. *John Jeffery*, labourer and clerk.—Boys will go to tent at 6 years old here; then with horses at 8, if they are well grown. Girls will go at 8 or 10 to weed carrots, &c., and get 4*d.* at day. A boy, if strong, will get 8*d.*; so that they get all the girls they can to weed. They go in lots of 10 or 20 and the foreman will look after them. But it's odd days only that they go. There's no regular work for girls; but there is for women. Men are often out of work while the women can get it, especially at weeding time, or at the threshing machines. Women will weed better than men if they are used to it. At threshing time it's hard to get hands enough, and the women are wanted.

79. *Mrs. Standiline*, labourer's wife.—I work a little all the year, may be. First I go weeding about latter end of April, then there's harvest, and then the threshing machines all the rest, on and off, as long as there's ought to thresh. I get 1*s.* for weeding, and 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* a day for threshing, but then I go at 6.30 a.m. and work till 5 or 6. Generally I wouldn't go till 8. I don't mind the machines. I never saw no accidents. It's very hard work.

NORTH CARLTON.

Population 163.

80. *Samuel Slater, Esq.*, owner and occupier of the whole parish.—Employs no gang here, and no boys or girls for weeding. Men do it for him. Two or three of his men come from Saxelby; the rest live here, except Irishmen. He employs a great many of them, they lodge in the granaries and places. He has a cookshop for them. He thinks the children have too much education already, they don't make good servants now. All the children here go to school; to South Carlton (a mile off). There is no school here.

WELTON.

Population 692.

81. *Mr. W. S. Eddison*, relieving officer for North district of Lincoln Union.—I was for 17 years schoolmaster at Welton and gave up that appointment this year. I knew of one public gang there; a Mrs. Priestley took it out for a time. I noticed the effect on the school children, even if they only went for a fortnight. They came back rougher and used words they never knew before. They have admitted to me "—— used it" and he laughed when we did. Some of the farmers at Welton Heath have lads and lasses in private gangs. I see no difference in the effect on morals between public and private gangs. Different men are put over the children, but whoever it is, he is never thoroughly responsible for them. I was born at Leeds and lived there some time. I can truly say that there is far more depravity here than there was there. It comes from nobody being answerable for their conduct or caring to check their bad talk and so on. I would never have boys and girls together; but above all things, some one should be responsible for their conduct. I have never heard of any illtreatment. If there had been any, I think I should have heard of it. No boy ought to be employed under 10. Before that age, with nothing but memory to rub at, and no reason, he forgets all he learns in a few weeks. I think it would be far better to keep him at school entirely up to 10, and then let him go from day school altogether, than to let him come only irregularly till a later period. This would be hard on some families, but it would do a great deal of good in the main. The weekly payment at our school at Welton was 8*d.* or 4*d.* (if no writing in copybooks was wanted). Now for agricultural children the rector would pay two-thirds of that sum, or 5*d.* out of 8*d.*, on condition that the parents paid the rest, whether the children went to school or not. The result of this was they never left for an odd day, but only when they could get a spell of work. They valued the education far more than where they can get it cheaper. This plan has been tried at Welton ever since I knew it. Irish labourers are largely employed north of Lincoln, even all the year. There seems to be an objection to give them cottages, so they put them into barns and outhouses. They sleep in sacks. They are made pretty comfortable, and don't seem to dislike it. They seldom bring their wives, one man brought his wife this year to Holton Beckering to work, and he, she, and other men slept in stables, granaries, and where they could. An Irishman of this sort never marries in this country, even though he stays here a good many years.

82. *Mrs. Hardwick*, labourer's wife.—My children go to weed to the farmers (in private gangs). The boy is 14, and the girl 12. They often go boys and girls together. A man looks after them. He sometimes will encourage them to talk badly, my children have told me. Women go too; Mrs. P. was there this year. She's worse than the men. Boys here go to

the turnip lands in winter at 9 or 10; it's too young for them.

[Only one cottage here had three bedrooms, most of them had two.]

NETTLEHAM.

Population 919.

83. *Rev. A. V. Stuart*, vicar.—I am astonished at the great amount of bastardy and immorality here. I think it ensues from the small control exercised over them in farmers' houses, but field work is the origin and beginning of the evil for the girls. Summer work took away 41 children from our school for an average of 18 weeks each. These included 12 boys and five girls of 8 and under, one girl was 6 only.

84. *Charles Barnaby* (8).—I led horses all the summer, and went weeding at Mr. Holmes'. I was 7 then. I was not the youngest there. Isaac Rook was there (just over 6); 12 or 14 other boys; father ganged us. I got 6*d.* a day for weeding, and 9*d.* for harvest. At harvest I went out at 6, and worked till 8 or 9.

[Could read and write fairly.]

85. *Mrs. Borringham.*—I'd sooner let my girl go on bread and salt than go to Mr. Hood's to work. I've heard a deal about his lot; such bad language, and the women fighting, and such like things. He has boys and girls, Irish, and gypsies, and all sorts, whoever 'll come. I have three children, and my husband is ill. We are living on 6*s.* a week; but she shan't go there if I can help it. People that can get anything else don't go there. It's the worst that goes. Some come from Lincoln (three and a half miles). He pays such bad wages too; the women only gets 8*d.* The sheperd takes them out, I believe, but not always. Sometimes they're alone, I should say they don't talk so bad when he's there.

WADDINGTON.

Population 909.

86. Extracts from Return sent to the Commission by the Rev. G. G. Perry, rector, and rural dean.

I don't think any legislation is practicable for private gangs as such, but as to the employment of children in field work generally it is practicable and most desirable.

The state of education among the young of both sexes is very indifferent. Many of the children employed in field labour never learn to read and write. They are usually sent to a Sunday school; but scarce anything can be taught thus, when the body is exhausted from the week's work, and the mental powers are dormant. Taking the lowest standard of a sufficient education for an agricultural labourer, *i.e.*, reading, writing, and some knowledge of arithmetic, with an elementary knowledge of Scripture, and the formularies of the Church, I believe that more than one-half the population is growing up without it. There are probably very few who grow up without some knowledge of the above subjects. My estimate, (there being other schools in the place besides the one over which I have control,) is that during the depth of winter there are from 130 to 150 children at school, the greater part of whom go away in the spring and forget what they have learnt; during summer and autumn perhaps from 60 to 80. The schools are closed for six weeks at harvest. I should say that even at the best time for school there are always some 30 or 40 children who ought to be at school (being not employed), but are not through the negligence of parents.

I believe that of the adult population about one-third can neither read nor write.

I would not attempt to combine school attendance with farm work, but would not suffer children to be employed under 12 years, and then not till they had produced a certificate from (say) a clergyman or schoolmaster that they were able to read and write. There is no parent here who is not able to pay the small charges required for school.

The cottages vary very much here. Some of the old ones have a roomy kitchen and hovel or pantry, with two bedrooms; the new ones have mostly a small (say 10 feet square) front and back room, with generally an out-door hovel and two bedrooms. The drainage, owing to the character of the soil, is easy; a hole is dug for a sink, until what is locally called a "loss" is formed, *i.e.*, a fissure in the oolite rock: this drains rapidly, but the effect is that much deleterious matter gets into the wells. There is often no garden. I have 60 allotments, which I let at a cheap rate. They are mostly the property of small people, little, cheap, and nasty, and let at 4*l.* or 5*l.* per annum.

87. Extract from letter from Mr. Perry, dated January 15, 1868.

(1.) The 60 allotments I alluded to are small (a rood and under), but vary in size. The land is let at the rate of 50*s.* per acre, about what it would fetch from a farmer.

(2.) The demand for allotments is very great. Every one is eager to get land. A great many people in this place rent larger ones than the above-mentioned; some as much as an acre, for which they gladly pay 6*l.* or even 8*l.*, the land being worth 3*l.* at the outside.

(3.) No doubt allotment gardens are in every way beneficial. They furnish vegetables, keep the pig, and also keep the men out of the public-houses in the spring and autumn, when the chief work is being done on them. I believe allotments are to be found, more or less, in most of the parishes about here.

WELLINGORE.

Population 943.

88. *Mrs. Grice*, labourer's wife.—My boys went at 7 or 8 years old to drag turnips and clean them. They went to Mr. Hilton's (two miles). They went soon after 5 in the morning, and got back at 6. Girls don't go on turnip lands; they go weeding only. I think it's better for 'em to be at home till they're 13 or 14; but many of them go at 6 or 7 to tend birds. My boys did. Some of the cottages here is bad. Some of them have no windows in the bedrooms. Mine has; it belongs to Mr. F———. He does nothing for us. We put in the grates ourselves. There's no very good things for poor people in this country. I expect we shall all have to leave it.

89. *Mrs. Chambers*, labourer's wife.—My children go to weed for Mr. Clark, of Ashby, and for Mr. Brooks (both four miles off). My husband goes three miles every day to work. The children have to be there at 9. That's not hard work. Some of the men, a few of them, ride on donkeys. Mr. Morley's does sometimes. No, sir, the meat won't get cold. We've meat sometimes on Sundays, and we reckon it to last all the week. My children can read a bit, not write.

90. *Annie Atters* (12).—I went to Mr. Brooks' to weed this summer. There was 16 of us went; boys and girls. One boy was 9 years old. Grandfather looked after us. We went from here at 7 and left at 5. I got 8*d.* a day. I've been also to weed at Temple, to Mr. Blackburn's (three miles), and to single turnips and spud thistles. My mother's gone to Mr. Brooks' to work now. It's two miles this side of Cranwell.

91. *Sarah Jane Watchorn* (10).—I went to Mr. Brooks' to weed with John Moore. We started at 7. I can read.

NAVENBY.

Population 1,194.

92. *Mr. Robert Bates*, small farmer.—Girls of 7 are fit to go to work, and will do as much as bigger girls. I'd sooner have girls than boys to work; but

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C.

when they get to 12 or 13 they are more wild and audacious than the boys. But I don't like the girls to go; it's bad for 'em morally, and is a bad school for them. And the worst of it is that when they go out to service they don't care about staying there, because they know they can get field work. You can't always get men of good moral character to look after them. Some don't care. Some are as good men as need to live. They don't mind the distance. But I say, don't let the bigger girls go. It's they that corrupt the little ones, and no one else. There's generally plenty of room in the cottages here. They are good. This place supplies the labour for Lady Palmerston's estate at Boothby Graffo, and for Mr. Chaplin's, on the Heath.

93. *Thomas Storey*, schoolmaster.—I've been here 35 years. We don't keep no regular registers. We've from 40 to 70 boys. The girls' school is under inspection; they have 70 on the books. The men and the children, and the women too, go long distances to work. They go to Mr. Blackburn's, at Temple (four miles), and to Mr. Charles', at Ashby (three miles) A good many children go to Ashby. Girls don't go on the turnip lands in winter. Boys and women go.

94. *Elizabeth Wing* (7).—I went to weed this year (one mile only). I went at 6 and came back at 6. I came back to dinner. Mother wasn't there.

95. *Annie Addison* (9).—I went to single turnips. Only girls went. Sarah was there; she's 8. We went at six in the morning. I can read and write.

96. *Benjamin Crosby* (9).—Went out to Green Man Inn (two miles) to weed this year; we went at 6, and left off at half past 5. There was four boys; two girls. Older than me. Billy Chapman looked after us. [Could read and write fairly.]

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97. *Jane Jackson* (9), Welbourn.—[Went singling in private gang.] There was four boys and two girls. We went at 6; left off at 5.

98. *George Clawson* (7), Welbourn.—Went weeding this year; before harvest. We went at 6 and came back at 6.

99. *Louisa Harvey* (10), Welbourn. — [Went weeding in private gang.] There were five or six girls. The boys that always work on the farm were there. They would be 13 or 14. We went at 6.

100. *Ann Hunt* (14), Rauceby.—Went weeding this year; I go swede cleaning too. Got done just before Christmas last year. After that went stone picking. Got 1*s.* a day. No girls as young as me went on the turnip lands. We went to Silk Willoughby, beyond it (about two and a half miles). We go rain or snow. Four or five women were there. We start soon after 6. [Can read and write imperfectly.]

101. *Elizabeth Elmore* (12), Sleaford.—I was all the summer looking after sheep in the lanes; I mean before harvest. I have not been since. I went to work at 6, and left off at 6.

102. *William Fancourt* (9), Sleaford.—Went spudding this year (in a public gang; nine boys and 10 girls,) to Mr. Lowe's. We started at a quarter to 6; left off 20 minutes to 6. An hour for dinner; half an hour for lunch. There was some boys as old as 17 there; some girls of 12, some of 7 or 8. [Could read and write fairly.]

103. *Jane Harrant* (9), Waddington.—Went with Elijah Squires to Mr. Mackinder's, at Mere (three miles). There was 12 of us. We had to be there at 6, and we left our work at 6. I got 7*d.* a day. Got home sometimes at half past 7.

104. *Louisa Moore* (9), Waddington.—[Went weeding in private gang.] Went from home at 6; got home at 7. Left off at 6.

105. *Maria Leary* (11), Waddington. — [Went weeding in private gang to a place one mile distant.] Had to be at work at 6. Left off at half past 5. There was 14 or 15 of us.

RUSKINGTON.

Population 1,089.

106. *Mrs. Wilcox*, labourer's wife.—My oldest boy used to go last year to Mr. Clark's, at Ashby, to work. It's five miles to the lodge. He's 12 years old now. There was him and that Marshall's boy that went all the summer. They used to go from here at 4 o'clock, or 20 minutes after, and wouldn't be back till half past 7. Marshall's wouldn't let their boy go any more after a time. There's some goes now to Mr. Groves' (four miles). My biggest boy used to go there. Many men work at Mr. Clark's and at Bloxholm now. Some of them ride on donkeys. I've seen six or seven ride in of an evening. In the summer there's children as goes there; they walk. My two boys went ketlucking this summer to Mr. Pogsen's, at Anwick Fen. Its four miles, I daresay. My youngest boy's turned 7. He'd go at 6 and come back at 6. George Reast used to look after them. He used to come and get them; and he used to bring me the money. My eldest boy's at Mr. Thurlby's now. He hasn't been home for dinner yet (3 p.m.). I wish he'd come. He's had a bit of lunch; he took it with him. My other little boy is out tending pigs. In the summer time there's lots that goes to work as young as him. They ought to have boys and girls to theirselves. There really is some boys they are that tiresome they don't care what language they use or what they do. I believe last year they had 'em more to theirselves. Mr. Lowe (farmer) likes the girls the best; he gets a great number, and very few boys. My boy of 12 can read and write pretty well.

107. *Harriet Smith* (9), labourer's daughter.—I went weeding and spudding thistles this year to Mr. Lowe's. There were 30 of us; five boys. Willy Lowe looked after us; sometimes Thomas. An hour for dinner. We went at 7.30. [Could read very little, not write.]

108. *Robert Sturton* (8).—Went pulling ketlocks to Newton's this year, from 9 to 5.30. I went to Mr. Pogsen's singling turnips; ever so many of us. Jack went; he's 7. My uncle looked after us.

[Can read a little, not write.]

[Average attendance at school, 116. Of all the children of agricultural labourers on the register only five boys and six girls were over 10.]

DORRINGTON.

Population 467.

109. *Rev. W. Sykes*, vicar.—Some of the labourers here go four miles or more They go to Ashby Lodge (four miles); they're to be there at 6. Some of the boys go to Ashby. Boys are taken at 9 or 10 to work all the year, leading horses and ploughing. Few boys stay at school after 10; their attendance before is very irregular. Part of the parish is two miles off in the fen. The children from there don't come to school. The farm belongs to Mr. Dent; there is one cottage on it. The eight or nine men employed on it come from here.

110. *W. S. Draper*, schoolmaster.—Mr. Elwood fetched away all the older children to-day (Oct. 21). He's taken six boys under 7, and four over; two girls under 7 and four over. They are taken for twitching. Out of 83 on the register of the school an average attendance is 47. Of the agricultural labourers' children we have five girls and one boy over 10, only one more boy over 9.

111. *Mrs. North*, labourer's wife.—My boys (12 and 10) went weeding in May, but they went before that bean-dropping in February. Then Mr. Clark of Ashby lets turnipping to a man by the acre, and he gets the children. Twenty of them will go singling this way. Charles Littler went with them this year. They give 6*d.* a day, and 1*s.* for the one that can single the best. They have three miles to go; many go as far. My boys had to be there at 6. My girl's 14 now. Last week she was at Ashby three days picking potatoes. Five or six of them goes; she'll go

a few weeks now taking up carrots and beets. They can't read or write, any of them. They have to go to work as soon as they can get anything; they begin by going to tent, Sunday and all. So they can't go to Sunday school.

METHERINGHAM.

Population 1,740.

112. *Mr. James Greenham*, owner and large occupier.—I employ a private gang of 10 or 20; they are the children of my own labourers. I don't see why the boys and girls should not go together. I feel so strongly about their education that I am building a school on my property. They can, I think, get as good an education as they want by the time they are 10 or 11, and after that I want them regularly.

113. *Rev. A. Barnardiston*, vicar.—It is curious to find the health of the people not more affected than it is, when we see sometimes seven, eight, and nine sleeping in one room. There are very few cottages here with three bedrooms, and many with only one. There cannot be two opinions about the effect it has on morality; perhaps as many as four sleeping in one bed. The largest landowners have but few cottages, and not always the best.

114. *Mrs. Spight*, labourer's wife.—My three boys worked at Mr. S.'s this year with a lot of girls and boys; four women were with them. Sometimes one man looked after them, sometimes another; they never complained to me. They are 11, 9, and 7. The eldest works for Mr. S. now regular. He leads a horse, and gets 9*d.* a day; 7*s.* a week in harvest. He goes at 6 and leaves at 6; he's at regular work now, so he was last year. He's left school two years; very bad scholar, can't read or write. Try to get him a night school. The other two can't read at all; don't go to school. Sometimes I've money, sometimes I haven't.

115. *Ellen Brown*, 14.—I'm in service. Went last year on the turnip land in the gangs (public). We first cleaned the turnips, and then topped and tailed them. I got 9*d.* and 10*d.* a day. I've been out three summers and two winters. It's very cold work on the turnip land; my clothes would freeze round me. We used to go at 7 in winter and leave off at 4. I never been to school; I can't read or write.

NOCTON.

Population 537.

116. *Mrs. Dykes*, labourer's wife.—My boys (14 and 12) go to Mrs. Toynbee's to work. Boys, girls, and women go all together; my husband looks after them. Mrs. Toynbee pays them. They go from 6 to 6. They can read and write a little; go to night school. I've six children. My father lives with my husband and me; we have only one bedroom.

[This house was one of a row of 12, all with one bedroom only. There are 19 such in the parish; only one in the parish has three rooms. Three others are being built by Lord De Grey, who has just succeeded to the property. "In one very small cottage, where "nine in family lived in one room, the woman, on "being asked how they all slept in their one room, "said, 'when we've all got up the ladder we put "'down the trap door and put a bed upon it.'"

The vicar (Mr. Wilson) expresses himself as struck with "their cleanliness and propriety" in spite of this.]

117. *Mrs. Lunn*, labourer's wife.—My boys went out at 7 years old to weed and tent birds. They went to Mr. Woolhouse's to weed; one of his labourers looked after them. They went among turnip sheep last winter. Girls go for that from Dunston. One (Chapman's) girl was not above 10 or 11. None go from here for that work; it's not fit for them. My boys can read what they write, but they can't do more; they're no scholars. My husband gets 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, and is never short of work. I've eight children, and it's hard to get along. He made 6*l.* 7*s.* this harvest, of which we saved 4*l.*, which went to pay our boot bill; but we owe 1*l.* for that now.

118. *Emma Mereweather* (12).—I went with John Tye to Mr. Howard's to weed this year. Many girls went, boys too; only one woman. Tye carried a stick; he hit us. I got 9*d.* a day. I've been two summers at it.

[Could read a little, wrote fairly; spelt water "warite."]

THE WARP AND CARR DISTRICT.

(Including the Isle of Axholme, Trent Side, and Carr District of Lincoln and Notts.)

119. Table showing the employments of women and children at different seasons.

January - - - - -	Sorting potatoes in fine weather, for women and big boys and girls, generally not under 12.
February - - - - -	
March - - - - -	Same; with picking twitch and setting potatoes for women, and children over 8.
April. Tenting for boys over 7. - -	Weeding corn and potatoes.
May - - - - -	
June - - - - -	
July. Hay, clover and flax harvest. -	
August - - - - -	Harvest gleaning.
September - - - - -	
October - - - - -	Potato harvest for women, and children who can walk.
November - - - - -	Same, and potato sorting.
December - - - - -	Potato sorting.

Women go in some cases with threshing machines in autumn and winter. No public gangs.

120. *George Lister*, Esq., Hirst Priory, magistrate.—Most of the land in the Isle of Axholme, is "warp" land, made by the alluvium of the river being spread artificially over the surface. It is farmed a great deal by small freeholders, who work their own piece of land with the help of their own families. The crops grown on the soil are principally wheat and potatoes, which small farmers will often grow in succession for many years; but they grow also flax, beans, and turnips. This district may be regarded as a very exceptional one, because the hay harvest, beginning in July, runs into the corn harvest, and that into the potato harvest, which lasts till the middle of November; after that there is a great deal of work for children in sorting the potatoes for delivery, and this lasts mostly throughout the winter. During the summer months almost all the population is in the fields, besides many Irish from a distance. Harvest work is piece work. Even at other times they are not hard worked, because the labourers are the masters of the situation, hands being so scarce. In self defence employers require a labourer whom they employ to bring his wife and children in harvest time. I look upon it as a great evil for girls; they have for the

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most part the control of their own earnings, because if the father did not allow this, they would leave and work elsewhere. For this reason, and from the lightness of the work, they much prefer it to household service; but they spend their earnings mostly on dress and finery. They cannot well be stopped from working, as the wages are so very high. All the women go; if they have children, they hire an old woman past work to look after them. No doubt it leads to great immorality, though it is notorious that for some reason or other there is less among the Irish than the English. There are very few illegitimate children among the Irish. The worst evil perhaps is caused by boys lodging in the farmers' houses, who corrupt the girls employed in household work. I don't see why young children under 13 should not be compelled to go to school during four or five months in the winter; there is nothing to prevent it except the high wages they get; they require to be protected against themselves. Children under 10 might go to school all the year, except during the "harvests."

EASTTOFT.

Population 624.

121. *Mr. Francis Sykes*, farmer.—I farm 300 acres of "warp" land, 90 being in potatoes. I employ six boys, and 17 women and girls all the year round. Two only of the girls do not earn "women's wages," being under 16; none of them are under 10 years of age. I never employ any younger, they waste more than they produce. But in harvest time (I mean wheat and potato harvest) younger ones work on my farm; their fathers and mothers bring them. A boy of 14 is equal to a woman, and they are both now (July) receiving 1*s.* a day: in harvest they get 1*s.* 6*d.* or more. In potato harvest time I employ about 60 women and grown-up boys. This would begin in October and lasts about five or six weeks. I pay them by the day. Each woman has a furrow to herself in the potato field, and brings a child with her to help, or if very young, two children. Then behind the line of women I put a man to keep them in order. They are all close together in one long line. I employ my "regular" children all the year, but in December, January, and February they only work whenever it is not too cold to hurt the potatoes. My children have only three-quarters of a mile to come to work. They come at 9 and leave soon after 5, except at piece work, which is their affair. I know that at Whitgift and Swinefleet they often go three miles to work. They generally walk, but all, whether they have far to go or not, leave home the same time. They are too well off and too sure of employment to work hard. Some farmers on small farms work their own children: —— near here did so; they were taken from school about 8, and did hard work, and had long days. His eldest daughter couldn't write till she was 14. I think the out-door work is healthy for them, as hereabouts it is not too hard; it would be better for girls to go into household service. In my opinion they are corrupted by what they hear in the fields when very young. It might be stopped a good deal. I can keep my children well in check, except at potato harvest. Then I tell my man who looks after them "Don't let a man nor a boy take an "oath on my premises," but I cannot keep them in order. Some farmers don't try to do it, it is enough for them if the work is done. I think the greatest evil is that the parents bring them up with too great indulgence, and that at 14 a girl can dress and keep herself, and is independent. In some cases it is not pleasant meeting them on the road home. I make all my boys (from 11 or 12 to 25) sleep in my foreman's house; they used to live with me, till my wife was ill. In harvest time a great many Irish come from Manchester and Leeds; the resident Irish take them into their houses. They often crowd 15 or 20 into a cottage, or a dozen to one small room.

122. *Rev. G. F. Wade*, Incumbent.—I have been here 12 years. In my opinion out-door work is not healthy for women, especially if they are married. It is bad for girls because they learn nothing of household work. Directly the day's work is over they go and walk about the streets in smart dress, and never learn to sew or cook, or help their mothers. Small freeholders run up cottages very cheaply. Sometimes they do so for 50*l.*, and get 6*l.* a year rent for them. There are no provisions for decency or drainage. There are some cottages close by which were passed by the Local Board of Health, for which there is no drainage whatever. I know others, on the soil where the river Don was till we drained it away, which have no drainage. Here I believe a good per-centage could be got for money laid out in building cottages; one cottage here of two rooms lets for 5*l.* 4*s.* a year.

[This was not more than 10 feet square, and its floor was below the level of the street.]

They are so well off they can afford to pay a good rent. Some cottages here are dreadfully crowded, especially by the Irish. I know a case where a farmer had to send for a labourer earlier than usual, and his foreman when he went to the cottage could not push open the door, the whole floor being covered with sleeping people packed close together. The resident Irish pay a large rent for their cottages, and by cramming them in this way during harvests, make money by it.

123. *Mrs. Cockin*, nurse.—I've had six children. My way was to let all mine go to service as soon as I could; at 13. I don't like the fields. There's nothing good to be learnt there. It's the same with them all, weeding or harvest. It's worst when the children and big lads and women are all together. But poor people with large families must do something for bread. My daughter there (Mrs. Bellamy, next witness) is no better for going to the fields; her children's clothes get out of order and all. But the farmers won't have the children without their mothers; particular the girls, so she goes. I know all about it, my mother had a row of potatoes with me at 6 years old. It's bad for women. When Mrs. Slight died they said it was from working too hard; and there were three others too.

124. *Betsy B.*—Had eight or 10 children; she has two now. They all died as babies. A great many babies do die. The mothers give them to schoolmistresses to look after. They don't learn aught. Often a woman will take more than she can manage. I'm not fond of the fields, but I'd go there before I'd take babies. Yes, they do give them Godfrey's (opium), but it's not the schoolmistresses, the mothers give it them before they go out.

125. *Mrs. Bellamy*, labourer's wife.—How many children have I? How many, mother? Hannah's in service now; she went to the fields regular at 9 years old. I could take her for weeding. I would'nt go, but I must, they would'nt have the child else. We'd go from 8 to 6 in summer, and from 8½ to 5 in winter. One hour for dinner. The Irish use dreadful rough language; they mind and not let the man hear it. He don't; if he did he might try to stop it.

AMCOTTS.

Population 374.

126. EXTRACTS from Return sent to the Commission by the Rev. A. Sweeting, rector and diocesan inspector of schools.

Number of females employed in the parish between 8 and 10, 4; between 10 and 13, 8; between 13 and 18, 7; over 18, 21 married and 6 unmarried; total 46.

There is little or no doubt that working in the fields has a bad effect on the morals of females, the greater pay and personal liberty making them prefer such work to domestic service. But, I fear, that it would be scarcely possible to carry on the work of this neighbourhood without female labour.

Some of the old cottages are defective, but the new ones (at present 13 in number) have excellent accommodation. The landlord (Colonel Amcotts) has given considerable attention to it. Most of them have from

half an acre to 3½ acres of land attached to them, and nearly all have gardens. We have very few really poor here.

CROWLE.

Population 2,648.

127. *Mr. John Brunyee*, overseer.—The women and children are the masters here; and they won't work without high wages. The children can find employment all the year in the fields, and there is a flax mill besides. They don't work before 10, except in harvest. They often work 10, 20, or even 50 together in pulling "line" (flax) or potatoes. A man follows with a fork to see that they pick clean, and to take their time and so on, but he can't look after them. He has no influence and can't stop their talking. A woman with them could not keep them in order. The farmer expects the man to do it, but he doesn't. I don't think mixed gangs can be prevented. A farmer must keep his work together because of carting; he could not separate it. The girls are very depraved. Our town at night is very bad; we are worse than we were. The girls won't go out to service, because they become less independent. They spend their money in finery.

128. *Mr. John Forster*, innkeeper and small farmer.—On my farm I would often rather not have the children, but the mothers bring them and won't work for me unless I employ the children. Children under 12 are no good to me. I think the worst employment for children is over "potato pies" in winter. The "pie" is a large heap of potatoes covered up with straw. When the farmer wants to deliver some, he gets a lot of children, old and young, who kneel down round the "pie" quite close together and sort them. The talk is dreadful then. I don't see why all the big children should not be separated from the little ones.

129. *Mr. Thomas Foster*, flax merchant.—I grow flax, but I often buy it on the land. I should pull it in August. I pay by the "score" of sheaves in pulling. The field is open and anyone comes that likes to pull. Mothers bring their little ones, otherwise I would rather not have them unless they were 8 or 10; they often bring them at 6, but rather to take care of them. The work lasts about three weeks. We "stook" it like corn, and then stack it. We beat the seed out, then the stalk is laid on the grass to "rate." We have seed flax now, and spread it dry; we used to put it in dykes and spread it wet. This is done by women. It's dry work now and don't smell as it used. It lasts over three or four months in the autumn.

130. *Mr. Cornelius Maw*, farmer. — At potato "pies" I don't like children under 12 or 13. I don't want such in winter at all. Mothers go with their children for weeding; they often take them out at 8. For line weeding they often take them without their mothers, because it must be done quick. It is a disagreeable thing to go among a company of women at work: the overlookers don't like it, but the women won't have their tongues tied. They are worse than the men at any kind of ribald discourse. Some mothers don't care whether their children are near. You could'nt separate them. We should'nt employ the children unless they were supervised by the women; a clever woman can make a child work.

131. *Mr. Henry W. T. Ellis*, surgeon.—The mortality among infants is very great in this district; 50 children under three months old died during 1865–6. The mothers leave their children to go out to work; even children that are suckling are left a whole day; often 35 children in the charge of one old woman. Sometimes they give them Godfrey's (opium) to keep them quiet while they are out. Twins and illegitimate children almost always die. I know a case here where a woman has had five or six children all of whom have died, having been given opium to keep them quiet.

132. *Mr. John Hastings*, schoolmaster.—We have 50 children in summer. The eldest we have is 10; the average would be 7, but they are younger than last year. In winter we have 80, about 30 would be over 10. Some work half a day and come to school the rest. A good many are kept away by having to nurse young children at home.

BELTON.

Population 1,871.

133. *Mr. Winter Cockhill*, farmer.—I farm 250 acres. I employ six women all the year, and I keep my turnip-cutting for winter so as to give them work. Four of them have been with me over 19 years. In corn-harvest we let out an acre of corn to a labourer, and he brings his wife and child to help. In potato harvest I send a plough across a field of potatoes to throw the potatoes on the ridges. I then divide the field into 15 "stints" and put one woman in each. Each brings a child with her, or sometimes two. The woman gets 1*s.* 6*d.* a day, the child 9*d.* The man with the plough looks after the women. On the whole, I think no immorality results from this. You know there is great bastardy here, but I attribute it to the farmers taking the farm lads to lodge in their houses, and not to field work. For that reason I never let grown-up lads lodge in my house. The children ought to be educated in the winter; up to 12 or 14 they could well be spared. We could'nt spare them in the summer, but it ought to be left to those in the locality to settle that. If good schools were provided they would most of them have the sense to send their children; we have no good one here. They learn nothing at Mr. Burtwhistle's. He has to keep the parish book and is too busy. The great evil of the parish is drinking.

134. *Thomas Burtwhistle*, schoolmaster. — There are two men's schools and several women's schools in this parish. I have 35 in my school now (July); I used to have more. Mr. Skipworth (late clergyman) used to pay for some. I charge 3*s.* a quarter for reading, 2*s.* for writing, and 2*s.* more for accounts. It don't pay. Lots of children here don't go anywhere to school. They would'nt go if there was a free school. Mothers who go out take their children to the women's schools to be taken care of. Some are too young to learn; they sit quiet.

135. *Mary Slight*, schoolmistress. — I have 35 children in winter, not so many in summer; I've only 10 to-day, they don't always come. I take them by the week at 2*d.*, 2½*d.*, and 3*d.* I have two or three here now who can't learn, but they sit still and get no harm.

[The eldest child there was only 6. There was no parish or tolerable school for the elder children.]

EPWORTH.

Population 2,097.

136. *Hon. and Rev. Charles Dundas*, rector, rural dean, and magistrate.—Granted the advisability of instituting some regulations as to the employment of children in agriculture analogous to those enacted for factory children, I think that boys between 10 (or 11, as the age might be fixed) and 13 (or, if not thought too stringent, 14), and girls between 12 and 14, might be required to attend school regularly, say, from the middle of November to the middle of March. Boys under 10 (or 11) and girls under 12 should attend the rest of the year as well; a certificate of having done so might be given when the school term was ended. To enforce this school attendance the best way would be (besides requiring the certificate above mentioned) to forbid all farm work for boys under 10 (or 11), and for girls under 12 years of age. With a view to a system in this direction, it strikes me that some sort of registration would be advisable, if not necessary, for all children employed in farm labour. The registrar of births, deaths, and marriages would very likely furnish the best machinery for this, as he could easily ascertain the age of most of the children, besides being at any rate brought frequently into contact with the parents. It would be best in such cases to

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make the parents responsible. If you make the employers responsible they might not care to employ the children at all, and would, if possible, prefer some other method (either through more Irish from the large towns of Yorkshire, or in any other way that might appear to them feasible,) of getting their work done. This would operate very hardly upon the ordinary labourers, to whom the children's labour is in these districts undoubtedly of great advantage, as it is one reason why there is so little of that actual poverty which one sees in those parts of the country where the labourer's wages are the sole source of the maintenance of his family.

137. *Mrs. Clarke*, widow of a freeholder.—I have 10 acres of my own, and I rent about 20 more. We all work it together, my two sons, three daughters, and myself. We don't often get help. My children do our hard work. Anne (16) has got a bad back, and can't do much: she got a cold in it at work last Martinmas. My other two daughters are 19 and 22. We've a pair of horses. Help is hard to get at potato time, but we want it then. My daughters used to go to school after Martinmas, and then we could spare them till March, perhaps, if it was stormy (frosty—E. S.).

138. *Mr. J. R. Pearson*, schoolmaster. — The children come very irregularly. This is a free school. We have 50 children in summer and 90 in winter. There's a large class of small freeholders about here, holding under 10 acres, who work their own children and get no help. These educate their children better than they did. I suppose they see the advantage of it. Very few do not go to school at all.

139. *Rev. W. M. Anderson*, Baptist minister.—The field work is healthy, and does no harm to anyone here; we are not the worse for it in any way. Some very young children are taken out, but their mothers or sisters look after them. I think the education here very superior to many districts. Very few don't go to school at all.

140. *Anne Broomhead*, schoolmistress of National school.—Our average number here is 81 in January and 64 in July; we have about 45 in October. The oldest we have now (July) is 11, the youngest 2½. I know four other schools here.

141. *Mrs. Cawthorn*, labourer's wife.—I began to work at 9 years old; I used to drop beans with father. I sent out my boys and girls to "tent" birds as soon as they could get half a wage; they were 10 or 11. They were always willing, but I didn't like it. They went with boys and girls and men and women, all together, and they were so young. A child, if it can get 1*s.* a week anywhere else, is better not in the fields. My girls are in service now; they like it better. There used to be 15 or 16 going out from here to Butterwick Common to work; they were all grown women. I've gone to Butterwick Mills (six miles) and gathered potatoes for 20 days together; I was 25 then. I went there when I was 14, with my mother; this was 30 years ago. They don't go there now. Flax pulling's very hard work. We used to weed carrots, onions, and line on our knees; it's not hard, but it's cramping; they want weeding very close. Men and boys go out at 6, women at 7.15. In winter, when it's light, we leave off at 6. We stop 15 minutes at 10 and an hour at 12. I like young girls to work, if they go to school too. They can learn to cook and all in the winter, and they're the better for it. Women do more work now than they did. The farmers get them for less wages. There's often men out of work. Many farmers don't employ a man all the summer, not a labourer at all, only women. Where's there one in Epworth scarcely that has a constant labourer? Not many. I've known my husband to be five or six weeks without work. I don't think wives ought to go out at all. When a wife goes out they can't put their victuals to the best. Then there's the clothes. I've been out many a day when I should have saved money by staying at home, what with paying 2*d.* and 4*d.* for my babies to be taken care of; but then I was in regular work, and could'nt stay away. Before the "demack" (epidemic disease) came they used to let bits of land to a poor man, and manure it, and all for nothing. Then we could keep a pig, but now potatoes are worth so much we can't get it. The "demack" is better for the farmer but worse for the poor. They get more work, but they have to work harder.

WEST BUTTERWICK.

Population 907.

142. *Mr. William Brown*, farmer and churchwarden.—Flax harvest is more important than corn here; so with the potatoes. We never employ children under 9 here. They don't always come with their mothers. We want the young ones to tent birds or lead a horse. It's few young girls that are employed after picking time. I like women for "pies." At harvest the families mostly keep together. I employ eight women and five men all the year, and I keep three or four big boys in the house. They get too much education now; they are above their work. If there was much more of it I'd send for Irish.

143. *Mr. William Childs*, National schoolmaster.—We have nearly 70 children in winter, 40 in summer. We shut during potato harvest. The attendance is very bad. There are a lot of children here who don't go to school at all. There are two women's schools here. The potato "pies" are very bad for girls of 13 or 14. They sometimes go without their mothers, but their mothers are almost as bad. They are often much exposed at the "pies" to bad weather.

SCOTTER.

Population 1,167.

144. *Robert Eminson, Esq.*, surgeon and farmer.—Part of this parish touches the Trent. Children go there at 9 or 10 years, with or without their parents, a lot together, to work at the potatoes; women go also. It is 3½ miles off; it is too far, and the work is too laborious for them. In the upper part of the parish women are employed weeding and "wicking" (picking twitch), &c.; whole families go together sometimes. I know nothing objectionable in this system. I have known a man contract with a farmer to do a piece of work, as weeding carrots or potatoes, and then he gets women and children. One case I remember which got into court, because he didn't pay his gang. This system is not common here. From March to November women go out a good deal to the Trent side; they leave their children with a neighbour. They often give them Godfrey's, gin, laudanum, and poppy water to keep them quiet. The little ones needn't go here, but boys ought to go early to get inured to it. They go pretty well to school. The cottages here are defective; the drainage is bad. Some have only one sleeping room. I know one where 9 or 10 have slept in one room. Generally there are plenty of them. The people here all argue, "We won't save the parish," and so they spend what they get in public-houses and so on, and then when slack times come they go on the parish. I should order repayment of all such sums when they go out again; they don't do so now. Wives often go out to work because their husbands are hard on them, and won't pay for things for them. They generally have control over their own earnings.

145. *Thomas Gilliat*, labourer and clerk.—I've had 20 children or so. They go to Trent side to work; they like it. They go at 8 and get back at 6. There's a lot of women go; 100 at potato harvest. Now they're weeding carrots. My girls at service now. I like it better; they used to hear such bad talk. The old women like it; it's sport to them.

146. *Mrs. Wilkinson*, labourer's wife.—I work all the year, but not regular. I take my children in carrot weeding, and corn and potato harvest; never to "pies." They put me in a "stint" for setting and gathering potatoes. We're not always together; my

children are often separate. Some goes as young as 8. That girl there, I shan't let her go; she's 8, but she's not strong. My little boy (9), he's now with his father singling turnips; he did a "stint" last year; it was hard work. I had to do my own and help him with his too. I go with them four or even five miles to Trent side. No one is with us when we work, except the man with the plough. It's a bad thing for girls; there's all sorts of language. The farmer's lads is there with the carts. They mostly don't let us stop at all all day, except for dinner. Mr. T. gives us five minutes about 9; the others don't. I get 1*s.* a day, or 14*d.* for harvest.

[Husband earned 15*s.* a week.]

147. *Lizzie Wilkinson* (daughter of above).—I'm 7; I mean I'm 11. I've been at harvest several times. I was singling turnips last year with a man, not father. I live in Scotter; it's in Lincolnshire. Don't know England nor London. I've been to school every year a little.

EAST STOCKWITH.

Population 378.

148. *Rev. W. T. Humphrey*, incumbent.—There are only two or three large farms in this parish. Most of it is owned by small freeholders; these employ their own children. The parish stretches along the bank of the Trent, and consists of "warp" land, which needs the labour of many hands. The larger farmers employ children for weeding and potato gathering, for "tenting" of all sorts. Indeed, those that don't go have to resist the solicitations of farmers. Generally they are ready enough to go; the girls get so fond of it that they won't go to service. The farmers don't employ them regularly, but that makes no difference. The parents like to get a week's schooling for a week's wage, as they say. They pay by the week here, and so they won't pay if there is any chance of their children getting employment in the fields, even for a day.

149. Extract from Return sent to the Commission by the same.

Females employed in agriculture: between 8 and 10 years, 1 or 2; betwen 10 and 13, 3; between 13 and 18, 1; over 18, 22 married, and 3 unmarried; total 31. I do not include in the above table certain families who confine their labour, and that of their families to their own land, their own 4, 5, or even 7 acres, which they till themselves. Of these we have about a dozen cases. I have no personal knowledge of it, but women have acknowledged to me that the language used in the fields by women is of a very loose description, and when I have said, "Why do not "the elder women put it down?" I find that some of them are not free from this. As a preparation for domestic duties, field-work is as bad a preparation as can be. Some labourers say that they could not pay their way at 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, unless their wives and families added their quota of earnings; but it is to be doubted whether in such cases the female quota equals beer money, or waste and wear of household, consequent on the mother's absence. Some see this and keep at home, and seem quite as well off as those who go out.

150. Extract of Letter to Mr. Stanhope from the same, dated August 30, 1867.

The information I have jotted down on the other side may be depended upon. I have it from one of the little shopkeepers who began life as the wife of a labourer, and has brought up a large family. In the estimate there is no fresh meat allowed, nor strong beer, nor doctor's bill or expenses of a domestic occurrence. I have put down 2*s.* 6*d.* a stone for flour, as a sort of average; just now it is 2*s.* 8*d.*, and has been for some months. In those fortunate cases were there is a small allotment garden and a pig, a family will have a better living, for the estimate only allows 4 lb. of bacon, the large portion of which, I suppose, will go to the husband.

On the whole, it seems clear that women's work is needful to eke out the means of living; lads also might be allowed to work on a sort of natural half-time system, provided schooling was attended to for the other half. I would, however, do away with the out-door labour of girls under 18, with the exception of working in the harvest fields with their parents.

Believe me, &c.,
(Signed) W. T. Humphrey.

Enclosure.

Estimated Weekly Expenses of a Labourer's family in Lincolnshire, the family consisting of a man, his wife, and three children.

	s.	*d.*
* 2½ stone of flour at (say) 2*s.* 6*d.*	6	3
1 lb. of butter	1	6
2 „ sugar	0	9
¼ „ tea (at village prices)	1	0
1 „ rice	0	3
Soap	0	3
1 „ candles	0	6
Starch, &c.	0	2
Box of coal	1	0
4 lb. of bacon	3	4
Potatoes	1	0
	16	0
The above are real necessaries.		
Their clothing, including boots, &c.	2	0
Small beer (per gallon)	0	4
Tobacco	0	6
School wages	0	3
	19	1
Rent (say)	1	6
	£1 0	7

It is clear that, according to the above statement, the family of a man must soon be plunged in debt unless for some excess of wage in harvest time, or unless (as here) there were out-door occupation for the women.†

151. *Mr. Charles Forrington.*—I farm 80 acres. I employ children of 10 or 11, or girls rather older, from March till the "back end" (autumn). Mothers generally take them, but sometimes they go alone, and a man looks after them. I don't want them for "pies," at least not if I can get women. I think boys are fit to lead horses at 12 years old. Boys and girls can go to school up to that time all the winter, and a bit of the summer. I want them sometimes one day, sometimes a week, but I must have them when I want them, according to the season.

152. *William Betts*, labourer.—If I were in the Parliament and could have my say, I'd never let a woman go near a threshing-machine. Their dresses get caught, and they are dragged in. It's only them that has the pluck that does it. My wife used always to go, but this year I said she should'nt any more. There was one killed here not long ago. They don't have girls not till they are 15. My girl there goes; she is just 15. Threshing lasts from the "back end" (autumn)

* N.B.—One stone for the man, half a stone for the wife, and one stone for the three children.

† The following account, which I owe to the kindness of Miss Boucherett, of Willingham, of the expenditure of a family with three children, is added here for comparison:—

	s.	*d.*
Rent	1	3
Coal	1	9
Flour (at a very cheap time)	3	2
Tea	0	7
Sugar	0	3
Meat, lard, or bacon, 4 lbs.	2	3
Soap	0	2
Candles	0	3
Soda	0	1
	10	6

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till May. Small farmers thresh early, large ones hold on, and don't thresh sometimes till May. I don't like "tenting" for boys. My boy there, he's 14, got cold at it last "back end." They are out from light to dark every day, wet or dry, for 5 or 6 weeks sometimes. The women working throws men out of work. I've often been out 5 or 6 weeks when my wife could get it. I think 12 is young enough for a man to send out his children, unless he's very hard pressed.

153. *Mary Betts*, wife of last witness.—I was out yesterday (July 25) gathering early potatoes. There were five or six women and a few children. My daughter went. She does a "stint" herself. She first went at 9. We can get work, she and I, on and off all the year, what with "pies" and threshing in the winter. Alice —— went with us yesterday; she's 7. She gets 6*d.* a day. Now she'll be out till the "back end," and not go to school at all. We start at 8 and get back at 6. We get an hour for dinner. We don't often get an "andrew" (time for lunch). I used to pull flax; they don't grow much here now, and it's all seed flax. They used to put it in "dykes," and then we had to spread it all wet. We used to wear oil cloth, but many's the day I've been wet through and through all day with it. I believe they do it now near the Trent, higher up, but here they spread it dry now.

154. *Henry Barratt*, freeholder and farmer.—I farm 20 acres. No help at all last year. My wife and four children work it. The youngest (Sarah) went last year singling and potato-picking; she is 8 now. She is wanted at home to mind the children; she don't go to school.

WINTERTON.

Population 1,780.

155. *Mr. Lucas Marshall Bennet*, medical officer of union.—This is an "open" town and supplies labourers to several of the close parishes round. There are two or three large landowners, but it is chiefly owned by small freeholders. Women and children are employed a good deal, though there are not so many potatoes here as nearer the Trent. Children from 8 upwards, boys as well as girls, are employed to pick twitch, set potatoes, hoe corn, &c. They often go out in lots of five, 10, or 20, with a man to look after them. The farmers would rather not have them till 12 years old. This work lasts from March till October, but is very irregular. Just now (July) there is not much for children to do. Women go out a good deal, but not regularly. They go more than they did.

156. *Thomas Stubbins*, overseer.—Girls don't go as young as boys; they needn't go at all; the fathers all get 15*s.* a week, and the farmers don't want them. They are much better at service, but some fathers like field work better for them; it's healthier. I wish the women didn't go so much, there's lots of men out of work because of it, or at low wages. But then the farmer can get them for 1*s.* a day, and a man costs him 2*s.* 6*d.* It would be better for the women too if they didn't go. I know a women here who puts out her child to nurse for 6*d.* a day, and goes out into the fields herself for 10*d.*

157. *Ellen Fenwick*, labourer's wife.—I live at Appleby; I used to live at Winterton. I've done all sorts of work. I used to go weeding, and setting, and harvesting, and then I went to the threshing machines in winter. That goes on pretty regular, in or out of doors. They don't want children now for these steam machines. It's hard work, so is gathering potatoes. "Pies" I don't mind, except in bad weather. But they'd often put up a screen to shelter us. I took my children out at 6 or 7 to work. They'd get work in March, and get it on and off till the frost came on, the biggest part of the time. Sometimes they went without me, with others. A man would look after them. I never heard of them being ill-treated; I don't think they were the worse for it. I sent my girls out to service at 12 or 13. They had to go to "statutes" to be hired.

158. [Extract from Report by Dr. Thorne to Local Board of Winterton; April 11th, 1867, on the occasion of an outbreak of typhoid fever there.]

After speaking of a group of four cottages in the High Street, with a well close behind, he continues—"In short we have in a circuit of about 14 feet round "this well one open drain, one open ash-pit, two pig-"styes, three privies, and one open cesspool, all of which, "with the exception of the drain, were raised to a height "varying from one foot six inches to three feet above "it, and situated on a loose porous soil. * * As a "second example I will call attention to a house situated "in the High Street, the property of ——, and occu-"pied by Mr. Backhouse. I there saw Ellen Backhouse "who had been attended for fever. * * Thirteen "feet from the door was an open ash-pit on which some "of the discharges of the patient had been thrown, and "where they still lay uncovered. By the side of this "is an open drain. At a distance of about three feet "from the house is the opening from the main drain-"age. * * The outfall is merely an open ditch, "the contents of which, contaminated as they must "be by the privy, I found spread out on the tenant's "garden, the proceeding having been ordered by the "town authorities. * * * The cases enumerated "are fair examples of what I found throughout the "town."

GRINGLEY-ON-THE-HILL (NOTTS).

Population 874.

159. *Rev. G. Hopton Scott*, vicar.—Part of the "Carr" has been allotted to this parish; but it forms only a small part of it. We have a good school, but we don't keep the children long enough, and in summer their attendance is very irregular. The average attendance will not show you this, because the numbers are swelled by little ones who come only in the summer. I believe all the children here go to school; but there is a class of lads here, from 12 to 18, in the farmers' service who are very ignorant. We tried a night school for them, but after a time they were ashamed to go with the younger lads who knew more than they did. The cottages here are pretty good, and let at about 4*l.* Most of them have gardens.

160. *William Durdey* (12), labourer's son.—Began at 7 years old to "plough;" I drove a horse. I go to school sometimes in winter. Didn't go last year; I go this year. I do some work all the summer through. I feed cattle; I tent; I pick up potatoes. In the summer I go to work at 6 in the morning. Not in winter.

[Reads, writes, and sums fairly.]

161. *Herbert Pearce* (going 12), labourer's son.—Began to go with horses at 8 years old. Went all last summer, and the year before, and the year before that. Don't do much work in winter.

[Reads, writes, and sums well.]

162. *George Antcliffe* (12), labourer's son.—First went with a horse at 8 years old. Come to school in winter. Sometimes come in summer, for a week or sometimes a day or two, and then I get work again.

MISTERTON.

Population 1,089.

163. *Mr. Gabbetas*, schoolmaster.—Our school is very much affected by work. Children go for potato picking and such like work at 9 years old. The result is that the attendance varies from 65 to 30 in winter and summer respectively.

[A bad school. No mistress to teach the girls sewing. Very few girls were at the school.]

THE MARSHES.

164. TABLE showing the Employments of Women and Children at different Seasons.

—	Northern Section (from Barton to Wainfleet).	Southern Section (from Wainfleet to Tydd St. Mary).
January	—	—
February	—	—
March	Wool-picking	Bean-dropping for boys and girls over 8 or 9.
April	Tenting for boys and girls over 7; osier peeling for girls and women.	Planting potatoes and mangold; knocking manure: twitching.
May, June, July	Singling for women, boys, and girls; a little weeding. Weeding; hay harvest; berry-pulling for women.	Twitching; Planting cabbages; singling; Weeding corn, potatoes, and woad.
August, September	Harvest; gleaning	Harvest; gleaning: woad pulling.
October, November	Weeding, tenting, or potato picking	Taking up potatoes, mangold, and carrots; twitching (the most busy time).
December	—	—
	The work for children in this district is very occasional; women go with threshing machines: no public gangs.	Boys and girls of 7 and upwards at work on the potato land; boys of 7 and upwards tent and (with women and a few girls) weed; women go with threshing machines; boys of 10 go with horses; only one or two public gangs.

LONG SUTTON.

Population 4,146.

165. LETTER to Mr. Edward Stanhope from Mr. John Algernon Clarke, Secretary to the Central Chamber of Agriculture, and large occupier at Long Sutton, dated January 7th, 1868.

SIR,

THE extent to which the husbandry of this neighbourhood is dependent upon the field labour of women and children I believe to be much greater than might be supposed. Omitting from consideration the spring and summer work of weeding crops, cleaning land, planting potatoes, haymaking, harvesting, &c., take the autumnal employment provided by our special culture of potatoes, taking up mangold wurzel, cleaning fallow ground, and so on. The limits of the potato district can hardly be defined; but for the purpose of forming an estimate, take a stripe of the rich alluvial tract stretching from Wisbeach to Spalding, and including, say, a breadth of three miles on each side the railway, with the same distance beyond the two towns mentioned. This length of 30 miles, by six miles in width, contains an area of 180 square miles, or 115,000 acres. From this deduct fully one-third for permanent pasture, roads, &c., and there remains an area of 75,000 acres arable. Considering the large proportion of land in small parcels, and farmed in semi-garden style around the towns and villages, much of it bearing potatoes every alternate year; and from the fact that, while almost every farmer cultivates the crop to some extent, many very extensive growers indeed are embraced in the tract under calculation, we cannot estimate the acreage of potatoes at less than one-seventh of the arable; that is, the crop occupies 11,000 acres within three miles of the line of towns and villages through which the railway passes between Wisbeach and Spalding. The common rate of work and wages is, that two women at 1*s.* 3*d.* each, two girls at 1*s.* each, and two children at 9*d.* each (that is, six hands at 6*s.* per day), pick up one acre of an ordinary potato crop in one day. The wages of the women and children (to say nothing about other expenses of "taking up,") are about 6*s.* per acre. Hence, their earnings in picking the 11,000 acres amount to 3,300*l.* for 66,000 "days' work."

But a great deal of female and juvenile labour is simultaneously engaged in autumn fallowing, mangold-wurzel harvesting, &c. On a farm of 340 acres arable, having a medium breadth of potatoes and mangold, I paid for women, girls, and a few extra boys, in the autumn of 1867, as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Week ending September 21st	3	5	0
" " September 28th	4	8	5
" " October 5th	7	8	8
" " October 12th	6	1	5
Week ending October 19th	6	0	2
" " October 26th	4	17	6
" " November 2nd	3	3	0
" " November 9th	2	3	9
" " November 16th	2	12	4
	40	0	3

And at this rate the total earnings of female and juvenile labour during the nine weeks will be 8,800*l.* upon 75,000 acres arable in the district; that is, more than double the amount expended upon potato picking alone. This autumnal work occupies the whole of September and October, with portions of August and November, the potato "taking-up" time generally lasting about 60 days from the commencement with early lots, to the finish; and with 60 working days, the average sum earned per day in the district will be about 146*l.*, showing the number of hands (reckoned at 1*s.* each) to average about 3,000 at work daily.

A woman at 1*s.* 3*d.* per day, with a daughter at 1*s.*, and a younger daughter or son at 9*d.*, earn 3*s.* per day, so that the labour of the three during the 60 days work, adds the sum of 8*l.* to the income of the family. Reckoning the husband's wages at 15*s.* a week, without intermission throughout the year, supposing him to make 4*l.* additional in harvest, a boy to earn him 4*s.* a week for a portion of the year, and the wife also to earn 3*l.* or 4*l.* in spring to summer, the total income of the family is, say, 56*l.* a year,—certainly a favourable case; and thus the 8*l.* autumnal earnings of the wife and two children is one-seventh of the whole livelihood of the family. In fact, a loss of this source of income would be equivalent to a deprivation of one day's living per week.

I have, &c.,
JOHN ALGERNON CLARKE.

166. *Rev. Henry Leigh Bennett*, curate.—In Long Sutton there are eight dames' schools, the scholars from which do not exceed 80; one mixed school under a married man, assisted by his wife, averaging perhaps 30; a boys' school which may average 20; other schools intended for the class above, but attracting a few of the wealthier labourers' children, for which 20 poor scholars may be allowed; and the boys' free school, averaging 40 poor scholars, under no inspection; the girls' National school, averaging 80 scholars, under Government inspection. The above schools contain a total of 280 poor children under education, out of a population of 2,700, *i.e.* about 10 per cent.

In Luton there is a dame's school with an average of 20 scholars, and the National mixed school averaging 70 scholars, not under Government inspection. This makes a total of 90 out of a population of 810, *i.e.* 11 per cent. There is a considerable number of children, some of

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them being girls kept at home to nurse, but the chief part, the very poorest and most squalid, whom no system but that of a compulsory ragged school will reach, who attend no daily school, and only very irregularly any Sunday school. Of the dames' schools four may teach writing as well as reading, the others only reading; the rest teach the ordinary three subjects, reading, writing, and arithmetic. The boys' school is endowed, and as I have no control or knowledge of it, I can only judge of the education of boys at Long Sutton by the Sunday schools and night schools. The Sunday school of course attracts the worst educated boys, so that it is not fair to judge education by them. But out of a night school averaging 40 only 15 can read thoroughly, write fairly, and work the compound rules. In the Sunday school about 40 boys out of 80 are able to read in one way or other; of writing and arithmetic we have no opportunity of judging. But it is impossible to believe, in the face of the immense difficulties in the management of the boys, at both Sunday and night schools, that any real moral or religious training, or any inculcation of habits of obedience, are attempted in the week; and it is a significant fact, regarding the intellectual attainments of the boys at Long Sutton, that, in the annual competition for prizes, of the best boys of all the schools of the district, not merely has no boy ever gained a prize from Long Sutton, but as far as I recollect, scarcely a boy in the last 10 years has been entered for the competition. The education of boys at Long Sutton is considerably below that of the villages which surround it, and there is a marked contrast between the two parishes of Long Sutton and Lutton, in the interest which the poor show about the education of their children.

It is an interesting point, what is the surplus of women, beyond the needs of the labourers' marriage market, and domestic service. People say that there will soon be a scarcity of domestic female servants. On the other hand, I find a difficulty in getting young girls out to service who desire it; the dressmaker class has also increased of late hereabouts. If domestic service, marriage, needle-work, shops, and charing will absorb the women there will be no moral risk in excluding female labour from the fields; if such exclusion narrows the range of female occupations, and a class of idle, or starving women is produced, the gain to female morals is doubtful enough.

167. Letter from the same to Mr. Edward Stanhope, dated Feb. 21, 1868.

Physically field work, it appears, does not hurt. Morally, I suppose a small gang, with a bad woman as its chief talker, would be worse than a big one, or (supposing that it be objected that in the big gang the bad ones develop filth infinitely more through the infection of thoughts and the variety of suggestion) at least as bad, because the one bad woman's influence is intensified by the smallness of the set. But in the case of a family, parents and children working together, I see no more danger than in their sleeping as they now sleep; not so much. The tendency of cottage building in our marshes is to foster this working of families. Every cottage is crowded, and (besides lodgers) has a host of children. So cottage building will not stop company work. A farmer whose farm I crossed on Monday, could gather from his own cottages a gang of 20 children, I should say, besides men and young women. Therefore by a mere limitation of numbers you will scarcely get any principle; it would be easily evaded. Two gangs in the same field, or on two sides of the same hedge, will be as bad as one.

I do hope you will see your way to setting a high limit of age to girls working in the fields at all. In my judgment, clearly the right course is to make field work the last and loathed resource. Instead of, as at present, field work being preferred for its freedom and license, let everything, from the gentleman's situation, and the shopman's, down to the lowest farm service, come to be preferred to the field. Let the field be to all other female callings what the union is to the poor man, the alternative of starvation; and to produce this I do think that the gentling (if I may not add refining) system of keeping girls away from the dirty field till 12 must do most.

* * * * *

With respect to gardens I am connected with two experiments. I have 34 roods of allotments at Lutton, let at 15*s.* per rood, the rent paid in four instalments. Attached to this is a system of three or four prizes, varying from 20*s.* to 5*s.* for the best cultivated allotment. This scheme has been going seven or eight years at least, had the most conceivable start, but has prospered more, and proceeds with less grumbling and less misunderstanding than any scheme for the good of the poor that I have ever been connected with. But I should be glad, if it were possible, to break up the field into four, and place it in different centres of the population.

168. Extracts from returns sent in by Mr. John Clarke, large occupier.

The number employed in private gangs in spring and summer:—

On my farm, 12 to 15 males, and 10 to 12 females.

In this parish, 80 to 100 males, and 100 to 120 females.

And in autumn:—

On my farm, 12 to 20 males, and 30 to 50 females.

In this parish, 100 to 130 males, and 150 to 250 females.

I have probably underrated the number employed in the parish.

None of the children on my farm are under 8. From three to five boys, and the same number of girls, under 10 in the autumn.

I think all boys up to 8 years, and all girls up to 10 years, should go to school. Subsequently they might go to field work under regulations, *i. e.*, from the 25th of March to Nov. 5, or thereabouts. In the winter months to school again if practicable (that is) if schools can be found for them. The most part live within easy distance, a few would have some distance to go. But this distance, and the fact that the work upon the farms when once begun is continuous, make it impossible that any farmer could put up with any alternate system. Besides, when the work is in they could not be spared without serious hindrance to business.

I think some local authority might have power to decide when the young children are fairly strong and healthy enough for field labour.

169. *Mr. Albert Porter*, bookseller, Spalding.—I was for some years of my life working in the fields in this neighbourhood. I worked on the farms of Mr. John Clarke, Mr. Reed, and Mr. Harrison, of Gedney Dyke. I often worked with 30 or 40 boys and girls. I don't recollect any illtreatment, except in one case (not on the farms mentioned), where the farmer beat us himself, and allowed his man to do so. But I have heard language between boys and girls of 12 or 14 of a most disgusting character. I have seen very bad things done. I recollect once falling asleep during the dinner hour apart from the others, and when I woke up I found that they had stripped me naked before all the girls and women. But I will do farmers the justice to say that I don't think they know half what goes on. At meal times we were allowed to run off and do what we liked. I think the potato gangs were not so bad as those at weeding time. Boys and girls should certainly be separated, but I don't see how to prevent their going to work and coming away together. On a fine day there is a charm in field work. I see nothing objectionable in it for boys under good management. But if a little wet comes on the girls get "clogged up," and come home in a miserable state.

170. At the market ordinary at Long Sutton on Friday, Nov. 8, 1867, Geo. Prest, Esq., magistrate, in the chair, the Hon. E. Stanhope, Assistant Commissioner, being present, and having explained the objects

of the Commission, the following discussion took place:—

Mr. John Clarke, of Long Sutton, objected to the extension of the Agricultural Gangs Bill to private gangs, or "companies," as he would call them. There was the potato setting in spring, the weeding of corn and potatoes, the potato harvest, and mangold and swede harvests in autumn, all of which required an immense amount of labour, and of that sort of labour usually done by women and children. At these harvests the sexes must be mixed, or the growth of root crops would be restricted or abandoned. He contended that it was healthy, that the workers were grateful for the employment, and that no illegitimacy resulted from it. He quoted the statistics of illegitimacy in the neighbourhood, varying from 1 in 15 births to 1 in 21 births, to show that the rate in that neighbourhood is not above that of the whole county, while the employment of women and children was far greater. He argued that elementary education should go on up to 8, at which age they should be allowed to go at certain times to field work.

The Chairman (Mr. Geo. Prest) argued in favour of education, maintaining that that in England was the worst in Europe, and a Government secular system ought to be introduced, by which it should be imperative on parents to send their children to school. He said that a child might be hurt by taking it too young, thinly clad, or to too long a distance to work. But he did not believe that to be the case in this district. As to separation of the sexes, he considered it very difficult, as the immorality (if existing) would still go on during the dinner hour, and before or after work. He contended for the great importance of the future wives of agricultural labourers being properly trained, and, therefore, he would prefer their not going to work before 12 years of age. Women could not act as "gangmasters;" no respectable woman could be got to do so, and the plan was impracticable.

Mr. R. Caparn, of Holbeach, approved the separation of the sexes, and said he did not see the difficulty of it, but maintained that it was most important in going to and coming from work. He quoted some gross cases which had come under his notice.

Rev. H. L. Bennett, curate of Long Sutton, argued that women ought gradually to be excluded from field work, and limited to their proper sphere. Young girls, therefore, ought to be taken from it, and taught domestic management at home. He doubted how far such work was really profitable to the poor, and quoted one woman who had said to him, "My man says that "between the woman that works and the woman that "doesn't there is only 6*d.* to choose at the year's end, "and she that stays at home has it."

Mr. J. Algernon Clarke, of Long Sutton, said that there was evidently a disposition on the part of Government to interfere with female labour. He admitted that the fields might not be the best place for women, but were they to be kept there by Act of Parliament? If they were to be excluded from field work, why not from the factories, which were more unhealthy, and just as immoral. He argued in favour of further assistance to night schools and other existing agencies, and thought it reasonable that, if the rule is to be to keep children part of their time at school up to 13 years of age, some standard of proficiency should be fixed, on reaching which children should be set free to work. This would give an object to their school work.

Mr. J. G. Hobson, of Long Sutton, spoke in favour of better infant schools, and against the possibility of separating the sexes.

Mr. Longbottom spoke strongly in favour of industrial training in addition to school, showing that children brought up at the union were generally found useless. It was great nonsense to talk of separating the sexes before 13 years of age, for before that age boys and girls were shy, and naturally kept apart. After that time he agreed that they ought to be separated. In his opinion every child between 8 and 13 should go to school four months in the year, and there would be no difficulty about it in this neighbourhood. As to keeping girls altogether from field work, no worse infliction could fall upon the poor.

Other gentlemen also spoke, and the general feeling of the meeting was clearly against the separation of the sexes in field work, and in favour of improved education. No resolutions were come to, and the meeting ended.

171. EXTRACT from a Letter to Mr. Edward Stanhope from Mr. J. G. Hobson, large occupier, and honorary secretary to the Long Sutton Agricultural Association, dated Curlew Lodge, Long Sutton, Dec. 21, 1867.

I have the pleasure to enclose some papers relating to the educational department of our association. The examination for 1861, which was near the commencement, if not the date of the first report, congratulates us on the result of our plan and says "It was copied "in four other centres of the county, and there is a "growing feeling that such prize schemes are produc-"tive of good." I believe this is borne out by experience.

[Nine schools out of 17 in the deanery of Long Sutton sent up candidates in 1867 for the various prizes. These were given for Scripture knowledge, reading, writing and arithmetic; for grammar, geography, and history, for needle work, for cutting out, for knitting and darning, and for domestic economy. The following was the paper of questions in domestic economy:—

1. Why are girls when they first go to service to expect only small wages?
2. When is it a duty to be honest?
3. What is trying to conceal a fault?
4. What do waste and extravagance produce?
5. When about to boil meat, will you put it in with the water hot or cold?
6. Describe the process for boiling potatoes?
7. What care is necessary when admitting fresh air into a nursery?
8. When nursing a child, what care is required with regard to its frock?
9. What kind of language is to be avoided before children?
10. When a patient can sit long enough, how should the bed clothes be aired? And how when the patient can only sit a short time?
11. In giving drink to a person in bed what should be done?
12. Why do you require two waiters in a sick room?]

172. *Mary Ann Lyon* (18?), labourer's daughter, Long Sutton.—I work all the summer at Mr. Hobson's. I start at quarter before 7, get there at 8, and leave off work at 5. There are a great many women sometimes. At potato-picking time there will be children also, those of his own labourers. I got 1*s.* a day all the time. I begin in February dropping beans, and I might have gone to-day (Nov. 15), only mother said it was too cold. Mr. Hobson don't employ children much. Mrs. Allison looks after us. There'll be a dozen of us regularly. We don't go into the corn when its wet. If it is, we weed the potatoes instead. He pays us on Thursday nights. He calls it his Saturday.

173. *Mrs. Smith*, labourer's wife.—My girl of 11 is at work now picking up potatoes after the drill. She can't read. She goes to work from March to December. She has'nt been to school the last two winters.

[This woman was very badly off.]

174. *Mrs. Rodwell*, labourer's wife.—I've nine girls, seven of them at home. No boys. How am I to live if they don't go out to work. The little ones only go potato-picking. Mr. Brown won't have them to weed or to set potatoes. They can all read and write a little.

175. *Rebecca Rodwell* (16), daughter of last witness.—I am working with Mr. Brown now. I get woman's wages (1*s*). There are nine women and two boys

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C.

picking up potatoes. We pick up those that were left in the ground at harvest. I begin in March and work till pretty nigh Christmas.

[Could read and write well.]

176. *Mrs. Watley*, labourer's wife.—I went to Mr. Brown's potato-picking this year. There was 50 or 60, mostly children. I'd two little girls with me. Mr. Brown's generally with them. You'd be astonished at the difference in talking when he's not there. That girl of F's was the worst; but there was some that encouraged her. I've a boy (13) at Mr. Clarke's. He has been there seven years I should say. He has never had no day school. He's a very poor reader.

177. *Mrs. Russell*, labourer's wife, Sutton.—The women and girls go weeding here. Not many girls. We all go to pick up potatoes. I went with Sapey's (public) gang to pick them up. He gave us 1*s.* 6*d.* a day. We worked same hours as we should for a farmer, but we keep at it because we know he has taken the work. If we'd only half an hour dinner we left off at 4.30. I like to eat and go on again, and not sit in the cold. There's some all sorts that go.

178. *Mrs. Blackburn*, labourer's wife, Long Sutton.—We feel as if we must let the children go. I'd rather my girls did'nt. It's the old men and women that talks bad and corrupts the children. I took my girl away from Mr. Derry's because she told us of what an old man did among them at dinner time, when they were potato-picking. [He exposed his person to them.] But my girl has been to work since. My boy went a month to Mr. Clarke's. He had to go at 6 and got back here only about 7, and only got 6*d.* a day. He's 9.

TYDD ST. MARY.

Population 977.

179. Extracts from a Letter to Mr. Edward Stanhope from the Ven. Archdeacon Mackenzie, late rector of Tydd St. Mary.

I have hardly anything to add to what I stated to the Commission which was inquiring last year into the agricultural gang system. In gang districts it would be impossible to apply the half-time system generally to days, and inexpedient to apply it to months or even complete weeks. The best mode in this district would be to insist on three days' schooling in every week wherein the child went to labour, up to 12 or 13 years of age. No licensed ganger should be allowed to employ a boy without a certificate of school attendance for one day or two or three days preceding his employment.

The certificate might be framed thus:—

	Employment.	Signed.
Monday	School	A.B., schoolmaster.
Tuesday	Field work	C.D. gangmaster.
Wednesday	School	A.B.
Thursday	School	A.B.
Friday	Field work	C.D.
Saturday	Field work	C.D.

Week ending .

This certificate to be filed at the school-house and duly registered.

Children would thus pay for their own schooling, which rarely costs more than 3*d.* per week, and often only 1*d.*

180. *Mr. John T. Marshall*, large occupier.—Boys go very young with horses here; at 7 or 8, I think; but no one is ever summoned for doing so. The reason may be that there are few, if any, accidents from this cause. I remember one or two. Girls ought not to go to work at all; but if they are wanted for potato work let them go with their mothers, as they do in the corn harvest, and at no other time. No mere separation will of itself be sufficient. The bigger boys here, between 10 and 13, are spared about four months in the winter to go to school; the 6*d.* boys, under 10, not so long. We want them for a variety of purposes, and they hardly are free more than two months. A great deal might be done towards improving the schools. Boys don't want history and geography. They learn it in some schools before they learn to write. Then again they teach big hand and round hand, and the children have left before they get to small hand, which is the only one of any use to them. The wages for men here are about 2*s.* 3*d.* to to 2*s.* 4*d.* a day; and some are unemployed in the winter.

181. *Mr. — Bills*, occupies 20 acres.—There is much less tenting than there used to be, now that cattle are not allowed to be turned out on the roads. Girls are much less employed in tenting than formerly. The worst work for young boys is going with horses. My boy there (10) I can trust with my own horse, because it knows him; but I don't consider him fit to go with other people's horses. I have known women go with them. I took a boy 6 years old to be my regular boy. He was with me 5½ years; then he went to some one else. He never went to a day-school after 6, yet he's a good scholar. He used to go to night school, and his mother taught him at home.

182. *Mrs. Freeman*, labourer's wife.—I'm certain sure that if I wasn't forced to it I wouldn't let the girls go to work. It's the root of what's bad. My girls do go. One of them (6) went potato picking only; but I don't like it. There's men that'll boast to hear their children bravado the most. The "graves" is the worst. They sit round and sort the potatoes; but women and men do it mostly. Then there's the wet corn. They've come home often wet up to the waist. Some of them go out for 5*d.* I don't get much out of that, though we keep old clothes for them; but I want half as much bread again when my children are out in the fields. Most of the clear gain I've got of their going has been a pair of boots for them. I wish the bakers would keep their bread a little; the children eat twice as much of it when it's new.

183. *Mrs. Beadman*, labourer's wife.—All my children, boys and girls, go to work. They go to school a bit in the winter when I can. I would'nt let the girls go if I could help it. When there's a lot together what one doesn't talk of another will. They go to work at 7 and leave off at 5.30.; sometimes if they go far they start sooner. I've nine children and one chamber. I pay 4*l.* 4*s.* a year. [Her boy of 15 read and wrote very little.]

HOLBEACH.

Population 4,956.

184. *Rev. A. Brook*, vicar.—We are about to try a sort of half-time system here. Two schools are to be built at outlying parts of the parish, and the schoolmaster is to teach three days in one and three days in the other. This is to avoid the expense of two good masters.

185. *Charles Webb*, schoolmaster and registrar.—I have been here 27 years. Since the great cultivation of potatoes the school has been much more affected by field work than formerly. Out of the 190 boys on the books 72 are farmers' sons. Seven-eighths of these are cottage farmers, and send their children a little better than the hired labourers. They are just a step above them. These children attend about one-third of the school year (10 months). Eighty-three are sons of agricultural labourers, who attend on an average less than this. We begin in January with 100, increase to 150; at the end of February, if the weather is open, the number decreases, till, in May, we average 85. After harvest holidays I begin with 30, and this number gradually increases. Now (Nov. 21) we have 100. I've had children come five miles to school. Where the attendance is bad it often arises from the carelessness as much as the indifference of the mother. In the Marsh there are two or three dames' schools; but there are plenty of children who get no schooling at all. They live a long way from here. I do'nt think the average of boys who leave school can read and write properly. Some boys even of 8 can write mechanically; but they often can't even read what they write. Girls seem to me to forget quicker

than boys. I have to register births. And numbers of girls whom I know to have been able to write well at 14 can't do it at 18 or 19 years of age; the boys keep it up better. What I think is wanted is better teaching for very young boys. We take them at 7. They are not grounded in anything previously. Now with my big school I can't teach them myself; I am obliged to leave them to monitors (boys of 14), and they don't get well taught. Boys would learn enough for their purpose if they were regularly taught up to 8, and then had half time of some sort. I should like an alternate week system, but for this reason. One day when it's fine we have 90, the next day, being wet, 120 come; on the third day we fall to 90 again. And I should not like to deprive them of this chance of getting on.

BURGH-LE-MARSH.

Population 1,528.

186. *Rev. W. S. Thomason*, vicar.—The average attendance at our school is apparently the same in summer as in winter; but in reality we have only half as many big boys in summer as in winter, and the difference is made up by infants. I think the people here do value schooling. They would be ashamed to have it said of them that they don't send their children; but many of them send them very irregularly. I think in such cases it is often that the parents cannot resist their own self-indulgence in opium or drink, and so cannot afford to send them to school. Our school here is a good one. Big boys will come three miles to it, and are often the most regular attendants. At Winthorpe (four miles) we have another school, under a mistress. This in fact supplies also the parishes of Ingoldwells, Addlethorpe, and Skegness, where there are no schools. Intermediate between these two schools we have an infant school; for the labourers living there cannot send infant children two or three miles. And in my opinion it is very important to get at the infants; for what can one do with a big boy of 9 coming to school for the first time, and absolutely ignorant. I think it is very hard that such infant schools, which do more good than almost any others, should not be helped by a grant; and yet the principle is already recognized by the grant being given to the larger schools for infants under 6 without any examination.

The farmers have to fill the place of "squires," and are often called so; but they are not fitted for it by their education, which has often been at the same school with their labourers. And in fact we not only have no resident landlords here, but very few resident farmers; most of the pasture land is held by the wold farmers. At Winthorpe, for instance, scarcely one-fifth of the land is occupied by resident farmers. Our night school is very successful here; we sometimes have 60 or 70 on the books, grown-up men included. Labourers have sometimes to go from three to four miles to work. But as a rule cottages are pretty well distributed. Some of them, but not many, are very bad.

187. *J. Wilkinson*, labourer.—My boy of 11 is at work now, and will be all the year. They go younger than him to pick up potatoes; they go at 7 or 8. So they do to the "pies" (potato-heaps) in winter. It's mostly cold work for these young things. They don't go out much before 10 years old or so for other work. Children and women too have to go out at 8, and leave at 6, summer and winter. Some go at 6. When they go long distances they still only leave here at 6. It's a good place for work, this, I'm never out. Weeding and twitching is done by boys and girls; 15 to a score of them sometimes, under one of the farmer's own men. He'll be about 30 generally; an older man can't manage them. I don't see that any harm comes of their going together. I'm no scholar myself. I shall go to night school this winter. If I'd been a scholar I would'nt have been here. That's why the farmers hold against this 'ere scholarship. I've only had half a year's schooling in my life.

CROFT.

Population 784.

188. *Mr. Marshall Heanley*, landowner and farmer.—Up to 12 the boys can well be spared in the winter. I have a boy of 11 regularly, but he is too young for the winter work. I consider that if we give them reading, writing, and summing we've done our duty by them. I want to see that the boys who are to be our labourers learn how to work in good time. Look at the union boys; they're all schooling, and they are no use anywhere. I tried this year at Spilsby to get them sent to work a bit, to train them, but I couldn't. We've good schools about here. We want a woman's school where I live for the young children; it's four miles from the parish school; that's too far for night schools to be any use. But I don't like night schools; it's an excuse for the lads to be off the premises. I employ one woman all the year, and two or three for threshing; no girls. No women go on my turnip lands. Sometimes a man will take a lot of turnips to top and tail, and then he'll get a little girl or boy to help. Sometimes a man at Burgh will take a piece of land to weed and hire children to do it, but that system is very rare here. I never hire my farm lads by the year; a month's wages and a month's warning is my plan; otherwise, under the new Poor Law, you have to keep them well or ill, and if you don't agree the sooner you part company the better, I say. I've only one confined labourer (my foreman); the rest are taken by the day. Many farmers do the same now. If in my cottages, I let them by the week, and charge 3*s*. a week during 20 summer weeks (when they have garden stuff) and 1*s*. in winter. Waggoner's hours are from 4 a.m. to 8 p.m.; some people say they're too long, but we must have them all the time, and feeding horses is not hard work. Besides, a married man won't go with the horses.

189. *Mr. — Waite*, schoolmaster.—Children go out at 7 or 8 for twitching, boys and girls together, under the foreman; they come back to school rough and rude after it. Boys at 10 go off to topping and tailing in winter; they go much younger than they used to do; 20 years ago we kept them till 12 or 13, now it's rare to keep them after 10. There is no school at the other end of the parish, at Croft Marsh (four miles); no children come here from there. Women go a good deal to work, and so girls are much wanted at home to nurse.

[Four of the children had come two and two had come three miles to school.]

190. The following return of school attendance is from the excellent school of Wainfleet St. Mary:—

Average attendance of boys aged		9 -	321
"	"	10 -	142
"	"	11 -	92
"	"	12 -	18

FRISKNEY.

191. *Mr. John Carden*, farmer.—The worst and most demoralizing employment here is "cockling," picking up cockle-shells on the seashore; it is done by families. The women and girls turn up their dresses to their waists, and walk about with their legs bare. The talk is frightful. The parents don't mind what goes on. All the worst characters of the place are there. They earn so much by it that we can't get them to field work. I should employ more women if I could get them. As to boys and girls going together, there's something to be said on both sides. The great difficulty is how they are to perform the offices of nature in a mixed gang. At Butterwick I've seen a convenience built of sod in the middle of a potato field. We've talked over your education scheme at our board (Spilsby). The union boys and girls are fit for nothing. We have a bit of land for the boys to work on, but I advocate putting them out

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with small cottage farmers to learn their business. We've fewer confined labourers here than on the Wolds; no shepherd or gatherman.

[Mr. Carden's potato gang was composed of three men, nine women, two girls, and 10 boys. Of eight boys examined, two could read a little only, four read and wrote fairly, two very indifferently.]

GREAT CARLTON.

Population 338.

192. *Rev. F. Pretyman*, vicar, rural dean, and magistrate.—The wants of this neighbourhood are summed up in the word "cottages." Previously to the passing of the Union Chargeability Act, there were in this one union 13 parishes, averaging 1,000 acres each, which contributed nothing to the poor rates, there being few or no cottages on the farms. In this parish we are very well off, the principal landowner having built many sets of double cottages. There are now only four bad ones, and of these two will shortly be pulled down. The two others are on glebe lands belongiug to parishes at a distance. In Little Carlton much land has been bought by Queen Anne's Bounty for the endowment of small livings, and there is only one decent house, and not one labourer's cottage. There is scarcely a glebe farm in the district on which there is a good labourer's cottage, and very few indeed have any at all. There should be greater facilities for building cottages on glebe lands. Unless the money is borrowed at a high rate of interest and charged on the living, all the money expended by an incumbent in building is sunk, no allowance whatever being made him if he finds the money, and the more he builds the heavier will be his successor's claim for dilapidations. If a tenant builds in this district, he has a tenant right. Why should not a clergyman who builds cottages, under certain restrictions? Some of the worst cases of crowding take place in May-day week, when all farm and household servants take a week's holiday. I can mention the following cases of overcrowding which had come under my own observation:—At Manby, father, mother, daughter (26), with illegitimate child, another daughter about 20, a son nearly 30, and (very often) another son nearly 20, all in one room. Some time since a case was reported at the Board of Guardians from Grainthorpe, in which the father and mother and seven children were found in a room with only one bedstead, all ill with fever; no window except one in the roof. Here I once found a man and wife, two grown-up sons, one grown-up daughter and her illegitimate child, all in one room. This was done on the sly; they did it by preference, and none of them would leave till I threatened them with the loss of the cottage. On the whole I see nothing which calls for legislation with respect to the employment of women and children in this district. The children attend school fairly well, and they improve in health by working a few weeks in the fields. It is very difficult to get young men to night schools in winter, as they have to cut food for their horses and do other work till nearly 7 o'clock, and many of them have to be up at 3 or 4 a.m. to feed the horses.

193. Extract of Letter from the same to Mr. Edward Stanhope, dated Feb. 26, 1868, on the Subject of Allotments.

So far as I can learn, there are very few parishes in this neighbourhood where the cottages have more land than the gardens round their cottages. The farmers, I think, as a rule, are not very much inclined to encourage them, under the impression that they keep men away from their work at certain seasons of the year. There is often great difficulty in getting straw enough for littering the pig, whose manure ought to go to the allotment where the roots are grown to fatten it. Many farmers won't part with their straw unless it is brought back again in the form of manure, in which case, of course, the allotment does not get much.

GAYTON-LE-MARSH.

Population 331.

194. Extract from Return sent in by the Rev. W. B. Harrison, rector.

There are 30 cottages in this parish; nine belong to the parish, are built of mud and stud (except two), and have one bedroom each. They contain 36 persons, that is, four to each bed-room. Of the others, one has three bed-rooms, seven have two, and 13 have one only. These 13 contain 60 persons, or $4\frac{1}{2}$ to each bed-room. Most of the cottages are of a miserable description.

The average age of the boys at my school is $6\frac{3}{4}$, of the girls $8\frac{1}{2}$.

LEGBOURNE.

Population 512.

195. *Rev. J. H. Overton*, incumbent.—The greater number of the cottages in this parish have only one chamber or sleeping room; in many others the second is a mere closet. Some of the bad ones are parish property, and are the least likely to be improved; others belong to small freeholders. The larger proprietors have built some of a better class. The two worst are on the Alford Road; one of these has two small chambers, in which a man and wife, seven children (one being a girl of 16), and a lodger lived. The lodger has now married the eldest daughter. The other has one chamber only. Our school here, recently built, is well attended; we have the same number there in summer, but they are much smaller than in winter.

196. *Mr. Edward Twigg*, farmer.—I employ no girls, except for harvest. Women weed a little for me. I send my foreman, and he brings a lot of women and boys for a week or two. I don't employ young boys for tenting; they do more harm than the sparrows. But at 10 I want them regularly. I sometimes employ a "confined" labourer, because he has two or three boys, and I reckon on those boys whenever I want them. A girl in my service went home for May-day week holiday this year. Her family live in the Alford Road; there are nine children in all. I asked her how they all got into the one small bedroom they had, and she said that they had laid "like "pins, heads and tails next each other."

[The eldest child of these nine was 14, the youngest 3 months; when I went there the house was locked up, and father, mother, and eight children were in the harvest field. The floor of this and the next house, already mentioned, were below the level of the street. In another cottage, with one chamber, in which a man and wife with three children had just come to live, the woman described it as a great change for the better, and said she never wished to leave it till she died. —E. S.]

197. *Joseph Graves*, 12.—I work for Mr. Clarke. I weed and pick up stones with women, girls, and other boys; only one girl now of 11. Franky goes, he's 8, but he's only just begun. A man looks after us. I work from 6 to 6; rest at 10, and dinner at 1. I get 8*d*. I used to go to school, I went last winter.

[Could read and write well. 4 × 5 is 20.]

198. *Mrs. Lille*, widow.—I have boys of 15, 12, and 10, who all work, and a boy of 8 who goes to tent birds; they go from 6 to 6, and sometimes go to Mr. Twigg's, two miles off. It's too long a day for them; they are often very tired. I get relief from the parish.

THEDDLETHORPE.

Population 300.

199. *Mr Thomas Eve*, farmer.—I farm 500 acres of "marsh" land. There is hardly any one with so large a farm near me; many holdings are 50 acre ones. I employ women for weeding, the same six every year mostly; they work three together, with

no one to look after them. If a man can be trusted why can't a woman? I have two regular boys of 11 and 12, hired by the year. The are difficult to get, because many of the labourers have small holdings and work their own children. Boys of from 9 to 11 get "catch" (irregular) work only; no girls go. We have a good school, with 110 children in it, but very few are over 9. There are 60 labourers' cottages in our parish, of which only six or seven have one chamber only.

ALVINGHAM AND COCKERINGTON.

Population 615.

200. *Rev. A. Scrivenor*, incumbent.—In one of my parishes (Alvingham) there are 26 cottages with one bedroom, 19 with two, and two with three bedrooms. In the other there are 11 with one, 22 with two, and none with three bedrooms. A large proportion of the second bedrooms are only apologies for rooms. In all the cottages with one bedroom there are 115 persons, giving an average of more than three to each.

201. *Thomas Cocking*, schoolmaster.—Our attendance is 46 in winter, and about 42 in summer; just now (August) there are none here except farmers' children, who don't work. The average age of all the children on the books is 9, of all the labourers' children only 8. The custom here is for the children who work to attend school from about November 15 to the end of March, and then we hardly see them till the next November, if so soon. Take Edward Hildred: he is just 10; his father owns two or three cows, and makes more than 1*l.* a week altogether. He has tented for three years to my knowledge. He always comes to school from December to March, never during the rest of the year.

202. *Mrs. Dobbs*, labourer's wife.—I weed and go harvesting, but I go with the threshing machines whenever I can. They come from Louth and bring perhaps two regular hands, and a few "catch work" men. They usually want 11 to 12 men and two women. The women stand on the stage, cut the bands, and feed. It is hard work, but I don't see any danger; when there is, it comes from play. Women don't go before 18 years of age. We generally get 2*s.* a day, and the men 4*s.*; but Mr. —— is "tinkerly" with the women, and will only give 1*s.* 6*d.* The threshing begins in September and lasts on and off till May. In my cottage I have a parlour, where we sleep, and a chamber besides upstairs; but that has no window, it has no hole in the roof.

203. *Elizabeth Wright* (9).—I go out woolpicking in March. I go singling with father, never without him. I went last year and the year before. "Chris" is out now, making bands for mother; he's 7. I go to school in the winter.

WITHERN.

Population 528.

204. Extracts from Return sent in by the Rev. W. P. Vyner, rector, rural dean, and magistrate.

If children go out to work in the fields they must work all the day. They commonly attend school during the winter. I do not think any legislation on this point necessary. Taking 15 per cent. of the population as the number that ought to be in daily attendance at school (I am referring to boys under 10 and girls under 12), I should say that about 10 per cent. of these get no real advantage from the school by their own default in attendance; some few not even attending at all; some so irregularly that what they gain in a few weeks' schooling is soon lost; while some few leave school altogether when 8 or 9 years old. We have no night school. Very few will attend, from the backwardness of grown-up men to be taught like children, their irregular habits, and their being too tired at night. I know of no good night school in rural parishes, and not above two or three in towns.

The cottages here commonly consist of a living room and small pantry and scullery, with one bedroom ever the living room, and an open space over the pantry and scullery at the stair or ladder head. Rent from 4*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* 5*s.* Families often occupy one bedroom in a crowded state, and leave the other unoccupied, unless by a chance lodger.

205. *Thomas Knight*, schoolmaster.—Women don't go very much to work here; them that do go are the most unthrifty class. There is a great deal more work for children than there used to be, especially in the winter. More turnips are now grown; and boys of 9 and upwards are employed for that sort of work here, and are obliged to go Sundays and weekdays alike. In consequence of the increased work, the school age is gradually decreasing; the average age of the children now in the school is nearly 9, of labourers' children only 7½. Most of the families send their children to school; I only know three here that do not.

MARSH CHAPEL.

Population 671.

206. Extracts from Return sent in by the Rev. A. Floyer, incumbent.

Number of persons employed in private gangs in spring, 15 males and 13 females; in summer, 19 and 19; in autumn, 25 and 28; in winter, 14 and 16; two boys and two girls are under 8, four boys and five girls between 10 and 13. In addition to these, 16 males (two under 8) and 38 females are employed in other ways. Field work for women results in loss of self-respect, it tends to coarseness of manners, encourages strong passions, rough language, and general "loudness." I believe it tends on the whole to bodily health. Any restriction had better be left to personal feeling to effect.

The average attendance at school being 84, would, if distance from school were no obstacle, be 88. They should be required, I would suggest, to pass an examination before a Government inspector, proving that they have obtained a certain standard before being allowed to work.

After having heartily tried a night school here, I despair of making the good overbalance the evil in this parish. It will not answer where the roads are unlighted by night (we have an 8 ft. ditch on each side of the road); when all the scholars are tired out by field work, or have horses to attend to at night; where there is not a single person of easy circumstances to assist the lighting and warming of the room, or of leisure and qualification to help in the teaching. One great use of a night school is to bring the teachers, who are usually such persons as have the truth at heart, and exercise a beneficial influence, into contact with those whom it is at all times difficult to reach. A mere conversation then is generally a real good done. I have spread among the cottages, as a substitute, a good number of cheap periodicals, &c.

The cottages are mostly of brick and tile; the ground floor having a room about 12 ft. × 13 ft. in front, and one 8 ft. × 12 f. behind. Above are two bedrooms, one of them often only an enlarged stair-landing. All the householding labourers (except three) have a garden, generally half a rood. The average rent is probably 4*l.*, the owners paying the outgoings.

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207. *Mr J. Short*, Wyberton, woad-grower.—I grow a good deal of woad, and employ women and children in cultivating it. We begin weeding in May. Each family has so much an acre for weeding and pulling it. They pull it twice or even three times in the year. This lasts till the middle of November. The women wear a long thick petticoat, and the men and

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boys wear knee caps. It has to be weeded and pulled on their knees. It's healthy work, all the more so because their faces are close to the earth.

208. *Mrs. Neale*, labourer's wife, Algarkirk.—I work for Mr. Nussey, at the woad. Each family takes as much ground as it can do, and then does it as it likes. We take children as young as 6 or 7; they can do a little. We began in May and finished to-day (Nov. 17). We weed it twice and crop it twice. We have to kneel to work. We don't go when it is very wet if we can help it. I've been sometimes in the factory at 3 a.m. to make the balls of woad, before going to field work. It made a long day. It's slavish, but one must get a living.

209. *Mr. James Barwick*, farmer, Barrow.—I employ 100 children in osier peeling. Probably 250 are so employed in Barrow. It begins on April 10th, and lasts 5 or 6 weeks. The parents break the peel, the children take it off. They are paid 6*d.* a bundle. A woman with a child will do from four to six bundles a day. We pay the mother, and she brings what help she likes. A child of 6 or 7 will often do as much as a woman. The people here prefer it to all other work. There is a good deal of immorality among them, so far as talk goes, because all sorts are mixed together. I was always there myself, and never allowed any swearing or bad talk. Many don't do that, and then they talk and sing "blue" songs.

THE FENS.

210. Table showing the Employments of Women and Children at different seasons.

January.	
February, dibbling beans, for boys and girls over 7 or 8.	
March - - - - - -	Twitching and weeding corn. Women, boys, and girls over 8, in private gangs. In public gangs rather older children go.
April - - - - - -	
May - - - - -	
June - } Singling mangolds. [Osier peeling.]	
July - }	
August - - - -	Harvest, making bands, and tying-gleaning.
September - -	
October - - - -	Twitching, taking up mangolds, and (in small quantities) potatoes.
November - - - -	Treading wheat, for boys and girls in some soils.
December.	

Women and a few boys of 10 and upwards go with threshing machines, the boys only carrying water. Boys of 10, and some women and girls, go with horses. Boys of 6 and upwards tent birds in April and October, and at odd times do other sorts of tenting. Girls and women are but little employed in the East, West, and Wildmoor fens.

DEEPING FEN.

211. *H. H. Tatam, Esq.*, Moulton, Chairman of the Board of Guardians, large owner and occupier.—I don't like field labour for girls; if they do go I am inclined to think that physically it suits them better between 10 and 14 than just after that age. But I object to it, because even if they escape moral contamination, it unfits them for their future life, and makes them unable to make a husband's home comfortable. They can't cook or look after the house, or sew. Many of our labourers' families have to employ dressmakers to mend their clothes, and the result is, that no amount of wage will make the husband well off, because the wife does not know how to make use of the money. It may be that where a family consists wholly of girls, they could ill afford to spare their earnings in the fields, but in most cases our labourers are so well off that they could do so; moreover, they have no excuse for saying that they can't afford their children schooling. I have labourers on my farm earning 25*s.* to 30*s.* a week with their children, yet they are all in rags and tatters because the wife goes out to work. Wages for men at Moulton are at 2*s.* 6*d.* a week all the year round. Some of them will earn 15*l.* and even up to 20*l.* at harvest, with the help of their families, and besides that they will often glean enough wheat to keep them in bread half the year. Then see how they live. I know Kent well, and some of the southern counties, and they are incomparably better off here. Meat here is 2*d.* a pound less than there, it's cheaper than bacon. Single men will eat it three times a day Some of those with families do also. Almost all of them have a bit of bacon for breakfast, a bit in the middle of the day, and a hot supper at night with meat. Of course these remarks apply principally to those in regular work, but all active men with a good character can get it if they choose. The great want here is a better supply of cottages. Deeping Fen is about 16,500 acres in extent, and the population is about 1,100, which is very inadequate, and extra labour has to be drawn from Spalding or Market Deeping. Much of the grass land that formerly existed has been ploughed up. There could not be 1,000 acres of grass land in the whole fen, and the introduction of machinery has only increased the demand for labour. Yet the number of cottages built has been very small in proportion. In consequence of this those that do exist are very much crowded. Lodgers must be taken in, however, by the family. On my own farm I employ very few girls or women, and I never employ a public gang. Boys go very young with horses in my neighbourhood. They will even go as young as 8 or 9, when they are not fit to manage them. I have even seen women with them occasionally. We are very well off for schools. Besides the main village, we have two small villages three or four miles from it, all in one parish. In each of these there is a school, so that everyone is brought within two miles of a school.

212. *Robert Everard, Esq.*, Fulney Hall, Spalding, magistrate, large owner and occupier.

Suggestions for the Employment of Children in Agricultural Districts.

1. The labour of children in this locality is absolutely necessary for the proper cultivation of the land, and the comfortable maintenace of their families.

2. Children under 8 years of age shall not be employed in agricultural labour, except to assist their mothers in gleaning during the time of harvest.

3. Boys not to be employed in agricultural gangs under 10 years of age, nor girls under 12 years. Boys and girls to be in separate gangs.

4. Children under 10 years of age not to be engaged in labour, except, with their parents, provided that if the labour of any child under 10 years of age is required apart from its parent, the parents shall state to the clergyman of the parish, or to the churchwardens, or to the overseers of the poor of such parish, or to any magistrate, the nature of the employment the child is intended to be engaged in, and the distance it will have to walk to reach the place it is to be employed at, when, any of the above-named parties, giving a written authority, the child may be employed apart from its parents.

5. Children under 12 years of age to attend school two days in each week, during the time of their employment, except in the time of harvest.

6. Children to attend school during the winter months when they are not engaged in labour.

7. Certificate of such attendance necessary to enable children to be employed in gangs.

8. Gangs shall not be at their labour before 7·30 in the morning, nor later than 5 in the afternoon, with one hour for dinner.

9. Children under 12 years of age shall not leave their homes before 6·15 in the morning, and if the distance be so great as to prevent them being at their labour at 7·30, the loss of time to be their employers.

10. When the clergymen and churchwardens of any parish, or out-lying district forming part of the parish, shall represent to the magistrates in petty sessions that such parish or district requires a school, but is too poor to raise sufficient funds for the salary of a certificated master, and the said magistrates and clergymen and churchwardens sign a declaration to that effect, Government aid shall be extended to such schools, although a certificated master may not be engaged, and the examination of the children attending such schools, shall be conducted on a lower scale.

213. *Mr. J. Morton*, large occupier at Peak Hill, Spalding.—The result of legislation for public gangs will be great evasion of the Act under the form of private gangs, which will require dealing with just as much. So far as regards the separation of the sexes, I don't see any difficulty in it, but in my opinion girls ought not to go at all. It's dreadful to see the little things coming out wet and draggled. It's as bad for their health as it is for their morals. Farmers could well do without them. I believe the system of farming which requires so much labour of very young children to be no cheaper than mine. I never employ girls, or very young boys. Little boys ought not to go to weeding. It's all very well when the corn is a few inches high, but when it begins to grow, they are not fit for it. In the spring I send my man to get as many boys as he can to weed. When he brought the lot this year, I asked them all their ages, and sent some home as not old or strong enough for the work. With respect to young children, it seems to me that their going to school depends on their employer, and he alone can make them really go; while the minister if he works alone, as some will do, cannot accomplish it. Little boys can well be spared in the winter, and for a month or so just before harvest at any rate; but let them choose their own schools and their own times, and then make them go to school some part of the year. It would soon be known in a village who were certificated boys and who could be employed. Cottages are much wanted, and the only objection to building them is that the question of schooling is made more difficult. But I think that would right itself. One advantage of more cottages would be that the men would get more regular employment. Now many farmers in Deeping Fen employ no men regularly all the year. How can you expect to get good labourers on such a system? I have just about the same number all the year, except harvest.

214. *Mr. Coats Maples*, farmer and assistant overseer, Deeping St. Nicholas.—My farm is 120 acres. I have one cottage and three men live in it. I average four men during the year in my employment. In my parish there are over 14,500 acres, of which 700 are pasture. On this there are only 108 cottages, and two just being built. On Lord Carington's estate of 2,400 acres there are four occupied ones only. Some of the men live in public houses. Wages are at 15*s.* a week. They were 13*s.* 6*d.* a week last winter, but they will not go down this year. I don't think girls ought to go at all. I employ a gang from Deeping, because I can't get my work done. But it's five and a half miles or more to my farm.

215. Extracts from letters to Mr. Edward Stanhope from the Rev. Edward Moore, Incumbent of Spalding, magistrate (January and February 1868).

In Weston St. Mary I let five acres in roods to the labourers at 1*l.* a rood, and I pay rates, tithes, and taxes. This is eagerly sought after. In Whaplode Drove, another living I held for 30 years, I used to let during that period six acres in roods at 17*s.* a rood, which paid rates, tithes, and taxes, leaving the net rent about 15*s.* a rood. One of the tenants told me that he cleared 7*l.* in one year on one rood of this land by growing cabbage plants for sale. In Spalding there are 25 acres, 3 roods, 36 perches let to 91 poor men for 74*l.* 4*s.*, averaging 15*s.* 1*d.* each per rood; seven of them occupy half an acre. It so happens that I am one of the trustees in each case where land is let in allotments to the poor in Spalding. They are most thankful for it. If we had as much more land to let in the same way, it would be gladly taken by them. The advantages to the poor are that they can grow their own vegetables and feed a pig. It employs their leisure hours, keeps them out of idle company and beershops, gives them an interest in their Sunday walk, makes them thoughtful in the cultivation of their gardens, and is profitable to them. They teach their children also to work on the land. I do not allow my tenants to work on their allotments on Sundays, except to gather vegetables before 9 a.m., nor on Good Fridays, Ascension Day, nor Christmas Day, nor when they can obtain work elsewhere, nor do I allow the children to work on the allotments during school hours. I require the rent to be paid punctually the first Monday in August for the current year ending 6th April following, and the crop is not to be removed before the rent is paid. These rules appear stringent, but I have found them work well during the last 30 years. Sir Culling E. Smith once let an 18 acre field in this parish in allotments to the poor. They redeemed the land from a bad state of cultivation to good condition, when he gave them notice to quit, and sold the land at the enhanced value. A permanency or compensation should be guaranteed to the allottees, so long as they pay the rent and manage the land well. Mr. Jonathan Hopkins of this parish lets a small portion of land to 11 labourers, about one rood each at 16*s.* a rood. He ploughs the land, and sows wheat and potatoes alternately, and charges the tenants for seed and labour. I consider this system less beneficial to the labourer than when he occupies his broken days and extra hours in cultivating his own plot.

216. *Mr. J. Leaper*, police superintendent, Spalding.—It's no use separating boys from girls, unless you separate the young girls from prostitutes and the elder women who demoralize them. No girl ought to go to work before she's 10, and then only with those of her own age. They go too far, and work too long; 10 or 12 hours is too much for a young child. I met a gang to-day five and a half miles from here, taking up mangolds. They start now at 6; in summer they will go before. It varies according to the distance, and so does their pay. Boys go very young with horses. The law forbids their going on the high-road with carts under 13. But they are all taught to swear that they are 13; and besides they are mostly employed on the farm, not on a road. Applicants for the police force must be able to read and write. Scores of farm labourers apply who can't even write their names. But I know farmers in the Marsh, some of them living on their own land, who can do no better. There's much less drunkenness here than there used to be. I believe it is partly due to improved education. In May-day week men will spend their earnings in a trip to London, instead of eating and drinking it all away.

217. *Mr. E. Storr*, relieving officer, Spalding.—Girls and boys go too young to work. Boards of guardians won't relieve the parent if the child can get any sort of work. I think their constitutions are undermined by cold and exposure. They don't live

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c.

nature's time. As for girls, it unfits them for service; they grow so uncouth, and their character is so bad. Most of the parents themselves will acknowledge this. And boys and girls ought not to go together. Some of the farmers see this, and won't let them mix, even to pick up potatoes. Men don't get more than 13*s.* 6*d.* a week here, as a rule, and it often falls in the winter.

218. *E. Morris, Esq., M.D.*, medical officer to union.—I have been in practice at Spalding for 26 years. The want of cottages is the great evil here. The rule in Deeping Fen is that the farmhouse is at one end of the farm and the foreman's at the other. The latter lodges all the young waggoners. In many cases there are only two bedrooms in the house. Sometimes even these are passage rooms, and divided from each other by lath and plaster only. In one of these all the waggoners sleep, in the other the family. In attending confinements in such cases I have often had to clear out the adjacent room for decency's sake. The amount of cubic feet of air in such cottages is often very inadequate for health. Field work, as a rule, is wholesome for children. Boys should not go before 7 years old; girls should not go at all, or if they go I would limit the age to between 12 and 15. Children of either sex not to commence work before 8 a.m., or to work after 4 p.m. Morally field work is very injurious, and separation of the sexes should be rigidly enforced in all cases.

219. *Mr. Ashton*, farmer, Deeping St. Nicholas.—I employ a private gang of girls to do my weeding, and I have noticed that they almost all of them bring mutton or meat of some kind to their dinner. I used formerly to live in Hertfordshire, where they used live on bread and onions only. All our corn has to be weeded twice before harvest. Boys are employed very young to lead horses with us. Hardly a harvest gets over without an accident to some of them. Mr. ——— (a farmer), employs women to lead manure carts, and they will often ride astride the horses. He's the only one who does that. Our great want is cottages; it is at the root of all these questions.

220. *Mr. Clement Laxton*, farmer, Pinchbeck.—We are pretty well off for cottages, because a lot have been run up on the waste. But many of them are not fit to put a pig in, and we have no sanitary inspection worth anything. I get a gang at times. I fetch them in a cart. But I won't have girls. I don't think they ought to go at all. I've seen a woman go ploughing.

221. *Mr. Charles Copping*, farmer, Wragg Marsh.—I am six miles from Spalding and five from Weston. I've only one cottage. My man who lives there has six children. He takes in lodgers. There is no school nearer than five miles. The rest of my labour come from Spalding.

222. *Mr. James Holland*, farmer, Pinchbeck Fen.—I occupy 400 acres of Lord Saye and Sele. I've a cottage for my shepherd and no other. Some of the men come four miles.

SPALDING.

223. *Mr. Albert Porter*, bookseller.—I lived 20 years of my life in a part called Little London. Since that I have kept up my knowledge of it through the Sunday school. Sometimes 200 children will come to that. Yet a Mrs. Cross, who tried to begin a day school there, for there is no day school, could only make 8*d.* a day, after paying her expenses. So she has given up that, and is trying a night school there. Last year we had 50 at night school. I don't think many of the children went ever to the schools in Spalding. Last year I taught a Sunday school in another part of Spalding. A large proportion of the children between 10 and 14 who came to it would sit unable to read a single word, or at any rate a sentence.

224. *Mr. J. B. Pratt*, schoolmaster, British school.—I have been here 30 years. During that time I have taught a great deal in the Sunday school, and am able to say from that that education, especially reading, has also advanced a good deal. But only a few years ago I went to Market Deeping on a Sunday. In the school there were 100 or so, of whom 15 or 20 were young grown-up men; hardly one of them could read the alphabet. The children of the labouring class who come to my school—and we do not have the very poor—do not (taking the average of them) leave with sufficient education. Even in the case of those who know a good deal, it is too mechanical an education. In a large school like this the education of the very young ones is mostly done by monitors. I want them to learn lessons which will be instruments for cultivating thought, and I have more faith in the quality than in the quantity of the instruction. The monitors do not know how to develope their intelligence. So, too, I often get good scholars from the little dame schools who can read and spell well. I attribute it to the close personal attention that has been bestowed on them. If a child has a good foundation, then I don't mind their being away all the summer, as they are now, and they come back not much the worse for it. But now they come to me at 6 years old, and at 7 will begin to go to work and to come irregularly. One reason why they come irregularly after they once go to work is that going to work gives them a sort of independence, and makes them masters of their mothers. When they come back, and I put them under discipline, they are inclined to rebel and leave altogether. Now the father is at work all day, and seldom sees them; he doesn't care. The mother does care much more, but the boy is her master. I can always tell what boy in the school have got a good mother. The question, therefore, of the education of girls is the more important of the two. If you stop them from work, what are they to do at home? In my opinion the education of girls is wrongly directed now. The parents all want them educated as teachers and so on, but in the end the girl's place will be at "home," and she should be educated for it. I know one man here who sends his girls six months to school, and keeps them at home the rest of the year to get them "domesticated," as he calls it. He sees something wanting in the mere schooling. The mechanical education I speak of is partly due to the books. Give a boy "Cinderella," and he will devour it, and ask intelligent questions about it; but here in this book I open are passages from Abercrombie and Paley. How can you wonder that the boy learns to read them in a mechanical way, without understanding what he reads.

225. — *Bright*, labourer, Pigeon End, Spalding.—My girl of 8 goes to work: she doesn't go in a gang; she goes to a farmer. I wouldn't let her go in a gang. She goes at 6 and gets back at 6. I have six children. We've two bed-rooms. I've seen 13 or 14 come out of a morning from that house (two doors off), boys and girls and women. We don't know whether they're married or not. It's the same size as mine. They lie as thick as thieves, and they live like pigs.

226. *Mrs. Wilson*, labourer's wife.—I used to go in a gang. I have been six miles to work. I had to be at Little London (two miles off) at 6.

227. *Mrs. Gray*, labourer's wife.—I don't go to work now. My mother sent all her's out at 6 years old to tent birds at 3*d.* and 4*d.* a day. They can't read or write, most of them. I don't know a letter in the book hardly.

228. *John Quincey*, labourer.—I go with a machine. I get 3*s.* a day, but I've not had a full week's work since harvest. I'm out of work now (Nov. 21). I shan't get anything more to do, except odd days. There's lots more like me. The farmers here employ very few men in the winter. My boy is 12; he is tenting now. He gets 8*d.* He first went three years ago, and got 3*d.* He can't read or write, nor can my wife. He'll go to night school this year, if I can. It costs us 14*d.* a day for bread.

229. [*Mrs. Wakelin*, widow, was out at work in the fields. Had nine children. One bed-room. Some of them slept on the floor, some in the small kitchen. A girl of 7 and a boy of 8 left in charge of the house and the younger children.]

230. *Mrs. Kisby*, labourer's wife, Pinchbeck Bars.—I've come to Spalding to complain against a (public) ganger for beating my boy. My boy is 11; he can't read. I can't afford to give nine children schooling. This boy earns 4*s.* 6*d.* a week. My husband only gets 10*s.* I've kept my girls from field work; I don't like it for them. I've worked myself. I've been on machines; I know one woman who lost her arm by it, and one that lost her foot.

[Her husband was a foreman, and really was better off than his wages would seem to show.]

PINCHBECK.

Population 1,518.

231. *Mr. Wilson*, National schoolmaster. — The average age of the children at this school is 7½; it is gradually falling. The children go to work younger than they used. We have fewer labourer's children at school, and they never get into the high standards. The girls used to be older and bigger than the boys; now they are about as young and fewer in number. One reason is, the growth of root crops, such as carrots and potatoes, which require so much young labour. This has improved the condition of the labourer except in this respect, that the farmers get more winter work done in the summer, and employ fewer men regularly all the year.

232. *Mrs. James Green*, labourer's wife. — I've heard tell they want to stop the children. I wish they'd tell us how we're to live, when a man's wages won't keep us in bread. They should just see the poor folks' baker's bill, them that talk so; but I hold with them that says it's not good for girls to go. Mine go in the summer, but it's only with their father or me; they go weeding and flax-pulling. My husband takes out Mr. Aitken's (private) gang. I only go a few odd days; my place is at home. I've six children, and women with a family are better there. Flax-pulling is not hard work; it's the "notion." When you've got the notion, it's easy. There'll be 40 men, women, and children at it. The youngest that goes is 10. They get a bit of schooling. Mr. Aitken gives 15*s.* a week, and employs his men regular all the year.

[Her six children were eating meat pie and suet pudding for dinner.]

CROYLAND.

Population 3,148.

233. *Rev. J. Bates*, vicar.—Our school is turned almost into an infant school in summer. In 1867 our average attendance in January was 141; at the end of March it dwindled to 89, in June to 66: rose again for a fortnight in August to 115, and is now (Nov. 13) rising to 90. This is the rule every year. In the summer only infants and the children of parents raised above the labouring class attend. Some get a little teaching in the Sunday schools who never go to any day school. The labour of children is much required here, but although you cannot divide the day or the week, I don't see why children should not be required to attend school alternate weeks, or better still, so many weeks in the year. They are well enough off here, but rents are high, rising to 5*l.* and 6*l.* The labourers go terrible distances in some cases; they go to Postland and Thorney, each four or five miles off, to Lord Exeter's and the Duke of Bedford's estates.

234. *Mr. Benjamin Hardy*, farmer.—There are three large public gangs here, but we never employ them at taken work, but only by the day. When I myself want children for weeding, &c. I offer higher than gang wages, which are 6*d.* for children, and of all sizes, and the bigger children come to us and work under one of my own men. The gangs are then filled up with little ones, who are pushed out again when I have done with the elder ones. Women don't care to go, but girls do, and I don't know why they should'nt; they ought not to go with boys. The time for starting is 6.30 now, or 6 in summer; they leave off half an hour before the men

235. *Mr. Jackson Boor*, farmer.—Girls ought to be 10 before they go to work; at that age I don't object to their going with their mothers, if they don't go the long distances; but many women send their children out instead of going themselves. Mr. R.——(3½ miles away) has only one cottage on his farm of 700 acres, but he sends a horse and cart in every day for his people. Some of the children go to Thorney Fen or Whaplode Drove (six miles at some points); they start at half-past 5 or 6, and get back at 7. They ought to do distance in the master's time.

236. *Mr. Wm. Hutchinson*, churchwarden.—Out of 200 children going to field work here, I calculate 80 to be in public gangs. The hours are rather longer in private gangs, but the children are older, and better able to take care of themselves.

237. *Mr. Robert Wyche*, farmer.—The cottages here are very bad and crowded; there are a good many with one bedroom. There are some where there are hardly seats enough for all the family, and the children are turned out into the street when the father comes home. Girls go with horses and carts from 10 years old. I find them steadier than the boys. They never sit on the shafts. They get into good places afterwards. Girls and boys are better apart; but the mischief arises in going to and coming from work. You should see the children and women at Croyland; they all meet at the bridge at 6 a.m. before they start for work, and you should hear the talk that goes on then. My plan is to get a lot of men to finish off a job at once, and not to keep a few regularly at it. I send my foreman to get 10 men or as many as I want to do a particular job, and when it's done I pay them off.

238. *Mr. Thomas Hardy*, farmer.—I made an effort together with Mr. Calthorp in 1856 to get the gang system put on a better footing. I had always seen its evils. The more you interfere with gang work the better, if it leads to work being taken by families, as it used to be. I don't like girls going to field work at all without their mothers. The great want is industrial schools. I think in a town like Croyland, such a school could be made self-supporting if washing were taken in and work sold. I took a girl the other day who had worked previously at leading horses in the fields; she was quite "out of her element," could not make a bed or do anything. I remember the riots and the sort of set made against machinery in '30–32. The thing which pacified the men in our district was giving each of them half an acre of land at a nominal rent. Nobody can tell how much it has added to their prosperity. It's that land which keeps our best labour at Croyland.

239. *Mrs. Boone*, labourer's wife.—My girl (8) goes in a gang. She went four miles yesterday. She goes out at 6.30 a.m. (in November).

240. Extract from Letter to Mr. Edward Stanhope from Mr. G. Wilson of Croyland, dated Feb. 8, 1868.

In the year 1831 Sir Thomas Orby Hunter granted 33 acres for the purposes of allotment gardens, and some years after 25 acres more. The Marquess of Exeter, who bought the estate, continued this use of them.

The lands are divided into half-acres and roods, the rent paid by the poor varying according to quality from 33*s.* to 50*s.* per acre. It is payable on the 1st of September in every year, and I think I may say that the loss of rent for the many years that the system has been in existence does not amount to 1*l.* (in 37 years).

As to your second question, the value of the occupation is so appreciated by the labourer, that I should say there are at least 40 names on the list of applicants for any piece which may be at liberty, either by death or removal; this fact induces many good men to remain in this town.

Lincolnshire.
Mr. Stanhope.
C.

The moral effect is wonderful, for with the exception of two or three petty delinquencies, I do not know of any of the holders of the lands being convicted of crime.

DEEPING ST. JAMES.

Population 1,763.

241. *Rev. J. George*, vicar.—In this parish there are 23 public-houses. I reckon this to be about one to every 13 heads of families, excluding some whom I know not to go to them. Public gangs absorb the majority of the children here, and there are a few private gangs. At Market Deeping there are no public gangs, as the children are almost all employed by Mr. W. Holland, a large grower of peppermint and other herbs. Ten years ago there was a great reaction about public gangs, and they were much improved, but they have now got back much into the old course, and I think education has suffered in consequence. This place supplies labour to all the southern portion of Deeping Fen. There is a girls' school here under my management, and a boys' school under the trustees of a charity.

242. *Mr. Edward Pawlett*, large occupier. — I employ a private gang of boys, no girls. If girls go to work they seldom go to service. But I don't think it hurts them in the least; they grow up stronger than other girls, so I don't think they ought to be stopped from working. I begin in March with my gang and keep them right up to the winter. Now (Nov. 27) I've 10 boys only, one of whom is under 13. Of these four can't read or write; the rest can. I asked them to-day, and I was much surprised because I know two of those who could'nt read to have been at school a good deai. In summer boys are much wanted, and a boy of 8 is as good as one of 15, and more manageable. There are lots of boys doing nothing in winter who ought to go to school. Fewer women go than used, and more children.

243. *Mr. G. H. Dean*, schoolmaster.—The labour here for children is increasing. 50 of my children went to work this year, of whom only 17 are back now (Nov. 28). Some of course have left for good. 16 went in public gangs, 28 in private, or to farmers in other ways, and seven worked for their parents only. Some of the children come three or four miles to school. Matthew Baker, 6 years old, comes over three miles. I feel very strongly about the public gang system, and I have considered the effect of the Gangs Act in this district. I don't think the licensing system will answer. The gangmaster may apply at any time. From here he has to apply at Bourn (nine miles off). He will go recommended by all the farmers who employ him, and how are any of us here to know of his application so that we may oppose it. There ought to be some public notice of the intended application.

244. *Ernest Hare* (11), carpenter's son.—I went to Mr. John Holland's in the Fen this summer [private gang]. His near farm is three miles, but he has one farm at Deeping St. Nicholas (six miles). We'd have sometimes to go to t'other end of it (three miles further). I got 7*d.* a day. There were girls and boys there. The girls didn't go from here, they lived in the Fen. Miss Palmer went with me. I went at 5 and got back home at 7. I came back to school last week.

[An intelligent, healthy looking boy.]

245. *Mrs Smith*, labourer's wife.—I've eight children, and my husband's not in regular work. One boy (15), goes to Mr. John Holland's in the Fen. He starts at 5. This week (Nov. 27) it's to be half-past 5 a.m., and half an hour for dinner. My two girls went to Mr. Millington's in the Fen (six miles) and further to weed. They go a little before 6. We go further to glean. I pay 13*s.* a week for bread.

246. *Jane Smith* (9), daughter of above.—I went with Mr. Feilden's (public) gang this year. We went at 6. I got 6*d.* a day. [Could read, and could write a little.]

MARKET DEEPING.

Population 1,337.

247. *Mr. W. Holland*, large occupier.—I grow peppermint and other herbs, which require a great deal of weeding. For this purpose I only have boys, and a few women; no girls. I have a very large number at busy times, under five or six of my steadier men. The younger boys, under 10, I employ all through the summer, from March till November; most of the older ones I want in the winter also. I don't think girls ought to go at all, unless with their families. All girls want "situations" now, not "places." There are plenty of places, but very few situations.

248. *Thomas Osborne*, public gangmaster.—I took out 21 children to-day. I look after them going out and coming home; they walk before me in sight. I have more girls than boys. I should not like my own girls to go to field work at all. I have got three weeks more work, if the weather's open (Nov. 28). Two of my girls are over 15. I have got places for some of them.

249. *Charles Sculthorpe*, labourer.—I take charge of 16 or 18 boys to weed for Mr. Holland. We have some as young as 8. We go out at 6 in summer, and get home at 6. We want the little boys from April till the back end. Boys of 11 or 12 are wanted all the winter. Mr. Holland employs no girls. Girls do go too young hereabouts. My girl (12) went this year in Osborne's gang. He doesn't go far; but some of them go six miles to Mr. Millington's, and two miles down his farm. I know young children who have done so; they go at 6. I don't like my girl to go at all, but I'm obliged to let her go. We set the peppermint in May, then we weed it, and in August we mow it. Boys are wanted for all this. Women go to threshing machines about here, and work on the stand. It's very dangerous for them.

LANGTOFT.

Population 746.

250. Extracts from two letters from the Rev. J. S. Warren, vicar and magistrate.

I am inclined to think the evil done to children physically by field work is often exaggerated. With the exception of very young children, and of girls at a certain age, I believe that living in the fresh air more than compensates for the occasional too great fatigue In 10 years I have observed only one case (that of a girl) of death traceable to exposure in the fields.

I think, however, very differently of the moral evils. Those of the public gang system having been exposed and legislated for, I cannot see how the private gang system can escape. If all employers conscientiously cared for the good of their employees it would be unnecessary to interfere with them; but directly this is not the case, and this is unfortunately too frequent, every evil attending the public gang belongs to the private one, and requires to be dealt with in the same way. I cannot help thinking that these remarks must be extended to all children employed in agricultural labour, nor do I think that their condition will be ameliorated until they are protected by legislation.

The first method that suggests itself is by insuring that each child be brought under education, and I believe that the principles of the Factory Act might be brought into play in agricultural districts. In them the features of demand for labour being a great demand during certain seasons, and then a cessation of demand, the half day plan, or the alternate whole day plan, would be most inconvenient; I do not, however, see that any inconvenience would arise from a child being obliged, before employment in labour, to produce a certificate that he has made a certain number of attendances at some school during the 12 months last preceding; this would enable employers to avail themselves of child labour when most required, and would allow parents to select the times of year, and the kinds

of employment best suited to their children's health and power.

Unless some system be adopted making education either directly or indirectly compulsory, I am satisfied that the indifference, or I might almost say opposition to it, shown by many of the farmers, and the natural anxiety of parents to make their children self-supporting, will cause numbers of our labouring poor to grow up in entire ignorance.

As regards payment, it would be hard to expect a parent, obliged to send his child to school, to pay more than 1*d.* weekly for each child; except, therefore, in the case of an endowment, or of well-to-do and willing parishioners, no efficient school could be carried on, unless it were known that the deficiency would be met from some public source.

But without proper cottage accommodation no great good can be expected. Here again the indifference of a certain class of landlords and tenants seem to demand legislative interference. In this neighbourhood a labouring man cannot pay sufficient rent to make the building of cottages remunerative; though indirectly it becomes so, respectable houses bringing respectable labourers.

I think that the night school though it mitigates, far from supplies the wants of the day school; it requires a better staff of teachers than most country parishes possess, to have a night school for both boys and girls, therefore the girls are mostly neglected; while it demands more thoughtful resolution than can be expected of boys whose early education has been neglected, to cause them after a hard day's work to go through the drudgery of learning their letters and solving sums. In this parish there was last winter an average attendance of only 12.

Children are sent fairly up to 8 years old. They then begin to drop off. After 11 or 12 the idea seems to be that education is complete, and with the exception of the few who attend the night school, no more is received. The result of this appears when they present themselves as candidates for confirmation.

This year, out of 20 boys who came to me, averaging 16 years old, seven could not read at all, and 10 could not write at all, while with others the power was too small to be of any practical use. The girls were better, out of 14, three could not read, and eight could not write.

I cannot see why children should not be employed in the fields as young as 8, provided that they had made their school attendances in the preceding year, but I should like to see this attendance kept up till 15, under an Act analogous to the Print Works Act. Field work for girls is objectionable, making them low, and unfitting them for service, but in some neighbourhoods this seems almost necessary. The older the girls the greater the evil, and if they were only employed in the fields till 12 or 13, no great harm would be done.

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251. Notes by the Rev. H. T. Fletcher, Vicar of Bicker, near Spalding.

(1.) That it is not possible or desirable at present to dispense with the labour of young children in agriculture.

(2.) That for boys who are themselves to become labourers there can be no better employment, provided that a sufficient amount of school teaching be secured to them.

(3.) That it is desirable that girls should be excluded from out-door agricultural labour, but that if such exemption cannot be hoped for at present they should be placed under the same regulations as boys.

(4.) That it could not be possible to place the labour of girls, so different and scattered as it is, under any effective regulation or superintendence, tantamount to that of girls in public gangs.

(5.) That education should not be made compulsory, but that a certificate of school attendance should be required in the case of all children employed in agriculture, whether by parents or others.

(6.) That no child under 12 years of age should be employed at all in agriculture without a certificate of school attendance for 120 days, or 240 half-days, durings the preceding 12 months; or of 60 days, or 120 half-days, during the preceding six months.

(7.) That no child under 9 should be employed in agriculture without a certificate of school attendance for 180 days, or 360 half-days, during the preceding 12 months; or of 90 days, or 180 half-days, during the preceding six months.

(8.) That the present system of education should be made more widely effective by affording tentative assistance (where needful) to produce results.

In forwarding these notes Mr. Fletcher adds (March 19, 1868):—

"I believe these to be in accordance with the views of the neighbouring clergy and gentry, and most of the employers. It is obvious that some difficulty would arise as to the school certificate, pending the establishment of the needful schools, where no sufficient provision at present exists. In such cases a period of three years grace would have to be allowed, or certificates accepted for that time from dame schools, or even from parents, that such teaching is given as may be practicable. Within that period (still further extended possibly in a few exceptional cases) I feel sure that the additional schools required may be provided. The farmers and landlords will assist in the good work, when it becomes their interest as well as their duty to do so. There is a large amount of money left for charitable purposes in many of the parishes which could be made available. The remaining deficiency might require a grant; I am opposed to the principle of local rating for the purpose. It is clear that in any system of local rating an area would be taken which would include one or more parishes or places already well provided, perhaps at much cost and sacrifice; and that to tax these heavily for the shortcomings of their neighbours would be most unjust. Should any parishes or places, however, remain obstructed it might be necessary after a certain time to lay the needful rate upon them."

252. Extracts from the Return sent by Mr. Fletcher to the Children's Employment Commission in September 1865.

The children are generally employed in this parish, not in large gangs, but as assistants to the parents or other workmen who take work from the farmers at a certain sum per acre, &c. In some cases the farmers pay the children themselves by the day.

Until quite lately children were employed to a great extent in helping the men who go about with the threshing machines. The number of children thus employed is now much reduced. This employment is very bad. The men who attend these machines are generally a class that the farmers will not have as regular men. Their work is very irregular. When they are employed they get high wages, and the rest of their time they spend in beer houses.

Tenting cattle is another bad employment for children. Girls as well as boys are employed at this work between 10 and 14 years of age. They may be seen in our roads and lanes tenting cows, and in the dry season they are employed to tent pigs and sheep in the fen lands. The children have little to do all day but to lie about, or sit together and play, with no person to control them.

During the spring and early summer the same class of children are employed in weeding corn.

Comparing the children of the labouring class here with those in the manufacturing district with which I was previously acquainted, I should say that their intelligence is lower, and that they are far more prone to indecent language and immoral practices. I could mention cases of early depravity on the part of female children of which I had no experience whatever during 15 years residence among cotton spinners. I can certainly trace the origin of some

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of these cases to the employment of young girls and boys in the fields. I am now speaking of children of 13 and 14 years of age. Of course the insufficient sleeping accommodation for families is a very prominent evil.

I am convinced that nothing but some legislative interference can insure to these children anything like a necessary amount of education to fit them for their station as labourers. I do not mean that they require anything more than the simplest education in point of learning. Of course it cannot be expected that a labourer on 12*s.* a week with a large family on his hands can resist the temptation of 3*s.* to 6*s.* a week; but I think something may be done. I should say that the attempt to educate these children by means of night schools is unadvisable. The night school necessitates the children or young persons going home in the dark.

253. Number of Children under 14 years of age employed during August 1865 in 23 parishes in North Holland, as under.

Parish.	1. Weeding and Wood Gathering.		2. Tenting Cattle on the Roads.		3. Working with Threshing Machines.		Remarks.
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	
Sutterton	1	—	—	—	—	—	At this season of the year there is no weeding, and but little threshing. Some of the children who follow those employments are now engaged wood gathering, but the larger portion are helping their parents to harvest or glean, and do not appear in my return.—H. T. F.
Wigtoft	2	—	2	—	—	—	
Algashirk	9	3	1	—	—	—	
Fosdyke	6	2	2	—	—	—	
Kirton	16	—	6	2	—	—	
Frampton	16	—	4	1	—	—	
Wyberton	2	2	2	1	—	—	
Skirbeck	4	2	—	1	—	—	
Wrangle	28	3	16	5	11	—	
Leake	15	6	12	4	2	—	
Leverton	6	5	4	3	—	—	
Brinington	8	6	5	6	7	—	
Butterwick	14	4	4	—	—	—	
Treiston	12	2	6	2	—	—	
Fishtoft	20	8	5	—	—	—	
Skirbeck, North.	20	10	2	—	6	—	
Boston Long Edges.	10	4	4	3	6	—	
Bicker	—	—	3	1	—	—	
Donington	—	—	5	1	2	—	
Gosberton	—	—	5	4	2	—	
Quadring	—	—	3	2	—	—	
Surfleet	3	1	3	1	2	—	
Swineshead	—	—	4	—	—	—	
	192	58	98	37	38	—	
	423						

254. *Rev. W. Stockdale*, vicar of Morton.—In summer every child over 8 is employed in weeding here, girls as well as boys. Till last year men were not fully employed in winter, but now they all are, and the demand for children's labour is so great, and the wages given them so high, that the parents cannot resist the temptation of sending them, although (as some of them have often told me) they would rather not. This is of course especially the case with the girls. Girls that go to work for some time get unsettled habits and are unfit for anything else. Where they have done so, they never get into a good sort of household service, but only the most inferior. Mixed gangs are not generally employed here, but I don't think young girls ought in any way to go to field work. Lunch at 10 is a principal meal for field workers here. Dinner from 12 to 1 is not made much of a meal, but the great one is after they come home, when they have their meat or bacon, which in almost every family they eat every day. Women go weeding a great deal in summer. The worst time for weeders is when the corn is very high. The children weed till the corn is far beyond their middles, because in these fens the "hareiff" (goose grass) is very troublesome. And when it is suddenly wetted by a shower, it becomes an injurious sort of work for them. We can't depend on a boy staying at school at all after 9, and in the summer the school becomes almost an infant school. Weeding lasts so long here, and children of 8 can work nine months in the year. Parents also are too indulgent, and won't send them to school when they can; there is still great carelessness about it. Some few plead poverty; but all the men are earning 15*s.* a week, and extra money by contract work. But I am sorry to say that in many cases the more employment the more drunkenness. Public houses are our great evil, and the crowding in cottages. A good many cottages are very insufficient; very few have more than two bedrooms, some have only one.

255. Extract of letter to Mr. Stanhope from William Parker, Esq., Hanthorpe House, magistrate, dated Jan. 17, 1868.

(1.) I first commenced to let allotments about 35 years ago, starting with the most deserving labourers in my parish, about 40 in number, and I have come to the conclusion that one rood ought never to be exceeded. My rents for these are all 10*s.* per rood, the land being very good, say worth 45*s.* or 50*s.* per acre to a farmer, so that even half a rood is a nice labourer's garden. More than one rood causes too great an infringement upon the labourer's time, tempting him to trench too much upon his master, by taking half an hour or an hour occasionally out of his day's work; then again half an acre invariably results in the use of the plough, which I never allow; one rood is used for corn, one for potatoes. This looks nice at the first glance, but the objections are that the work gets done by hire (unless the labourer can beg the ploughing of his employer), that thus it often gets done indifferently; and that, as the land is bearing a crop every year, half potatoes, half corn, it must result in failure, unless the cultivation is very good, and the quantity of manure very ample. I endeavour to place the land as near as I can to the labourer's cottage, which is a great advantage, as in the spring and summer he can get his hour on it in morning and evening very well.

(2.) In my parish the desire to obtain their allotments is very great, in spite of the potato disease, and I cannot give you a stronger proof than this, that a set of labourers will frequently unite to take from a farmer a field or part of a field, which the farmer is intending to fallow, on the following terms: the farmer manures and ploughs the land and takes half the produce, the labourer finds the seed potatoes, plants, hoes, and weeds the whole, and gets up the crop; or, the farmer manures and ploughs the land, and makes it ready for setting, and the labourer sets and does all the after cultivation, paying from 6*l.* to 8*l.* per acre according to the quality of the land.

(3.) I believe that this system, as a rule, has a favourable influence upon the condition of the labourer, particularly if the allotments are let under proper restrictions, such as the requiring of a proper observance of the Sabbath, and habits of sobriety and honesty. All this reasonable control may generally be imposed without difficulty by the proprietor, and even the occupier will help his deserving labourer in this way; though I may here remark that the farmers are for the most part opposed to larger allotments than one rood.

256. *Capt. C. Parker*, Abbey Parks, magistrate.—Some simple limitation of the distance to which children should be allowed to go on foot to work would be desirable. If under 12 they ought not to be called upon to go more than two miles. Restrictions, however, upon children's labour will, I fear, have the effect of raising the price of men's labour, and this will be very hard upon the small farmers, who always pay a higher rent in proportion than the larger. Wages are high already, and do not represent the condition of a labourer's family, for gleaning is a large source of profit in good years. I knew one woman with a family who gleaned enough to keep them all in bread for a twelvemonth.

257. *Mr. Thos. Lawrence*, large occupier at Haccomby and chairman of Bourn board of guardians.—You will find in the Fens (speaking generally) two sorts of soils, the silty loam and the black peat. The boundary between the two in our district is the Car Dyke. The latter grows weeds of all sorts to such an extent as to require many months weeding, even after the corn begins to get high. My weeding sometimes costs me 10*s.* to 15*s.* an acre. It must be done by children, because, although you might hoe out the weeds between the lines, you can't hoe them out in the rows, but must take them out by hand. I don't see why boys shouldn't do this at 8 years old. They are even fit for some purposes before this, such as picking twitch. Girls can't be spared altogether, but the sexes ought to be separated entirely at work. It would be no hardship to the small farmers to be in this way compelled to employ boys only or girls only. We always let the children go distance in the master's time, in Deeping Fen they do not. This is because here we (the occupiers) live in the towns; there they live in the Fens and can be themselves on their farms at 6 a.m. Girls generally go at 7, but if they are to go in a lot with boys, often at 6. That is too early for them if they have anything to do at home. Children can get enough schooling by 8, if they go every winter afterwards, but there are families here that never send their children at all.

258. *Mr. Ed. Healey*, large occupier at Rippingale.—We have little girl labour here, and I object strongly to it; it's very unseemly and contaminating for them. When I was 9 I worked in the fields myself at weeding time, and I know very well the sort of language and conduct which goes on there. No girl under 12 or 13 ought to be allowed to go; that's the time when the evil is done. If they did not go the parents could get them into small service sooner, and so train them up for their duties in life; but if they once go to the fields they don't care about service. If they go after 13, males and females ought to be separated. It would be an advantage to the small farmer, because children now prefer the large mixed gangs, and won't to go to a small farmer. Boys go much too young with horses here; it's very dangerous to themselves and others. Two boys have been killed in my service in this way, and yet they were much older than many that go. They will go at 8 or 9 with a horse and cart. They lead the horse if they meet any one; at other times they are driving, or riding on the shafts.

259. *Mr. T. Casswell*, large occupier at Pointon.—The one great complaint I make is as to the overcrowding in cottages, especially at May-day week. At that time the parents will sometimes sleep on the bed, and the children on the floor under it. But at all times it is very bad. Many proprietors of cottages don't care what happens as long as they get their rent. In one of our poor houses I found a boy of 15 and a girl of 12 had been sleeping in the same bed for some time. The drainage is very bad in some of these towns. At Pointon there is an open sewer running down the street, which is quite stagnant in summer. You will find it in the line of villages at the edge of the Fen. The relieving officer is the inspector of nuisances. I think that a most unfit arrangement; 10*l.* extra is given to him for it, and he has not time to do the duties properly. They never do anything unless actual complaint is made to them.

260. *H. George, Esq., M.D.*, Revesby (in large practice in the upper Fen district).—I find flat feet a common complaint among young labouring men in this district. I attribute it to the rigidity of the boots they wear preventing any movement of the foot in them. I find rheumatism prevailing largely among adult men of 40 or 50 years of age; I attribute this to the climate, and not to working at too early an age. I have little experience of female field work; but as to the lads, I don't think the work they now do, or their hours (from 6 to 6), at all injures them. Tenting is the most starving sort of work. On the contrary the improved diet they get from their earnings by field work adds very much to their development. They have little calf to the leg, and not much development of the biceps muscle, but this is caused by the nature of the work they are required to do.

BILLINGBOROUGH.

Population 1,149.

261. *Mr. Sills*, farmer.—Great demoralization ensues from boys and girls being allowed to go together to work. I think that at any rate the older girls and women ought to be obliged to work alone, if indeed you do not separate the sexes altogether in work. But this would be rather hard on small farmers, who only want four or five children to do their weeding. And besides this, when a small number go together, the man who is with them can look after them better, and can really be responsible for them. I think you might fix a limit, say five or six; and in any larger gang than that separate the boys and girls. I separate them altogether, and send out the boys under a man, and the girls under a woman. The overlooker of a private gang has generally nothing to do with them during meal times, and then it is that the bad effects ensue. As an instance I may mention that not long ago I was passing one of our farms in the fen here, where a lot of big boys and girls where employed for weeding; I saw the boys all bathing before the girls.

262. *Mrs. Grocock*, labourer's wife.—I don't believe in girls going at all to work. I'd sooner let mine go on 'taters and salt. The boys and girls will go here to the farmers at 6 and 7 years old. Those poor little things of Betsy Frere's go. They're not as high as my little one there (8). And there's not one out of 10 of those that look after them that does't use badness to them. My youngest boy's 11 now. He works at Sempringham House; he went out at 7 first, and he has worked there ever since, summer and winter, snow and all weathers. He goes turnipping in winter. He goes out at a quarter before 6. My other boy (17) began at 7 years old. He'd lead horses; at harvest time he'd be leading till 11 o'clock at night. There's plenty of lads of 7 will take care of a pair of horses. I think it is very dangerous. I heard they talked of stopping it two years ago, but they've done nothing. They ought.

263. Report of a House to House Visitation of Billingborough, by William Cumberworth and Demetrius Glenn, January 1868.

—	From 2 to 7 Years of Age.	From 7 to 10.	From 10 to 14.	Totals.
Boys -	67	49	63	179
Girls -	75	32	31	138
	—	—	—	317

We find that there are 317 children in the parish over 2 and under 14 years of age.

Attendance at School.

	Boys.	Girls.
Alenson's (parish)* - -	34	—
Glenn's (private)† - -	24	—
Miss Barber's (ladies) -	—	7
Mrs. Iszatt's - -	3	17
Miss Hill's - - -	7	30
Mrs. Clarke's - -	2	10
Miss Pickworth's - -	9	20
Mrs. Tooms' - -	4	1
Totals -	83	85

showing an attendance at school of 168.

* With an endowment of 40*l.* a year.
† Payment quarterly: a higher class of school.

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The evening school is held four evenings in the week from 6 to 8 o'clock, from October to March. The number on the books at Christmas 1867 was 80, with an average attendance of 73, the ages of the pupils varying from 7 to 48. The teachers are all voluntary, except the superintendent, who is paid. Each pupil pays 2*d.* weekly.

Sunday School.

—	On the Books.	In attendance on Jan. 12, 1868.	
		Boys.	Girls.
Church School -	54	21	9
Wesleyan School	167	51	57
Baptist School -	42	9	5
	263	81	71
		152	

The population of Billingborough is 1,149 (census, 1861), and there are 317 children between 2 and 14 living at home.

Out of this number, 149 attend no day school, and 52 are on the books of no Sunday school.

Of the 80 on the books of the night school, there are 49 under 14 years of age* who are not attending day schools, and two only who attend both day and evening schools.

(Signed) W. Cumberworth,
Churchwarden.
D. Glenn,
Assistant overseer.

HORBLING.

Population 546.

264. *Rev. H. Harris*, vicar.—Women and girls work here, but it is the exception. Many of our farmers don't like it; Mr. Dean, one of our largest, does not. Boys go of 8 years old to pull weeds and twitch; they go to get up mangolds, too, and single turnips. They go as young as 8 to lead horses in manure carts. A few odd girls go to weed. In the last 20 years almost all the cottages have been rebuilt here. We have a good night school, with an attendance last year of 26 in all.

BILLINGHAY.

Population 1,403.

265. Extract from Returns sent in by the Rev. E. Jenkins, Vicar.

The employment of females in agriculture interferes very much with their proper training for domestic duties, but in the weeding season in the fens it cannot be dispensed with.

There is no school in this place at present, either National or of any other denomination, for the use of the poor. There are six small private schools, chiefly attended by the children of the poor. Few of them can afford to put more than one child at a time in a private school. Moreover, when work is scarce in winter, and the children could best be spared, the parents have no money to spare. Only three out of the six private schools give anything like sufficient instruction.

[There are two landowners (non-resident) drawing, say, 500*l.* and 3,000*l.* a year from the parish. One (a lady) gave 1*l.* towards the building of a school; the latter nothing. The rest of the land held by small proprietors.]

266. *Wm. Stennett*, relieving officer and inspector of nuisances.—Small freeholders of from 2 to 40 acres own most of the soil. They are more indifferent to education than the hired labourers, or, if not indifferent, sometimes less able to afford it. Some of them are paying 3*l.* or 4*l.* an acre for borrowed money. Land sells for over 100*l.* an acre. A great many children are employed by them here in carrot weeding; this has to be done on the knees, but it is mostly done by boys. We have several public gangs.

267. *Mrs. Dickinson*, labourer's wife.—I've five children. The oldest boy (13) has been to school a little; he can read; he has been four summers to work. My girl (11) has been two years. The first thing they do is dropping beans. A man will go with four children, boys or girls, who follow him and drop the beans. They get 6*d.* a day. There will often be three lots like this in one field. We want the money badly, so they must go. Wages are 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, but there isn't work in winter for all the men. We've only one chamber to sleep in.

[This was one of a row of seven cottages, with one bed-room each; only two privies. They belonged to the inspector of nuisances.]

NORTH AND SOUTH KIME.

Population 1,004.

268. *Rev. H. S. Neucatre*, incumbent.—There is a good school here, built by Lord Brownlow. Mr. Cust (the present owner) has rebuilt most of the cottages. Some of the old ones still remain. There is also a good school at North Kime (two miles off).

269. *Mr. Futcher*, schoolmaster.—From June to October the school is almost deserted for work; some go as young as 6. Treading wheat after sowing is a very large employment for young children here. Girls do a great deal of work; some of them go tenting all the summer. Many come to school only two months in the year.

HOLLAND FEN.

270. *Mrs. Jackson*, Barley Sheaf Inn, labourer's wife.—I have four boys at work. One is in service, one (13) is carrying water for the threshing machine, two others (11 and 9) are tenting pigs or leading horses in the manure carts. They are not scholars. Nobody's are less so. They can't read. My boys have mostly started to work at 6 or 7 years old, and worked ever since when they could. I expect my youngest boy will get work all this winter at odd jobs, dragging turnips, and so on. They go weeding to Mr. Teesdale. He employs a lot of bairns, as many as he can get, and as young as they can go. He has 16 or 17 at weeding times, boys and girls. He has six boys now. At weeding young Williams used to take care of them a few years ago. He was 24. Now it's an old soldier. He won't let them speak, he's strict with them. The weeding and singling will often go on in this way from May day to harvest. Most of the farmers here employ more women than bairns. Many small farmers have one woman regularly. The women go out at 8, though some make them come by 7 and work till 6. If the corn is ever so wet in the early morning they have to go into it. We've been wet round the waist many times pretty nearly all day. But all the boys, even the little ones, have to be at work at 6, and leave off at 6. They'll have to leave home many of them soon after 5. It is a long day for them, and they only stop one hour for dinner. Many of the men here have to go a very long way to work. If they're tramp hands with a machine they have to go wherever it goes. My husband and one of my boys left home at 5 this morning to go three or four miles to work Two nights last week he wasn't back till half-past 8, and he got nothing extra for it beyond his 3*s.* My brother's by the Ferry (more than three and a half miles). In winter the men don't get regular work, but in summer there ain't enough of them. Mr. Teesdale had nearly 30 Paddies on at harvest. There were no women. One old man used to bring his wife, and she slept in the granaries

* [Of this number 10 were only 8 years old or under, 11 were 9, and nine were 10 years old.—E. S.]

like the rest. Some of them will stay all the year, but most of them will go away before Christmas, when it gets too cold to sleep in their sacks. They don't pay Paddies so much. It's very hard on us. Our harvest only lasted three weeks this year. We've only one chamber, and a closet for the two big boys. Almost all here have only one chamber. There's a cottage close by with only one room for sleeping and all. Our rent is 3*l.* 15*s.*, and we pay the rates too. [A slovenly and tumbledown cottage. There were many close by just as bad. They belonged to small freeholders.]

271. *Mr. Joseph Shipley*, schoolmaster.—Our lowest charge for schooling here is 2*d.*, and this school supplies a large extent of country in this parish and the 40-foot drain parish. But there are many who won't send their children, and some who send them only for a month. They are indifferent to it. There's a private school at Chapel Hill (three miles), and a school at Toft. Some of the children come nearly four miles to school here. I am astonished how they do it, as the roads are almost impassable in winter, very bad walking. Just now all the children are out potato gathering. They will come back at the end of the month. After they have been out at field work I notice the difference. They seem to want breaking in again. Girls go a great deal here. They will be employed this month (October) in topping and tailing mangolds. They don't go to the machines. Boys go to carry water. It's very dangerous for women. I've heard of two or three accidents lately.

MOUNT PLEASANT.

272. *Mr. J. C. Breathwick*, registrar and private schoolmaster.—I have been here 41 years. I keep a private school. I charge 2*d.* There is no other school near this. There are, however, a good many children here who neither go to school nor work. That is, even when they can't get work they don't go to school. There are several such families. They're ignorant themselves and don't see the value of it. I like field work for boys and girls. Those that go into the field and labour for the bread that perishes, &c., are the healthfullest children. But there is harm in boys and girls going together, though it's the crowded cottages that are at the bottom of the immorality. There is a place close to this (in Sibsey parish) which is called "The Rookery," and contains the following houses. In these—

1. With one small room to sleep in, live a widow, grown up son, and three other children.
2. With one room, live father and daughter aged 14.
3. With one room, live man, wife, and three children.
4. With two small rooms, man, wife, and five children.
5. With two rooms, man, wife, and son. Not amiss.
6. With a parlour to sleep in, man, wife, and widowed daughter, with two children.
7. With a parlour to sleep in, man and wife. Not amiss.

Most of them are sad places to dwell in. We've no inspector of nuisances who ever comes here, and there should be. We have not enough cottages about here, and lots of men lodge with the foremen all the year. Some farmers will have 10 or 11 of them. Then there are the Irish. Some of these stay all the winter, and sleep in the granaries in sacks. You'll see 12 or 14 of them lying close together. Not many young girls go to work here. Boys go at 6 or 7, but they don't do much winter work before 12. They take up mangolds with their fathers at the "back end," but they don't go much in winter. Women go on the turnip lands.

[There are parish schools at Thornton-le-Fen and Carrington. That at New York is closed, and replaced by a very poor private school. Carrington contains 2,400 acres, and only 20 cottages. Labourers come two to four miles from Bolingbroke.]

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273. For the following valuable notes on schools in a large part of the marsh and fen district I am indebted to the Rev. W. S. Thomason, vicar of Burgh-le-Marsh.

The survey which I have made includes the 12 deaneries of Bolingbroke, Calcewaith (1 and 2), Candleshoe (1 and 2), Hill (1 and 2), North Holland (1 and 2), Louthesk, and Ludborough (1, 2, and 3).

A small portion of this land is on the wolds, but it is chiefly a marsh and fen district, which extends from a point about five miles south of Grimsby to Fosdyke Bridge, the border of Holbeach parish. The acreage of the whole is a little short of 400,000; the population 106,767. There are 196 parishes (civil), and 139 ecclesiastical districts. Thirty-two of these districts have no school at all; but they are all very small parishes,* and the total population of them is 4,400. They have in most cases schools in other parishes quite close to them, and often have helped to build and support schools for their neighbours on the understanding that their own children share in the benefit of them.

Twenty-eight towns and parishes received a share of the grant administered by the Committee of Council in 1866. The population of these aided parishes is 50,646, about one-half of the whole district surveyed. The acreage is 88,273, rather less than one-fourth of the same district. It cannot be denied that these 28 schools, taken together, are on the whole by far the most efficient; the working of the Revised Code is such that a certain amount of instruction is secured throughout the whole school. If the teaching is pursued vigorously, the grant rises in proportion; as the school teaching declines in energy, so the grant diminishes. Thus 13 schools have failed to keep up to the mark the system requires, and have dropped out. On the other hand, some high-spirited schools are rising out of the list of Table D (45 schools unassisted by grant or endowment), and will in future years have earned a share of the public grant. The majority of these 45 parishes (containing a population of 17,395) have poor schools. A master is selected not because he is earnest and hearty in teaching, but because he will undertake the work for a very low salary. He generally ekes out his living by taking all the "parish writings," measuring land for the farmers in summer time, and helping little tradesmen to make out bills. The general sense of the county is in favour of attending school during the winter months; the labourers are anxious that their children should learn during that time all that they can, and are grateful to those who afford them help. The employers of labour do not wish the children to be wholly ignorant, but think that a very moderate share of scholarship is sufficient. Their view is that "more than a little is by much too much;" they are afraid that the labourers will be spoilt for field work. Between the masters and men stands the clergyman. If he will throw himself heartily into his school work, the labourers will be pleased, and the farmers, though they may grumble a little, will never interfere; they will simply mark their sense of the unwisdom of the parson by refusing to give more than a small subscription to the school, not so much, I believe, from stinginess as from a desire to keep the school below a certain level of efficiency. There are very few or no resident gentry, and the passive resistance offered by this plan can only be met by adopting one of two courses—either the clergyman must support the school out of his own pocket, or make a vigorous effort and bring the school under the system of the Council Office. The latter course is the one he will take if he be wise and has the means. The prejudice against it will die away in time, and a most valuable and powerful support to religion, order, and good living is maintained, with the immediate approval of all the better and more sober labourers, with the co-operation of the best class of farmers and their wives, and in the long run with the general approval of all. Besides this, a school is much

* [Seventeen of them contained a population of less than 100.—E. S.]

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more likely to be permanent which is founded with the help of the whole parish than the school which depends only on the will of one man. The clergyman is universally acknowledged as the head of the school in either case, and has no difficulty whatever in carrying out his views. He is recognized almost unanimously as the religious teacher of the young. The system of Methodism, which is the only form of dissent which has any hold in the country districts, does not attempt to deal with children in day schools, and Wesleyan day schools are practically secular schools, and a return of such schools supported without government aid would be blank.

The present government schools may be considered as the salt of elementary education; their indirect influence is very powerful, and the more widely they are distributed, the more the system as a whole is likely to be accepted and worked out. Had a despotic government been anxious to try the experiment of government schools, and so spread them over the country as to make them available to the greatest number of people, it could not, with a map of the country and statistical tables before it, have made a more judicious distribution than has been effected in this district. There is hardly a house in the whole district which is not within three miles, as the crow flies, of one of them, the deaneries of Holland being an exception, as they are very rich in endowments.

If a government school is, generally speaking, the best school, there is no doubt that an endowed elementary school is generally the worst. The master is generally appointed by local trustees on other grounds than those of ability and industry in teaching; and when he is installed he looks upon his post as a freehold, and insensibly sinks into idleness. It is very difficult indeed to found and maintain a national school in the parish, because the parishioners look upon the endowment as freeing them from all obligation to support a day school. There is also always a fear that the endowed school may be aroused into activity and absorb the children of the new institution; government will afford no aid; there is a dead lock.

I venture to make a few suggestions with regard to such schools:—

(1.) It should be unlawful for trustees to appoint to an endowed elementary school any master who has not either a certificate of fitness of the Council Office, or a certificate of success in the local examinations of the universities. (2.) The masters should be paid by a fixed payment, from 50*l.* to 70*l.*, and by a payment for results obtained, after the manner of the Revised Code, from the funds of the endowment, if sufficient. (3.) All idea of freehold in the office should be swept away. (4.) All endowed elementary schools should be under government inspection.

This subject is important in regard to this district, because the fund available for educational purposes by endowment is computed at no less a sum than 6,500*l.* a year, exceeding by 2,000*l.* a year the annual grants of the Committee of Council to the whole of Lincolnshire.* The results of the sum spent from endowments and that from the educational grant are most grotesquely disproportionate. The system of elementary education may be considered complete when a good national school is within reach of the vast majority of the inhabitants. The acreage that a first-class elementary school will conveniently cover is about 8,000, the population of which should be 2,000. Fifty of such schools would suffice, but the population of course is not so evenly distributed, and in practice perhaps 80 schools of the first class would be required. Of these, 28 already exist in working order in all the most important places; the rest are nearly all on the spots required, though from endowment or some other cause they do not yet receive a grant. Perhaps three or four new ones would be required. Subsidiary to these, and earning a smaller grant, should be infants' and dames' schools for remote country places.

* [Besides 10 schools inspected by the Middle-class School Commissioners in this county, there are no less than 25 in this district assisted by endowment.—E. S.]

274. (*a*) TABLE showing school attendance in the Wapentake of Avcland (excluding Bourn).

Population, 1861.	Number of Children on the Register of Schools.			In average Attendance.		Per-centage on the Register to Population.	Per-centage to Population of Children in average Attendance.	
	Under 6.	Over 6.	Total.	In Summer.	In Winter.		In Summer.	In Winter.
8,138	465	812	1,277	692	913	15½	8¼	11

(*b*) TABLE showing school attendance in the Wolds, Cliff, and Heath Districts (being those where there is both winter and summer work for children), as indicated by returns from 17 parishes, containing an aggregate population of 13,970.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	544	396
Between 10 and 13 -	190	105
Girls:		
Under 10 -	580	398
Between 10 and 13 -	210	145

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	678	519
Between 10 and 13 -	254	169
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	801	435
Between 10 and 13 -	298	219

Night schools existed only in four parishes out of these 17, and in winter only. The total number of night scholars was 86.

(*c*) TABLE showing the same in the Fen Districts, as indicated by the returns from 10 large parishes, with an aggregate population of 13,122.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	401	273
Between 10 and 13 -	113	23
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	374	260
Between 10 and 13 -	136	75

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	519	401
Between 10 and 13 -	181	117
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	426	332
Between 10 and 13 -	153	135

Out of 17 parishes in this district, three only had night schools.

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THE HALF-TIME SYSTEM OF EDUCATION, AS CARRIED ON AT RUDDINGTON.

275. PAMPHLET, entitled "Results of an Experiment on the Half-time System of Education in Rural Districts," by Charles Paget, Esq., M.P. (Bell and Daldy, 1859).

Having seen the advantage of the system of factory education, it occurred to me that the same principle might be introduced into rural districts.

In November 1854, I determined to employ eight boys on my farm, to do the work hitherto performed by four, each boy spending half his day at work and half at school, relieving each other, so that I should always have four on the farm and four at school. I found an inconvenience in this arrangement; when the boys' clothes were wet and dirty, from their morning's work, they were unfit for school. I therefore changed my method, and the boys now work on alternate days.

After four years' experience, I speak confidently of the satisfactory working of this system. As an employer of labour I have every reason to be satisfied with it. The boys having an alternate day of rest, work with more pleasure and spirit; and I have no difficulty in finding as many willing to accept employment on these conditions as I want. The parent, who might feel the entire loss of his son's wages to be too great a sacrifice, is willing to forego one-half the amount to secure him the advantages of an education which does not interfere with the acquisition of the knowledge which is essential to his power of maintaining himself at an early age.

The great advantage, however, is to the children themselves. They are never weary, either of school or of work. Their progress is found to be very nearly equal to that of those whose sole business is attending school. At 14 years they have received not only a very fair amount of the rudiments of school-learning, but they have also acquired a knowledge of the business of life, and are ready to enter into service with all that skill arising from habits of labour, combined with hardihood from exposure in out-of-doors work, which the farmer who hires them has a right to expect. They are much better servants than the mere schoolboy could be. Their school life being compared not with a holiday, but with a day of labour, they look upon it as a rest; and their associations with books are not irksome, but agreeable, so that, as a rule, they will retain what they have acquired.

The schoolmaster, also, feels the advantage of this system. The boys attend more regularly than the average of children, and, remaining to a later age, their attainments are higher, and they give a higher tone to the school. Mr. Spencer, the master of our Free School, declares that any master who has once experienced the benefits of the system will be very unwilling to forego them.

In the first week of October 1858 I examined three of the boys now working on my farm, who have been upon this system a considerable time, and who are about to leave school, two being 13, and one just 14 years of age.

I found that they all read intelligently and well.

They wrote from dictation, from a book which they had not previously seen, in a clear hand, and with few mistakes.

In arithmetic I dictated sums, which satisfied me as to their knowledge of numeration.

I found them quite familiar with the first four rules of arithmetic, and reduction, and compound multiplication.

I asked—

If I can plough 27 acres in a week, with 10 horses, how much can I do with 24 horses in the same time?

One answered correctly, 64 acres, 3 roods, 8 poles.

One answered, 64 acres, 3 roods, 4 poles.

One did not do the sum.

If a haystack will keep 83 beasts 7 days, how many will it keep 17 days?

Two answered correctly the first trial; the third, on the second attempt.

A rectangular field measures 11 chains, 46 links, by 12 chains, 37 links; what are its contents?

Two answered correctly, 14 acres, 28 poles.

The third did not answer it.

What are the solid contents of a box 22 in. long, 14 in. deep, 11 in. wide?

One gave the answer in feet and inches—1 foot, 1,660 inches. Two in inches.

The best evidence I can give of the value entertained by the labouring classes for this system, is the statement that they voluntarily adopt it in their own arrangements.

In addition to 16, who are working in pairs in agricultural labour, there are several pairs employed in the winding and seaming, belonging to the stocking manufactory, and several girls who assist the mother in her domestic duties alternately; and I have good reasons to believe that in both these cases the system works very satisfactorily.

If every parish were blessed with a schoolmaster as benevolent, zealous, and intelligent as the master of our Free School, I do not believe there would be any difficulty in the wide extension of this system.

Where, in close parishes, the possessors of estates compel the labourers to live in adjoining villages, in order that they may keep down their poor rates, no doubt there may be difficulty in providing pairs in sufficient number for the convenience of the farmers; but this is only one of the many evils arising from the existing laws of rating, which are so serious in their effect upon the moral and sanitary condition of the people, that they must ere long attract the attention of the legislature.

This alternate system of labour and rest appears to be indicated by our nature, in which the activity of the body is a good preparation for the activity of the mind, and every hard-working professional man has found that the best rest for his overtasked mind is in bodily exertion.

Much more than satisfied with the result of my experiment, I would earnestly request that any of the friends of education who may have it in their power will repeat it.

The principle is one which admits of a very wide application. Already has a manufacturer in Nottingham adopted it with satisfactory results to the 40 boys in his employ; and I believe that our middle classes might give their sons, up to the age of 20, an alternation of a day of college and gymnastic exercises, with a day in the counting house; and thus, with God's blessing, confer upon them that inestimable boon, a sound mind embodied in a healthy frame.

276. LETTER to me from Mr. PAGET.

"Ruddington Grange,
"DEAR MR. STANHOPE, 6th March 1868.

"YOU ask if I have any observations to make in addition to my previous statements respecting the 'half-time system of education in rural districts.' In reply I would say that in 1858 I took into my employment two boys who could not read, and I found that they made no satisfactory progress at school; I therefore dismissed them, this being the only case of my having done so, and I find no difficulty in carrying out my present rule to admit none to the benefit of the system who cannot read tolerably. At that time only 50 per cent. of the children in the village could read to any

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good purpose at 9 years, but the attention which has been called to their deficiencies has raise the per-centage to 80, without any increase of educational machinery, and I look for progressive improvement in this respect.

"I also wish to say emphatically that the system costs me nothing; that on the other hand I believe I gain by it as a farmer, for on any day when I want more boys to drive carts I inform the schoolmaster, and only pay the boys for the time they are at work, and at no higher rate than other employers in the village.

"I have ascertained that the average attendance at school of my boys is 90·7 days in the year, so that, taking 110 days as the half of the usual 220 school days in a year, I keep them from school an average of 19 days in the year for the purposes of the farm at times of pressure.

"I have never had any difficulty in replacing the boys when there is a vacancy. Their general success in life is perhaps one reason why parents are anxious to make their children half-timers. Not one has gone astray, and the parents express themselves more than satisfied with the plan, when they compare those of their children who have enjoyed it with the others who have not.

"This result does not arise from any exertion of my influence; when applied to, I have given a just character, and have done no more. What you have yourself seen, together with the enclosed letters recently written by the boys, will (I think) satisfy you of the value of the education, and I am quite convinced that on no other plan can they contribute so much to the labour of the country, and to their own support, while they secure for themselves a fair education.

"The boys begin to work with me when they enter their tenth year. In that year their labours are very light, but they accustom themselves to horses and out-of-doors employment. They continue to advance in usefulness, and in their twelfth and thirteenth they are worth much more than boys of the same age who have just left school.

"Examinations which I have made enable me to say that the education of my boys at 13 years of age is far better on an average than that of boys who have attended school without work up to 12 years; and at 13 my boys have worked for me 840 days, (that is, 210 days in each of four years,) while those leaving school at 12 will only have worked 300.

"Assuming that an adequate education is essential, it will be secured by alternate attendance on the school and farm with short intervals at the least cost to the parent and the least inconvenience to the farmer; and experience shows me that the boy becomes well prepared for the battle of life.

"I would suggest—

(1.) That previous to a boy's being permitted to work for a farmer he should receive a certificate that he can read tolerably, by which I understand that he should read ordinary words of two syllables without hesitation.

(2.) That boys of 9 years old and less than 13 should be required to attend 90 days in each year at school.

(3.) That eight days' attendance should be in each of nine months, and that the remaining 18 days should be in any month when the school is open, which the farmer may find convenient.

"If the time were absolutely fixed by law it would press very hardly upon many districts, for the times at which the work of boys is required vary much in different counties. In the south, I hear, they think that the boys might go to school in the winter alone, but here the winter is the season in which their services are most required.

"Yours truly,
"CHARLES PAGET."

277. *Mr. William Spencer*, master of the Free School.—The half-time system described by Mr. Paget was introduced here in 1854. Since that time Mr. Barker, one of the farmers here, has adopted it, and another farmer sends his two girls on alternate days. Besides this, several of the stockingers send their children almost in the same way, but with less regularity. These children come when they can be spared, and not on any certain days. On the whole their attendance is about the same as in the case of Mr. Paget's half-timers, and I am unable to distinguish between the results obtained in the two cases.

Mr. Paget's boys come every alternate day, but on Saturday all go to work. They are also all taken away when there is any very great press of work. It will be seen that as a rule this method requires no alteration in the mode of conducting the school, for necessarily the pupil must be present on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday during any two weeks. The total attendance in the year of Mr. Paget's boys is, on an average, 90 days, and the stockingers' children, mentioned above, attend about the same number of days.

To get on really well in school matters boys ought to come a part of every week, as a rule; and at a meeting of the Schoolmasters' Association, held last month at Nottingham, a resolution was unanimously passed in favour of that principle.

In my school there is no machinery for teaching infants, so that it is necessary that when they come to me the children should be able to read, and this is the rule laid down by Mr. Paget for boys working on his farm.

I find that the half-timers take as good a position in our school as those who come whole time, and do not have any great difficulty in keeping up with them. In the case of some boys the change is almost necessary, and I sometimes say to one, "Can't you get a "few days work somewhere?" They hardly know whether they like school or work the best.

Supposing lads under this system to be out of work for a time, there is plenty of work for them to do on the cottage allotment gardens. We have 100 acres here, let in lots of from a quarter to one acre. Indeed, I have to keep a sharp look-out, or the parents would send the boys to the allotments on the days when they ought to be at school.

The rule which Mr. Paget laid down, that every boy admitted to work upon half-time should be able to read fairly, exposed the fact that vast numbers of boys at the age of 9 years were unable to read with any degree of intelligence, although there had been a free school in the parish over 200 years. To remedy this evil a committee was formed in 1857, with the clergyman of the parish as its chairman, and a subscription made which enabled a prize of about 1*s.* 6*d.* worth of educational materials to be offered to every child in the parish over 9 and under 10 who could read the Gospels nicely, and besides this prize a certificate of merit was also to be given. The experiment was based upon National registration, and at the present time we find that about 90 per cent. of the children do present themselves for this examination, and that, whereas 10 years ago only 55 per cent. were able to read and 12 per cent. to read well, now nearly 80 per cent. do so. Nearly every certificate so obtained is now ornamenting the best room in the cottage of the parent, set in a good frame. The results of this experiment were at once so astonishing, that in 1861 Mr. Paget offered a second prize of 5*s.* worth of educational materials to every boy or girl who, at the age of 13 and under 14, could read, write, and account to his satisfaction.

The number of these prizes that have been awarded by Mr. Paget has increased year by year, and among the competition the half-timers have held their own. Out of 63 that have passed for them, of whom only 30 were boys, no less than 13 of the boys have been half-timers; 28 have failed in passing, and of these two only were half-timers. Think also of the effect of sending 404 bundles of slates, books, &c. into the cottages of this village during the last 10 years, besides 163 large dictionaries, &c.

The result of this system has been to extend "home education," if I may so call it. The half-timers have had to do work at home in order to keep up with their class, and a desire for self-improvement has been developed. There is in this village a "juvenile self-improving class" for boys over 13, who elect their own teachers and manage their own funds. It meets once a week all the year round, and helps to carry on education after the school has been left.

278. *Mr. R. C. Barker*, farmer, Ruddington.—Last spring I adopted the half-time plan with two boys here. The rule is, that they are to attend school alternately on five days of each week, but at cutting turnips or at harvest or hay time, we have to brush through our work, and take them away from school altogether. This, however, often happens during the school holidays, and would all fall within three months. If any farmer here were to try this plan we might find a little inconvenience in it, but at present it makes me better off than other formers, because it is no more expense to me than before, and I can double my staff at any moment.

I don't employ many boys; my weeding is all done by men. At singling time I don't have children to follow a man, but a day or two after the hoeinge is done I get a man with five or six children to go over it and single the turnips.

279. *Thomas Sadler*, bailiff to Mr. Paget.—I was kept at school till I was 14 years old. I found it very hard work to begin on the farm then. It's much easier to those lads who begin at 8 years old. We have six boys; three come each day, except Saturday, when there is no school, and all come to work. We can always find something for them to do, whether it's wet or dry. The effect of this plan is, that they seem to take more interest in the days they come to work; and I sometimes think they do better when they are coming on alternate days than they do in the school holidays, when they come to work every day.

280. *Wm. Sanday*, team-man.—My lad, who is now 24, went to Mr. Paget's half-time at 9 years old, and stayed till 14. Before that he had been at infant school. He is a gardener, but what will show that his education is good is, the fact that he has been employed in taking stock for the co-operative store.

My other boy (18) went to Mr. Spencer's school at 7. He began to work on the farm tenting crows at 8 years old. He worked every other day; then he got to leading horses and so on. He stayed at school till he was 14. The school is a mile from where we live. When it was his morning to work he had to be up at 6; when it was his morning for school he was not called till I had gone to work; but I did not find that he had any difficulty in getting up on work mornings. On the contrary, the rest made him the fresher for it.

Lads that go to work every day often get to look like old men before their time. You see them go to work with their heads down. There's a difference in their walk and in their looks.

281. *Mrs. Beecroft*, milkman's wife.—My boys Will. (19) and George (15) were both at Mr. Paget's; they were on the half-time plan. The oldest is apprentice to Danks and Nixon at Nottingham; the other helps his father. We never had any trouble in getting them up on work mornings; but boys that go every day to work seem to me to be overtired by it.

They both went to infant school, but we hadn't a good schoolmistress here till the last year or so; the other couldn't write herself hardly. Now we have a very good one. One of my boys is there, but both my elder boys could read before they were 9 years old.

There's plenty of work to do. I've heard of none of the men being out of work this winter.

[In both these houses they had framed and glazed on the walls the certificate given in the preliminary examination of being able to read, and Mr. Paget's certificate also. I noticed it in other cottages as well.]

282. *William Beecroft*, aged 18, bellhanger, apprentice to Messrs. Danks and Nixon, Nottingham.—I was one of Mr. Paget's half-time boys. I went to work on his farm when I was 10. I could read and write pretty well them. We could all of us read and write before we began, though some of us not very well.

When we went to school, we were not put next each other, nor treated differently from other boys. We took our places in our classes with the other boys as if we had never been away. We were obliged to do work in the evenings to keep up.

The day's rest from work was very good for me. A change of boots was the great thing. There are plenty of boys about who have their feet bent and twisted by the boots they have to wear in the field-work, but we were able to change our's every day, and never suffered at all from it.

There's not one of us that has not got on a bit.

[This was one of five half-timers, living at Nottingham, who came to see me one evening to speak to the advantage of the system. All had good places but one, who had lost an eye and was a basket maker.

His brother, when I asked him to read to me, chose an article on political subjects.]

THE SAND DISTRICT OF NOTTS.

283. TABLE showing the EMPLOYMENTS of WOMEN and CHILDREN at different seasons.

January - - - - - - - -	Women, and boys of 10 and upwards, cut up turnips for shop.
February - - - - - - - -	
March - - - - - - - - -	Twitching for women, and children over 8; girls not very largely employed.
April - - - - - - - - -	Singling turnips and planting potatoes.
May - - - - - - - - -	
June (women knock manure) - - - - - -	In some parts pea-pulling for many women, and boys and girls over 10.
July (taking up early potatoes, clover and hay harvest) -	
August - - - - - - - -	Harvest gleaning.
September - - - - - - - -	
October (taking up potatoes) - - - - - -	Same as January.
November - - - - - - - -	
December - - - - - - - -	

Few women go with threshing machines; boys of 12 or 13 go. In some places boys and girls of 8 and upwards tent most of the year.

284. *Mr. William Wilkinson*, Sturton High House, occupies 5,000 acres.—I farm largely both on sand and clay. I have sometimes at weeding time as many as 14 boys and girls together under a man; this would be on the sand land. I see no objection to their going together in this way while they are young, nor to girls going to work up to 14 years of age; after that age they ought not to be allowed to go, and if

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they were prevented, they would go into household service, where they are much wanted. Besides this, it is only after this age that the harm comes to them from going to the fields. I often buy potatoes from other farmers and hire men to take them up. Each man brings two women or girls to help him; and these are often of the worst class from Retford or Worksop, who corrupt others who may be in the fields.

If something is to be done with respect to schooling, I should approve of the children being half their time at school, from 8 to 10 years of age, and from 10 to 12 at the rate of one day a week, or even two days. If the times of the year when there is a great press of work were excluded, I don't think this plan would press hardly on the farmer, though it would be more convenient for him if the days were fixed, as for instance, every Saturday to be spent at school. But the children might fairly be excused if they came up to a certain standard of proficiency.

[On two of Mr. Wilkinson's farms I examined 15 lads from 12 to 16 years of age, who were on the turnip lands; five could read and write fairly, four a little, two could read only, and four could do neither; three of these came from Retford and one from Worksop.]

285. *Mr. J. C. Payne*, farmer and auctioneer, West Retford.—I farm close to Retford, and also about three and a half miles from it. I have to get all the children from Retford; it is too far for them to have to go to the further farm, and we cannot expect to get a fair day's work out of them. But there is a great want of cottages between Retford and Worksop. The children come to me about 7 in the morning and work till 6, stopping an hour for dinner.

I employ a great many children for setting potatoes in March; then weeding begins, which I do with small gangs of 7 to 12 children. Afterwards we want a great many to tent our corn and potatoes; potatoes have to be tented a very long time on our land. In winter we want a great many boys, because, besides cutting up turnips, there are both plough driving and tenting for which they are wanted.

Girls often come as old as 16, and it's at that age that mixing the sexes begins to do harm. I should not allow them to go out after 13 or 14. I don't think that it would be practicable to separate the sexes at work; for instance, I want 16 children at potato picking, I have carts and a staff of men to carry them away. Now these carts can take off all that 16 children can pick up, but if eight are obliged to be in one field and eight in another a double staff of carts and men will be required. Besides this, I don't think the young ones going together does any harm. A great deal depends upon the man who has charge of them, and I must say that he is not chosen often from any regard to his moral character, but because he is an inferior man at other work.

The chief danger to female servants is the farm service. I think it much better that the farm lads should lodge in the foreman's house, because there are fewer girls there. But there is great immorality among them, and the having had a child is no impediment to getting hired again; such girls are often the best workers.

286. *Mr. Wm. Egley*, farmer, Worksop.—There are several gangs go out from here at potato picking time, and for picking stones and so on. A man called Yates takes one. A man called Wilson takes one to the Duke of Newcastle's, at Hardwick (4 or 5 miles). They go boys and girls together. To one large potato grower near Retford they will go and live in a barn altogether for a night or two. Sometimes they are hired of the farmer, and sometimes by the man who takes them to work. When there's a lot together it does them a great deal of harm.

I employ sometimes as many as 400 or 500 women and children in pea-pulling at once. They work in families, each separate, and I have not heard of any bad language or ill-conduct. They generally leave off work at 2, being paid by the bag. I have known a family, which had a good deal of experience at it, earn as much as 10*s.* a day. The work will last about two months.

287. *Mr. William Ashton*, large occupier at Hodsock Park Farm, near Blyth.—Boys ought to go to work at 8 years old; indeed some boys are quite fit to do the light jobs they are put to at 7. Girls ought not to go so young. Tenting with us lasts a very long time; there is always some going on all the winter. Large numbers of children are employed in taking up potatoes. The system with us that four or five men "take" a field, and bring any women or children, each that they like; they mostly bring their own children, with perhaps one or two from a neighbour's house. To this sort of family work I see no objection, but it is conducted quite as it should be. Pea-pulling is done in the same way. I know, however, that potatoes are often sold on the ground, and I have heard complaints of the gangs of children which are brought from the towns to pick them up.

A great many children are wanted for the summer months; but for more than six months of the year hardly any children under 12 are wanted (except for a little tenting), and they might go to school. There are plenty of opportunities for them to go now, but the parents neglect them.

But for the girls the existing schools are not sufficient; they ought to be taught cooking and other household duties, and in any school on a large scale such a plan could be made, I believe, to pay its own way if washing were taken in. Many of us would be glad to encourage them by giving it; and in busy times they might do cooking for some of the poor families, who have neither the time nor the knowledge to do it properly for themselves.

288. *J. Walker, Esq.*, large landowner and occupier, and guardian, Mattersey.—There would be no hardship or injustice in preventing any child, male or female, from working under the age of 8 years; but after that age they might be employed at all reasonable times, provided they were certified to have been at school 100 days in the year, these days being when they could best be spared from their employer's service, so that their earnings might not be interfered with; those days could, in my opinion, be from November 1st to April 1st, but if the rule were left broad in this respect, some boys and girls would get to school in the summer months as well. Any employment of children part of a day, to attend school the other part, is totally inconsistent with their employment at all, and would do away with it, injuring their parents in their earnings, and injuring the employer by raising the price of adult labour, and also preventing that self-help and self-government we so highly prize.

As to girls after the age of 12 or 13 up to 18 or 20, that is, from girlhood to womanhood, I think it would be as well to prevent them from going to out-door work, which has a great tendency to promote immorality; and what they earn at that age seldom goes to the parent but is spent by themselves. If, by that being done, they were driven to domestic service, I believe there would be room for them all, and if the wages of domestic servants were a little lowered thereby, the difference would more than go into the earnings of the parents, who have the greater necessity.

In a letter enclosing these remarks, Mr. Walker says,—

"They were agreed to by the East Retford Board of Guardians, who had referred your questions to me. I would also add, that if ever there be any compulsory rate for education, it is right that it should be an income rate, as any other presses on the producer alone and lets many consumers go free; and every producer is a consumer, and therefore must bear his share."

289. Extracts from return sent in by Mr. T. S. Woolley, of South Collingham, land-agent and large occupier.

Nearly all the women in the parish of the labouring class, and many children of 12 and upwards, are em-

ployed from the middle of June to the end of July in pulling early peas for market. The results to the moral tone of the young women and children are certainly bad, but the evils are not of a kind which can be dealt with by legislation. I have never observed any signs of over fatigue in children or young persons going to or returning from work in this neighbourhood, though many of them walk two miles, or rather more, to work; so with the hours of work, excepting during harvest when the hours of work are of necessity excessive (and any legislative interfence with respect to work during harvest is, in my opinion, not expedient), I have never seen or heard of any signs of suffering from over fatigue.

School attendance is affected little, if at all, by the poverty of the parents. Of late years the wages have been good (averaging, as the earnings of an average family, from 18*s.* to 20*s.* per week), and employment constant. In the case of the larger families, the school fees are paid for some or all of the children by some of the wealthier parishioners.

The number of cottages would be sufficient if no labourers lived here but those required for work in our own parish, but from 10 to 16 labourers residing here work in Langford, the property of Lord Middleton, where there are few cottages; hence the accommodation for families here, though on the whole less insufficient than in other districts, is in some instances frightfully bad, and in few quite satisfactory.

290. In a letter to Mr. Stanhope, dated the 3rd of February 1868, Mr. Woolley adds, with respect to the power of advancing money for cottage building in the Labouring Classes Dwelling Houses Act:—

"I should regard the extension of the powers referred to in your obliging letter to rural districts as a great step towards the improvement of the position of the farm labourer in respect to cottage accommodation, which we all so greatly desire.

"I have made very great use of the Land's Improvement Company's powers, as agent for different landowners, and have seen a good deal of the working of the other improvement companies in my capacity of inspector for the Inclosure Commissioners. They have been of great advantage to the landed interest on the whole, but the annual payments in respect of outlay on cottages is too onerous to admit of their power being extensively used for the purpose."

291. *Henry Heming, Esq.*, agent to the Duke of Newcastle, Sparken, Worksop.—My views upon the employment of children are not popular with farmers generally. Any compulsion with regard to education or the restriction of labour must tend, as they well know, to raise wages and increase the difficulty which is now experienced in many places of obtaining sufficient hands for the work to be done. But even this is of small moment compared with the moral, physical, and social evils which result from the present barbarous system. A magistrate stated publicly at a Board of Guardians that he had passed a field in which were men, women, and children, more than 100 in number, employed in "pea-pulling;" that he was astonished at the language he heard from the mouths of the children, and their obscene manners, unblushingly practised in an open manner in the fields. Now, these are the children that have done going to school, and they go to no Sunday school. The gang system prevails here chiefly at pea-pulling and potato-gathering. There are instances known of large gangs of children being taken from here into Lincolnshire, and lodged in a barn at night.

It is quite clear that since the children have been employed so young they have degenerated. The agricultural labourer is not the fine stalwart man he used to be.

The farmers are getting out of one of the best systems for making good strong men, that is, to hire youths in the house, where they have plenty of beef, bacon, beer, &c., which developes their strength and makes them fine men.

Whatever may be said of the length of time in a day that men and women work, it is manifest that a boy of 10 or 12 years of age cannot, without great injury to his constitution, endure such long fatigue as from 6 to 6. In picking twitch, pulling peas, &c. there is one stooping posture for all those hours. Within my own recollection children used not to be employed so young; but the strides of agriculture have developed the resources of the soil to such an extent as to bring into requisition the youthful population.

The landlords should provide sufficient and suitable dwellings for the number of people required to work on their estates.

No child ought to be allowed to work until he is 13, and then only upon a medical officer's certificate that he or she is capable of such work; "bird-tenting" might, however, be done by a child under 13, but only subject to its being at school a portion of the time.

292. *Mr. Robert Sanford*, superintendent of police at East Retford.—A large number of children living on Spital Hill and Moorgate go out to work on the sandy land. They will go as young as 9 or 10, or even much younger at potato picking time. Girls go as well as boys. I have seen as many as 20 together, of which a good many would be girls, at work on some of the large farms near this place, picking up twitch. I have seen many more go together at potato time. Sometimes the potatoes are sold on the ground, and the buyer has to take them up. He hires the children to pick them up, and the men to hoe them. But sometimes they use the potato plough.

They go as far as three miles from here between this and Worksop, where there are too few cottages for the supply of the labour required.

At this time (January) I see no girls going out to work, but boys of 10 or 11 and upwards. They pass through the town at half-past 5 in the morning on their way to work. In summer, girls as well as boys have to be at work at 6 or half-past 6 and leave off at 6. It's too long for the young ones, and seems to me to stunt their growth; but as soon as they get into farm service, the hours don't hurt them at all, because the farmers give them better food.

293. *Mr. Field*, bailiff to the Duke of Portland, Welbeck.—We employ no public gangs in my neighbourhood. Hardly any girls; none over 13. Such girls ought not to go at all; they ought to be stopped from going. We have not got enough cottages for all our labourers, but we have plenty at Cuckney and Warsop. They have three miles to walk to work. I know they sometimes go four or five miles. I don't think the exercise hurts them. I don't see that they have anything to complain of.

294. *Mr. H. N. Hett*, M.R.C.S., medical officer to the Worksop union, and medical officer of health.—As the children are at present employed about here, I don't think that their hours are too long, and the work they do, in summer at any rate, does them a great deal of good. But it has the contrary effect on the morality of the girls.

The pea-pullers are a most demoralized set. Young women of 15 or 16 go out and sleep in barns night after night, not because they are too far off to return, but because they prefer it. In one case a man here went alone with a cart into one of the fields where they were pulling peas; the women seized him, and stripped him stark naked in the field. In another case I hear of a man who was seized by them and his breeches all pulled open before anyone else came up. There's regular low blackguards in among these women, who are the worst class in the town.

There is not much crowding in the cottages. There's a plan among colliers, who work day and night sometimes, of hiring a bed between two, and using it night and day, giving no time for any ventilation.

EDWINSTOWE.

Population 1,065.

295. *The Rev. W. H. Ibotson*, vicar.—This parish is seven miles long. It includes Edwinstowe, Ollerton, Carburton, Budby, and Clipstone.

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Of late years there has been a central school at Ollerton, intended for the accommodation of several adjoining parishes at a distance from it of from one to four miles. At Edwinstowe (population 1,065) there was an endowment of 12*l.* a school, and master's house, and a school under a certificated master was re-opened last year for boys only. Besides this, we have a good infants' school, at which girls are allowed to stay later.

Ollerton (population 932, two miles from Edwintowe) has a school for 27 free boys, the central school before mentioned under Government inspection, and an infants' school under a dame.

Carburton (population 177) has no school, no resident farmers, or anyone above the rank of labourers.

Budby has a dame's school; and besides that, there is an excellent girls' school supported by Lady Manvers, where girls are kept till 14 years of age. The older boys must come two miles here.

Clipstone has a dame's school, where boys cannot stay after 7; they have either then to come here two miles, or to Warsop two and a half.

Ollerton school is attended also by children from Wellow (half a mile, has a dame's school), Perlethorpe (two and a half miles, has an infant school), Boughton (one mile), and Walesby (two and a half miles).

Lord Manvers has bought up all the cottages he can here, and has improved them. His labourers mostly live here. But there are still some bad ones, the worst belonging to the parish. Four of these, where there were a front room and back kitchen, and two bedrooms, have now been divided into two houses each.

[One of these, occupied by an old couple, was not more than eight or nine feet square in all, with no back premises. The bedroom, which was in the roof, was at its highest side not five feet high, sloping down gradually to one foot.]

296. *John Horncastle, Esq.*, agent to the Earl Manvers, Thoresby Park.—Owing to a want of labourers' cottages in the immediate neighbourhood of Thoresby Park, many of the men and boys employed there, on the estate, have to come from a distance; but this is an evil and inconvenience which the present Earl Manvers is gradually removing.

Many of the servants and labourers more immediately connected with the establishment, such as stablemen, porters, masons, carpenters, &c., live in the park, and at Budby, about one mile from Thoresby; others come from a greater distance, namely, from Edwinstowe (two and three-quarter miles), Boughton (three), Walesby (two and three-quarters), Kirton (three and a half), Ollerton (two and a half), Bothamsall (two and three-quarters), Warsop (five), Laxton (six), and Kneesall (six). Those from the two latter places take lodgings near at hand during the week at 3*d.* a night, and go home on Saturday night. Some of the others, and old men, have donkeys, which they are allowed to depasture in the park; as a matter of course, having to walk a long distance not only interferes with their work, but (to use a common expression) takes some of the steel out of them.

One man who lives at Edwinstowe, and has to look after some of the farm horses at Perlethorpe (the Thoresby home farm), has complained to me that he could seldom be in bed after 3 a.m., because he had to feed and clean his horses so as to get them ready to start to work at 6.

We employ at Thoresby two gangs of boys, of 6 each, under two men, to weed the carriage roads, for five or six weeks in each year.

We have about eight day boys, from 9 to 13 years of age, who are employed on the farm all the year round; they come principally from the neighbouring villages, and are expected to be here at 6 a.m. in summer.

At certain times, for singling turnips or dibbling, girls go out to work, even more than boys, two or three following each man, who is generally their father, as men having children generally prefer to take such work.

I have seen twitch and stone gathering done by large lots or gangs of children on the Clipstone and Warsop estates in this neighbourhood, by as many as 20 or 30 girls and boys, principally the latter. A man will contract to gather stones for the repair of the public roads at so much per yard or load. Boys and girls ought certainly to be separated at such work. The meal time is the dangerous one, when they are left very much to themselves, and allowed to do what they like, and go where they like.

If the boys we employ regularly were obliged to go to school, I think (unless all are compelled to go) we should always be able to find what we required, particularly if any for part of the year.

All Lord Manvers' cottages have gardens. At Edwinstowe there are also 132 allotments of ground each, which are called "potato gardens." They are a great boon, and are eagerly sought after. We pay all parochial rates, and let them to the cottagers at about 10*s.* a year each. I have known 25 sacks of potatoes, per rood, produced in them, but more commonly it is from 15 to 20 sacks, according to the season.

The cottages have piggeries also, though this is sometimes objected to by the tenant farmers, whose labourers have them, under the impression that it may offer an inducement to take away corn, &c. from the farms.

We have abundance of fern in our old woods, part of which is cut and dried in summer, and a large load is delivered to each cottager for little more than it has cost in labour only; this is used as a bedding for the pigs, and afterwards as manure for the gardens.

Mrs. Simpson, labourer's wife.—Fewer girls go than used, because they can get the boys at 6 in the morning, and they can't get the girls till 8. If they go tenting they all go at 6. Some boys go two or three miles from here. Some go to Budby; they have to be there at 6, or in winter at 7. A man'll take the best part of a score of boys, girls too if he can get 'em. I don't much approve of it myself, their going together. Mealtime's the worst of it; they run where they like then. Girls go out to service about 12 or 13. That R.'s girl was only 12 when she went out.

Some odd women go to work. There's not half the work there was for them; they sooner take big boys now. Some odd ones go to the machines to untie the bands.

ELKSLEY.

Population, 362.

298. *Rev. Justice Chapman*, vicar.—The holdings in this parish are small, and there is therefore less employment for children. Women work especially in topping and tailing turnips, and during harvest, and a few girls go out singling and tenting. The parish belongs to the Dukes of Newcastle and Portland. Some of the men work at Clumber, three miles distant. At some seasons almost all the children are employed, but only for a short time. There is a dame's school here, but an indifferent one; an endowed school at Houghton (1½ miles) which, owing to the incompetence of the master, is rendered positively useless; and two tolerable good schools under mistresses two miles off at Gamston and Bottamsall. This year we have no night-school as yet. Last year we had one for girls only, and from 10 to 25 pupils attended.

The cottages are bad; in many there is only an apology for a second bedroom. Rents are generally low; almost all have gardens about a rood in size.

WARSOP.

Population, 1426.

299. *Mr. T. Boston*, schoolmaster.—Work here appears to go on all the winter. There is more juvenile labour in this parish, being all sand, than in most others about here. Since I came here 20 years ago it has much increased. There are two public gangers

to whom licences were granted last Thursday, and who are to-day taking out 12 and 9 boys respectively. I have never heard anything against their treatment; but they used formerly to take out mixed gangs.

A large gang of 25 came last year to Mr. Cox's in this parish from Mansfield Woodhouse; but our farmers for the most part have little gangs of their own, so that our public gangs go out a great deal to Langwith, Cuckney, and places round.

The girls work as much as the boys; weeding among turnips is done on their hands and knees. I have seen 30 of them in a field at it.

They begin to work at 8, or at tenting even sooner. The gangers take all. Last year I made a calculation as to this parish, that 75 boys under 14 were out at work. I should say that we saw about half of these at school in one way or other. The number of girls would not be more than 15 or 16, as far as I can guess. The result of this field-work is, that it is very rare to meet any boy beyond 9 years of age at school. At this moment (Jan. 28) there are only two boys of the poorest class at this school at all.

Sometimes there are none; at other times we have as many as 11 of this class. A great many boys leave us altogether at 8 years old. At that age they will have got to read easy lessons, but they can't read a chapter in the Testament; they can write a little on a slate, and some of them on paper.

We had a night school here, at which we had an average of over 30. We can't take any who do not read a little, simple words at any rate, and all but 8 or 10 can read fairly out of 60 on the books.

The cottages are pretty good here; there is hardly a bad one in the place. Mr. Bland (the incumbent) and Sir Wm. Fitzherbert both let out fields in allotments here.

[In the girls school there were none over 10 years of age.]

300. *Mrs. Ryley*, labourer's wife.—I've heard tell that they won't let boys and girls go together no more. I believe it's a very good thing. I don't like the girls going at all; but then what is poor people to do when flour is at 3*s.* 4*d.* a stone. My husband often says they shouldn't go at all if we could do without them anyways. Leastways a woman should go with them to look after them, and not a man. Mister Woodcock has big girls to work for him; they must be such as can look after theirselves. Such girls as them (her daughters of 8 and 5) he won't have. I've all girls, seven of them, but one's at service. Them two went out tenting till they was ill and couldn't go. One's 8 and t'other is 5; they go and single turnips. My girl there (8) went two years since; she went with a man and one or two more. She ought to be learning a bit now. If I could do without they should go to school; but with a poorly husband very often it takes a great deal of getting up. Two of them go to Sunday school.

The rent is about 4*l.*; they are tumble-down places altogether; we've a garden too, but we pay 6*s.* a year for it. If it wasn't for that I don't know what we should do. My husband is obliged to stay at home and work at it at setting time, and I do what I can. When I'm able I go out to work myself.

NORTON CUCKNEY.

Population, 1,454.

301. *D*——, labourer.—I've 10 children altogether myself, five of each sort, so I know as much as most people. I never had but one girl go out to the fields, and if I live and can keep the others away I shall. Girls oughtn't to go with boys under any circumstances. Say a girl wants to do a job for herself. Do you think that's decent for her among all the boys? They can't feel it to be so themselves. I've seen girls sit down in the middle of a field with their clothes up, and the boys throwing things at them as they sit. Dinner-time is the bad time. They've an hour to do what they like in. It's not in going and coming; it's not often they want to stop much after a day's work. Whether it does them harm or not depends on the man that goes with them. If you send a man properly with them I don't mind; but the farmers so often have a man that can't do a day's work, so they send him out with the children, and as often as not he's a bad one.

The parents can't help them, so the girls must go to work. They'd be better, so would the boys, if they got a bit more education, but the parents can't do it. A great many boys go to Welbeck; they get 7*d.* to 1*s.* a day, and they all have to do the same work. Is that fair?

My boy, when he goes to Carburton (3 miles?), has often to be up at 4.30 in the morning. He leaves off work at 6, and gets home when he can. He has turned 9 years; I should say he's near 10. They earn more than they get going backwards and forwards, but we can't get work for them anywhere else. The Duke (of Portland) is destroying all the farmland and throwing it down in seed. Some of the farmers here that used to be employing eight or nine men have only two or three now. I expect worse times for us. Then there's the lake and all he's making; that's moonshine, and won't make work for poor people. Bless you, there's not room in the houses. There's plenty of them with two or three families in them. There's a row further up with three families in one or two of the houses.

CARLTON-IN-LINDRICK.

Population, 1,035.

302. *Rev. C. G. Smith*, rector.—Children go to work here at 8 or 9 years of age. Twitch is indigenous to the sand-land, and picking it is a work lasting a long time. When there is an open autumn and an early harvest it is done before the winter; if not in the spring; 20 or 30 children, boys and girls, are sent to do this under one of the farmer's own men. Few girls go to this work older than 12 or 13 years of age. Picking stones off the gravelly fields for the roads occupies some children, and potato-picking a great many. The farmer will often sell the potatoes on the ground, and then the buyer will sub-let them to a few men to take up, who bring whatever assistance they like.

A few men go from here 2½ miles to work. The cottages have mostly two bedrooms; a few have one only. The rent will vary from 3*l.* 3*s.* to 5*l.* Most of them have gardens or allotments. The allotments vary in size from half a rood to one or two roods. Hard labour used to be stipulated for, but the plough has crept in, and no harm seems to result from the innovation.

The rent for these is 15*s.* a year per rood, assessments paid. There is a garden society here, giving prizes for vegetables, which encourages their good cultivation.

The schools, boys', girls', and infant, are well situated and convenient. A half-time system will answer if the children have a good foundation. It would be advantageous if the children could be compelled to go to school between 5 and 8, when they are too young to be of any use in the fields. After that they are very useful at times, and their earnings are of importance to their parents. There is a night school; but the difficulty seems to be that, when a boy comes to it without any previous education, he requires a teacher to himself to get him on much, during the short time which the night school affords.

BLYTH.

Population, 2,086.

303. *Rev. C. Webb*, curate in charge.—We have good schools here, but the outlying hamlets are very badly off. Out of four, one (Oldcoats) has a fair school, one a dame's school, and two none at all. They are 2 and 2½ miles from here respectively. Barnby Moor

Nottinghamshire.

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c.

(3 miles) has none at all. From these places very few can or do come to our school. We have a night school. When I first opened it we had 20 adults, besides boys; but before Christmas the former had fallen to 8, because they found it harder to learn to read and write than they expected. But the difficulty here is, that the parents won't give up the smallest portion of the children's earnings for the sake of schooling, although the charge for schooling is 1*d.* only per week. The cottages here are in good order on the whole, and not crowded. We have more than we want. A good many have gardens varying from a quarter of a rood to one rood.

304. In this district I visited 11 purely agricultural parishes.

In one parish (Elksley, population 362) there was only a bad dame's school. The small outlying parishes mostly have dames' schools.

Payments in two schools, nothing; in one school, 1*d.* and in nine schools, 2*d.*

The approximate number of children of the labouring class in attendance at eight of these parishes, containing an aggregate population of 8,234, was :—

In Summer.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	429	288
Between 10 and 13 -	137	45
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	399	263
Between 10 and 13 -	118	50

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	418	288
Between 10 and 13 -	137	45
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	399	263
Between 10 and 13 -	118	50

Thus the per-centage of population on the books of some school in summer was 13¼; in average attendance, 8; in winter it was 13¼ and 9 respectively.

Night schools existed in three parishes out of 11, and in winter only.

THE CLAY DISTRICT OF NOTTS.

304*a.* Table showing the Employments of Women and Children at different seasons.

January - } Boys of 8 and upwards lead horses.
February - }
March; bean-dropping for almost all boys and girls over 7 or 8.
April - } A little osier peeling for women and young girls in some places. } Occasional work for women and boys in twitching singling, and weeding.
May - }
June - - - - - - }
July (hay harvest) - - - - }
August - } Harvest, gleaning, a little hop-picking.
September - }
October; taking up mangolds, &c. for women and boys.
November - } Same as January.
December - }

Not much tenting. In this district the work for children under 10 is very intermittent.

305. *C. Storer, Esq., M.D.*, large occupier at Lowdham.—The heavy land in this district requires a great deal of winter labour of boys. I should think that almost all the lads over 10 here are employed all the year. They are wanted for leading horses and for cutting up turnips in winter.

Younger boys would hardly be fit to do such work; indeed in many cases boys of 8 or 9 could not do it.

To deprive them of this work would be, in my opinion, to deteriorate their physical condition. The development which their muscles had gained during work would go off in a period of inactivity. And I don't think they would be employed under any system which took them half their time to school. The better plan would be, as it seems to me, to let them be at school up to 9 or 10, and then show that they had reached a certain standard of proficiency. The parents would tell you the same. If they were compelled to send them to school each year before they could be allowed to go to work, they would evade it by giving them work to occupy their time in their gardens.

Girls go to dibble beans, pick up potatoes, and single turnips, but they are not much employed. They do more "seaming" work at home, and attend school more than the boys.

Women go much less than they used, and hardly ever go to threshing machines. Boys of 10 or so go to them to lead water-carts or carry the chaff; women top and tail and clean turnips a little, but it's not fit work for them. I have known a good deal of rheumatism come from it.

In the summer we don't require the boys to go with horses so much, for in summer we can plough double instead of single, and then need no driver besides the ploughman, but we employ boys of 10 in other ways. There is often a great press in October when turnips and mangolds are taken up and carted away.

306. *Rev. R. W. Miles*, rector of Bingham, and rural dean.—The children here leave school too early; and yet those who have stayed at school altogether up to 11 years of age have not always turned out the best, but have proved unsuitable for work. As to the infant school, all the parents are anxious to send their children to that; in fact, we find them so willing to get rid of their children while they are young, that 2*d.* a week is not at all too much to ask of them in payment. We have tried night schools here, but they have not answered well, owing to the large number of private night schools where a few scholars attend.

The statutes, as carried on here, are most demoralizing. There is great drunkenness all the day; rooms are open for dancing from a very early hour, and the day ends by 20 boys and girls going back together in a cart without any proper control. We felt this so strongly, that a few years ago a great effort was made to put them down, and to induce the farmers to say that they would not hire without characters, and that they would not go to the statutes themselves. But some elements of discord caused the whole matter to fall through. Then we tried to get a room for the girls to go to to be hired, and supplied coffee, &c., but it did not take; the most respectable girls came, but not those whom it was especially important to look after.

We are now trying to establish register offices; indeed, there was one here for some years, but it was not generally patronized, and the statutes still go on.

307. EXTRACT from return sent in by the Rev. Joshua Brooke, incumbent of Cropwell Butler, Bingham.

From an experience of 35 years in the parish, which is a wealthy one, I believe that labour in the fields, as now carried on by women, is not only harmless, but salutary to their health, and is not injurious to their morals.

It is my firm belief that any interference with the present times and seasons for employing children in this district would be inexpedient, and a hardship to the employers and employed. All the children in the parish attend the day school. I believe that if the employers of labour could not get the children exactly when needed, from the exigencies of the labour to be done, they would give up employing them at all, which would be a serious evil and loss to the parents.*

308. AT a meeting of some of the principal residents and farmers round Bingham, held at the Chesterfield Arms on Wednesday, Feb. 12, 1868, T. B. T. Hildyard, Esq., M.P., in the chair: Present, the Rev. R. W. Miles, vicar of Bingham; Rev. A. Pavey, of Scarrington; Mr. G. Parr, of Cropwell; Mr. G. Beaumont, of Bridgeford; Mr. W. Sanday, of Holmepierrepont; Mr. G. Hassall, of Shelford; Mr. G. Storer, of Thoroton; Mr. Wright, of Bingham; Mr. Watson, of Scarrington, and others; and also the Hon. Edward Stanhope, Assistant Commissioner, it was unanimously resolved:—

(1.) That if any compulsory legislation on the subject of the education of children employed in agriculture is to take place, this meeting is of opinion that the plan of requiring children over 8 years of age, who go to work, to attend school a certain number of hours in the year, would be preferable to the total exclusion from field-work of children above the age of 8.

(2.) That some power should be left in the hands of the magistrates to relax such rules in cases of great necessity.

(3.) That, admitting the great evils of statutes, this meeting does not see its way to remedy them by general legislation.

(Signed) THOS. B. T. HILDYARD, Chairman.

309. EXTRACTS from return sent in by the Rev. H. Stockdale, vicar of Bole.

It is impossible, I think, to give answers that can be relied upon to the various questions asked, especially as districts vary so much, according to the nature of the soil and manner of cultivation. The return in adjoining parishes would be quite different, where one parish consists of clay and another of sand or loam; where in one the farming was of a high standard, in the other of a low; where the land was drained or undrained; where the landlord looks after his estates or not; where the land is under one ownership or several.

In this parish all learn to read and write, and do a little arithmetic, but they leave school generally so very early that they soon forget almost all. Of course there are exceptions. I would recommend a certificate of a certain amount of education at 10 years old. The cottages in this parish have been for years in a most terrible state; but the owner, Lord Middleton, is now making extensive improvements. We provide labour for the two adjoining parishes, where there are no cottages. All have gardens attached.

CAUNTON.

Population, 596.

310. *Rev. S. R. Hole*, vicar and landowner.—Most of the land here belongs to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. The cottages are kept in fair order. There are seven poorhouses, which are very small, but none crowded. Rents go up to 4*l.* for a good cottage.

There is a good supply of boys here. Many go to work at 8, even with horses. Girls don't work much, except at rod-peeling, which is done by a very large number of women and children together, working, however, in families.

Children do not get sufficient education; they ought to stop at school two years longer, or, still better, to come at any rate a part of their time.

311. *Mr. W. J. Taylor*, occupies 200 acres.—All the boys here under 12 are day-boys at about 8*d.* a day. I employ none before that, except on very rare occasions; and we have plenty of labour. I don't, therefore, see why they shouldn't go to work up to that age. I employ women for weeding corn, not children; and at the latter end of the year, if we have a few turnips to take up, we let them by the acre to men or women, who bring what help they like.

Horsemen and shepherds get 17*s.* a week here; day labourers 2*s.* 6*d.* a day; but several men here are out of employment now (January).

312. *Mr. H. Morris*, agent to Mr. Hole.—A garden society was formed here to encourage cottage gardens, and offers liberal premiums for the best vegetables, &c. Anyone can exhibit by making a weekly payment. The society, however, has not done the good it ought, as a higher class exhibits than that for which it was intended. The allotments here are about half a rood each, and let at 1*s.* a year; the churchwardens allot them. There are 6¾ acres to let. Ploughing is allowed, but it is strong poor land, and they only grow potatoes. The land is let too cheap, and the labourers don't seem to value it.

313. *William Ancliffe*, labourer.—My boy of 23 can't read or write; he wasn't ever fond of it. I sent him to school; all my other children are there. My wife lost her foot in this stackyard with a threshing machine, three years ago. It wasn't with my wish that she went. Women oughtn't to go at all.

314. *Henry Barker*, labourer.—My boy is 13. He's been here at work two years regular; before that he went half a year. Went to school before that. He can read a bit, not write. Began to write last year at night school.

[Parish school under diocesan inspection. 24 children come free. Average attendance in summer, 19 boys and 31 girls; in winter, 36 boys and 31 girls. No night school.]

NORWELL.

Population, 736.

315. *Mr. J. Curtis* occupies 600 acres.—Few children go to work before 10 or 11, except at bean-dropping, pea-pulling, and osier-peeling. We weed with four or five boys and girls under a man. I never saw one work so young as 8.

We tried a sort of half-time here, because of what Mr. Denison told us about it; but we found the labourers didn't like it. One of my men wouldn't let his boy leave school at all for work, because he was on the free list, and at certain times we've only a bare sufficiency. There are two or three families here who let none of their children go to school, even though they could get them put on the free list; but this is not common.

Women and boys and girls go to osier-peeling. The school holiday is then in April; it lasts about five weeks.

An acre of osiers would take about 10 women and children. There are 23 acres of them in this parish, therefore some of those who peel them come from Caunton. They are paid by the "bunch." The men cut the rods, and take them to the yards to be peeled.

In winter we have no turnips to speak of, and only want boys of 10 and upwards to drive a plough.

Labourers now don't do as much, nearly as much, work as they used to do. To employ men instead of boys with horses at ploughing, if I could get them, would make a difference of 150*l.* a year to me.

OSSINGTON.

Population, 231.

316. *Mr. Camm*, bailiff to the Speaker.—I won't say I haven't seen a boy or a girl of 8 at work hereabouts,

* [At the moment of my visit an impression prevailed among the farmers that the Gangs Act, 1867, applied to their system of bean-dropping, in which a man contracts to do the work, and hires two or four children to drop after him. Rather than be at the trouble of getting licences for their men, the farmers were all drilling their beans, and the earnings were lost to the parents.—E. S.]

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C.

but it's very rare. At corn-weeding a farmer will get 12 or 14 boys and girls, and put them under some one to look after them. The girls go from 8 to 6 every day, the boys generally begin at 6.

I don't think the separation of sexes at work would do any good, because they are sure to mix going home; but I think it would be a good thing to prevent girls from going out after 14 years of age, so as to get them to go to service.

So long as we can be sure of getting all the children for certain times of year, when there is a press of work, I think a mixed system of school and work would be the best for this neighbourhood.

There are 70 allotment gardens at Sutton belonging to the Speaker. There is always a list of names of those who want an allotment, and the demand has increased. They pay from 4*s.* to 11*s.*, and generally very regularly. The size is from six perches to two roods. If a man grows potatoes on his rood, he will get 15 sacks in a fair year, worth about 6*l.* to him.

317. *Mr. Thomas Lester*, schoolmaster. — Boys leave school here for work, such as leading horses with the plough, as early as 8 years old. A little work is good for them; I see no harm in their being away for a week or two at a time, because I find with most boys that when they come to school they get on very fast at first, and then seem to get tired of it, and fall into careless habits. The change of occasional work prevents this.

WESTON.

Population, 380.

318. *Rev. J. B. Cane*, rector.—In March, April, and May there is bean-dropping and twitching, and after that osier-peeling. These are the only times when there is really much work. Boys go out at 10 years of age to follow the plough, and on this clay land it's very hard work.

To these works girls go also, besides a little hop-picking with their mothers. The girls go out 9 and upwards. My housemaid, who came from Shelford, had followed the plough and led horses. All the mothers go out to work here, and the girls have to stay at home and mind the house, even if they are not at work; there is, however, nothing for them to do in the winter. I don't think this interferes with the girls learning household work, because I doubt if a girl can learn much of it so young that is any good to her. At the Clumber school such things were taught, but the girls did not get places any better than the untrained ones; field-work is nevertheless immoral to girls, because of the farm lads working with them, and a married woman ought always to be with them. The overlookers are often very bad characters too.

This parish belongs chiefly to Lord Manvers.

Some of the cottages here are bad, but hardly any of the small ones contain a family; but where there are three bedrooms I often find that the third one is very little used.

319. *Mr. William Hunt*, farmer, occupies 300 acres.—I like boys of 14 to go with horses, or at any rate not much younger than 12; but boys of 8 or so can go tenting, and sometimes a girl or two. Girls go bean-dropping and singling turnips; women mostly used; girls pick up twitch.

They go in lots; I never saw more than eight in a lot. They go at 8 and leave off at 6, and have an hour and a half for meals; the overlooker is responsible for their conduct. There is no stipulation about it.

We are very short of plough-driving boys.

320. *Mrs. Wood*, labourer's wife.—One girl (11 years) has been two seasons bean-dropping; when she goes it's with Mr. Turner or one of the men; each would take four boys or girls. They mostly reckon the girls the best at such light work; they're quicker at it. She gets 8*d.* a day. There would be two or three sets in a field; they go at 7 in the morning and stay till 5.30. In summer at singling turnips she goes from 6 to 6. It's very back-aching. They have one hour for dinner and a bit of lunch.

I always go pea-pulling on the sand in June. We go out at 6.30 or 7; mostly women and big girls. I get 14*d.* a day. Little girls don't go to this work.

[Husband made 15*s.* a week regularly. A large family.]

321. *Mrs. Hill*, labourer's wife.—We're obliged to let the girls go, and when people's forced to do it they are forced. I don't know that it's bad or good for them. Some of our Weston women take a pride in doing the worst they can with their tongues. My girl—she's grown up now—"wed" a good bit with me, but she often went without me; nothing seemed to hurt her. Mr. Redgate sends Sarah Lees to look after the girls, but they mostly sends a man. Women do much less work here than they did. I reckon to go out in the spring and summer.

My girl can read and write so that I can understand her; she's not a scholar. I've lived in this house 22 years; we pay 25*s.* a year, and have to keep it in repair. We've two chambers, but one's only in the roof.

[A married son lived in the same house with them.]

EGMANTON.

Population, 386.

322. *Mr. George Spencer*, small farmer.—There are only a few boys here of an age to go to work. They go with horses, and it's then that they are most wanted; sometimes a girl goes too. Girls go a little to hoptying and picking, and twitching. There are 10 acres of hops here, which give a little employment for the children. These is no school here. The old clerk keeps a sort of private school, but the children are his masters; but it's not very far for them to go to good schools at Tuxford ($1\frac{1}{2}$ miles), and Laxton ($1\frac{3}{4}$ miles).

323. [In this district I visited 16 purely agricultural parishes, with the following results as to schools:—

Under Government inspection - -	8	16
Under diocesan only - - -	5	
Under none - - - - -	3	

[In one parish only, *Egmanton* (population, 386), was there nothing like a fit school; in two others the teachers were very inefficient.]

Payments: in 14, 2*d.*; for the poorer class in one, 3*d.*

52 children were sent free.

The following table shows the average attendance in summer and in winter in the 12 parishes from which the returns were received, of which the aggregate population is 6,788.

In Summer.

—	On the Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	273	212
Between 10 and 13 -	97	53
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	307	246
Between 10 and 13 -	82	54
In Winter.		
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	299	255
Between 10 and 13 -	131	104
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	315	271
Between 10 and 13 -	101	88

Per-centage of population on the books of any school in summer was 11; in average attendance, nearly 9. In winter, $12\frac{1}{2}$ and $10\frac{1}{2}$ respectively.

Night schools existed in three parishes out of 16, and in winter only.]

LEICESTERSHIRE.

EVIDENCE.

324. TABLE showing the EMPLOYMENTS of WOMEN and CHILDREN at different seasons.

January.
February, boys and girls of 8 and upwards drop beans in the north-east of the county.
March - - - - - - - } Occasional work in singling turnips or weeding for women and boys; tenting for boys over 9.
April - - - - - - -
May - - - - - - -
June - - - - - - -
July, hay harvest.
August - - - - - - - } Harvest gleaning.
September - - - - - - -
October, tenting for boys over 9.
November.
December.

Few women work; girls only occasionally. Boys of 10, or even sometimes 9, get regular employment with horses in many districts; very few attend school after that age.

LEICESTERSHIRE CHAMBER OF AGRICULTURE.

325. At two meetings of the Leicestershire Chamber of Agriculture, held at the Three Acorns Hotel, Leicester, on Saturday, February 29th, and Saturday, March 28th, Thomas Wright, Esq., chairman, in the chair, and the Honourable E. Stanhope, Assistant-Commissioner, being present, and having explained the nature of the inquiry,

It was resolved,—

(1.) That it is expedient that children under the age of 9 be restricted from employment in agriculture.

(2.) That this meeting is of opinion that any scheme of education will be unsatisfactory which proposes to exclude all religious instruction from elementary schools.

(3.) That the attempt by legislation to secure compulsory attendance at school is not desirable, nor is the present state of things feasible.

326. EXTRACTS from Return sent in by the Rev. J. M. LAKIN, rector of Gilmorton, and rural dean.

In answering the inquiries I have been assisted by some of the principal employers of labour in the parish, of which the population is 856.

About 35 children and young persons are employed in field labour, and no women; 11 of the boys are between 10 and 13.

I think that no boys should be permitted to work before 10, and that afterwards they should attend school during the months of November, December, January, May, June, and July, as being the months when their services are least required by their employers in this parish.

A good school has existed here for 17 years, and most of the young persons have been there, and it may therefore be concluded that few are growing up quite insufficiently educated.

There is a considerable number of cottages in this parish in which the accommodation is so limited as to be injurious to the morals and physical well-being of the inhabitants. They generally consist of one room downstairs of about 12 feet square, and either one bedroom or two small sleeping places formed by the division of the one chamber by a slight partition. They are, for the most part, the property of small proprietors, and their rents vary from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.*

I may also mention, as an instance of the evil results of over-crowding in cottages, that, while this parish has for the last 10 years enjoyed a singular exemption from immorality, as evidenced by the births of illegitimate children, in one house in which no less than 13 persons at one time occupied one chamber, two illegitimate births have occurred, and in one other cottage almost equally over-crowded, one such birth has taken place; these are the only two cases for several years.

327. *Mr. Thomas Willson*, Knaptoft Hall, Rugby, Secretary to the Leicester Chamber of Agriculture, large owner, and occupier of 500 acres.—I agree with Mr. Lakin's view as to the means of improving the education of the children, except that I don't see why children should be prevented from going to work before 10 years of age, so long as they go to school six months in the year preceding. It would be hard to deprive them of the little earnings they can get by dibbling beans, &c. There is hardly a village in our neighbourhood without a school.

I have a small rookery, but I never tent birds. I don't see that the rooks do any harm to the crop in autumn, although the early crops in the spring may possibly be hurt by them; even then, firing off a gun is better than tenting.

328. TABLE, constructed by the Rev. J. M. LAKIN, showing the Ages of the Boys employed in the undermentioned parishes:—

—	Population.	Total Boys employed.	Number under 12 Years of Age.
Gilmorton -	856	36	8
Bitteswell - -	428	12	2
Ashby Magna -	315	9	3
Dunston Bassett -	524	18	10
Peatling Parva -	168	3	2
Misterton -	554	41	4
Ashby Parva - -	160	9	3
Kimcote -	501	60	24
Total - -	3,506	188	56

329. PROPOSAL for carrying out the Education of Children employed in Agriculture, by the Rev. EDMUND WILLES, vicar of Ashby Magna, and Secretary to Diocesan Board of Education.

I. No child shall be employed in agricultural labour till he reach the age of 9 years.

II. No child shall be employed in such labour between the ages of 9 and 13 unless he,

a, have a certificate of having passed Her Majesty's inspector in the fourth standard at least.

Such certificate to be renewed each year.*

Explanations.

* The renewal of the certificate from year to year would secure the attendance of the boy at a night-school, to keep up to the standard; otherwise he would soon lose what he had learnt.

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c.

Or, β, have attended school 100 days, or 200 times, or 500 hours in the preceeding year.*

1. A school term to consist of not more than three consecutive hours, or (in the case of night schools) less than $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours.
2. Attendance at the night school to count as school "time," but not in addition to two previous attendances on the same day.

III. In case Her Majesty's inspector do not visit any particular parish, children may be sent for examination to another parish.

330. In a letter accompanying the preceding, and dated March 4, 1868, Mr. Willes says:—

"This plan has, I find, commended itself to a number of farmers. I urge for them that no two counties, parishes, or even farms stand in precisely the same position as regards the demand for children's labour; that they ought not to be fixed rigidly to any given months or even days; that if the children have the inducement to learn afforded by the prospect of being free after 9 years of age, conditional on passing the Government inspector, and passing him every year (thus sending them to night school to keep up their learning), a great number will be free at 10, if not at 9, that all classes in a parish will have a direct object in keeping up the efficiency of the elementary schools, and also of the regularity of attendance of all children under 9, as well as in forwarding those over 9 who have not yet passed the inspector."

331. Extract from Return sent in by the Rev. J. F. Halford, incumbent of Kilby.

Population, 362.

I believe that there are no children here between 8 and 13, neither at school nor work. I do not, however, by work mean merely or principally agricultural employment. Some 16 males and three females are growing up insufficiently educated. Most of these have been, when younger, to day schools, and several are in the habit of attending night school in winter, where they make but litlle progress.

Our difficulty at night school is want of teachers. The mistress of the day school, already tired with her day's work, cannot be expected to teach in it with spirit. I consider five hours day teaching to be a sufficient tax upon her strength and time.

332. *Rev. E. N. Pochin*, vicar of Sileby, and diocesan inspector of schools.—The parish schools which I visit as diocesan inspector are chiefly in agricultural districts. Scarcely any have certificated teachers, and the real knowledge acquired is very meagre, except in rare instances. I think that if diocesan inspection were recognized by the Government, and accompanied by pecuniary assistance, it might be used as a powerful means to improve education in Church of England schools, and very large results might be secured by very small grants. At present the first classes of agricultural schools scarcely equal children of the third standard where certificated teachers are employed. The great need is efficient authoritative supervision, coupled with benefits to be derived for satisfactory results.

In this, and other such parishes, where manufacturing and agricultural labour are nearly equally divided, I find the parents unable to distinguish between a good and bad school; and they prefer to send their children where there are the fewest restrictions, and the greatest independence. The proportion of children to the population is very far above the usual estimates. When I came here, and the National school (under Government) was opened, I invited all the children under 15 to a public tea, and upwards of 700 came. (I cannot vouch for their honour that they all were under 15.) The population was then about 1,800, and yet the average attendance at our day school is only 123. Many residents and proprietors contribute nothing at all to support schools or advance education, and the burden falls chiefly on the clergy, generally with small incomes, as well as the liability for all annual deficiences.

Many parents are satisfied if their children only go to the Sunday school; generally indeed the children select their own school, from the indifference of the parents, and the dissenting schools are mostly preferred, the reason being that there the children may do as they like. The dissenters are satisfied with quantity of attendance, rather than quality of teaching, and the education given is worse than useless. The children seldom know anything. I have frequently questioned them, and found the grossest ignorance. As an instance, in the presence of Mr. E. Stanhope, Assistant Commissioner, I visited one who stated that she had regularly attended the "Ranter's" Sunday school for 13 years (she was not nervous or excited). She did not know who Abraham, Moses, Samuel, or even Jesus Christ were; she did not know if Abraham lived 50 or 500,000 years ago; she had not heard of St. Matthew's Gospel, and did not know if it contained any account of the battle of Waterloo, the Emperor of the French, or not. She was unable to say who reigned in England, and could not read a word.† There can be no religious scruples or conscientious objections amongst such ignorance; and schools like these, which only deceive with the name of teaching, and waste children's early lives, ought not to be allowed to exist, at least without competent supervision and publication of reports.

The instances are very rare indeed where it would be a real hardship for parents to pay the small school weekly charges, and sacrifice their children's earnings up to the age of 10, or even 12.

332*a*. In a letter to Mr. E. Stanhope, dated April 9, 1868, Mr. Pochin adds:—

"I send you a copy of the notes which I made in answers to queries amongst farmers, stockingers, and labourers in this parish."

(*a*.) A few farmers collected together, agreed to these views, as follows:—

Boys and girls are of very little use before 10 years of age, and might well be spared for school-work.

The hours of work need not be limited for boys; they will always take care of themselves, and would not work better for two hours if the other 22 were granted them for rest.

Girls should not be allowed to work after dusk; they might work 12 hours in harvest; at other times get as much work out of them as you can, they won't overwork themselves.

* * *

(*b*.) W. S., farm labourer.—Earns 18*s*. a week in harvest, at other times 14*s*. Wishes for education, but wants his children's earnings. Some labourers might afford to sacrifice their earnings, but he can't. Has no objection to the feeling of his children being taught as a matter of charity. If the school charges were paid, he would send his children regularly, and do without their earnings till they were 10 years of age.

333. *Rev. F. J. Norman*, rector of Bottesford, and rural dean.—The schools immediately round here are not materially affected by field labour. Bean-setting and twitching are the chief works on which the children are employed. The other hindrances to attendance are found in hay-making, gleaning, and potato gathering, each cottager having a garden for the cultivation of potatoes.

* Thus a farmer might, during the months of November, December, January, February (for example) send his boys to school from 2 to 4 p.m., and again from 6 to 7.30, employing them in the forenoons.

He would thus gain for them (say) 80 attendances in the day, and 40, or even more, at night school, leaving him only 40 days to make up in the rest of the year.

N.B.—On "turnip" farms, for instance, a boy is wanted as much in winter as in summer.

† This girl belonged to a stockinger's family.—E. S.

Ten boys under 10, 15 under 13, and 10 girls between 10 and 13, are employed in this parish.

I think it is most desirable that some influence should be brought to bear upon parents, and of course incidentally upon employers of labour, with regard to school attendance, and I believe that mode of influence which would require at least one quarter's attendance at school in the year would be least offensive to our people, and most in accordance with the general practice amongst us. Indeed it is only the vicious and bad that do not send their children for at least a quarter of a year. The poorest respectable parents will send their children, while better-off slovens and bad characters will not send them, even if an offer be made to pay for their schooling.

334. *Rev. G. E. Gillett*, rector of Waltham-on-the-Wold, and rural dean.—Women are a great deal employed here in some kinds of farm-work of a light description, and it seems to me healthy and advantageous to them, excepting in wet weather. In gleaning time many women suffer in such weather and from the excessive stooping. Girls are rarely, if ever, employed in farm-work, but they are sometimes kept at home for lace running or similar work, though less frequently than formerly. Boys of 11 or 12 are often in constant employment, but many continue at school somewhat beyond that age. Boys of 8 or 9 are sometimes employed in bird-scaring or driving plough. I frequently see boys of that age having charge of carts on the turnpike road. The law on that subject seems to be unknown or systematically evaded.

The rule of our National school, which is a mixed school under a master, (a mistress attending in the afternoon for sewing, &c.,) is to take no children under 5, and to compel those we take to choose between school and work. We never, unless under special circumstances, allow them to be on and off during the week. If a boy goes to work he is struck off the register, and only re-admitted after the lapse of some time, or until that particular kind of work is over in the parish. Our school is extremely well attended. With some 12 or 14 children from neighbouring parishes which are too small to maintain a good school for the elder children, we have (our own population being about 650) about 115 to 120 children on the books, with a daily attendance of more than 100. To-day 107 are present.

I do not think any system of half-time would answer well in an agricultural parish, unless under special circumstances; but I see no objection to a compulsory system if it do not fetter the managers of a school in their discretion as to their acceptance or dismissal of children. The strictness of our rule works well. If children are allowed to be absent whenever their parents wish it, for a day or two, they will be taken from school on the most frivolous pretences, and the discipline and progress of the children must suffer. Many children, after leaving the day school, come to the Sunday school, which numbers about 120 without any from other parishes. They thus keep up their religious knowledge; and to encourage the children and their parents to read at home they are allowed to take some monthly penny periodical at half-price. I distribute about 80 of these every month.

The whole of the parish, with trifling exceptions, belongs to the Duke of Rutland, excepting also that the glebe consists of 420 acres, the total acreage being 2,700 acres. His grace has built and is now building substantial stone cottages in place of the old ones. Some of these last are not fit for human beings to live in, but they were mostly built by the labourers themselves, with perhaps some assistance in materials; or else 40 years and more ago by the parish. In a row of six of these last there is only one that has more than one bedroom. The rents are moderate, for the worst little more than nominal, and the rest vary from 30*s.* to 60*s.* Many have small gardens attached to their houses, and there are also a number of allotment gardens, each one-sixth of an acre, for which the rent is 10*s.* per annum, including all rates and taxes. The land is good, and conveniently situated.

335. *Mr. E. F. Burbidge*, farmer, Thorpe Arnold.—Almost all the land I occupy is grazing land, though the part of this parish furthest away from Melton has more plough land in it. The occupations about here are not large, very few of them reaching 400 acres. Hardly any children are emplpyed, and no women. I am not an advocate for employing boys at all, because I think them the dearest labour; a few work at bean-dibbling, and girls also. A man will take five or six of them. Then there is a little tenting; but one boy on each farm is more than the average.

Leicestershire.
Mr. Stanhope.
C.

There is nothing, therefore, to prevent their going to school, and they do go to our school pretty well up to 12 years of age. They may come free at 3 years of age, and stay as long as they like.

The cottages in this county generally are not good; in many cases they are badly looked after; hardly any have three bedrooms. Even some of the new ones, built within the last few years, have two only. The Duke of Rutland owns a great part of this parish. He has cottages enough for his land; but Lord Dysart with 400, and the Ravensworth Hospital with 500 acres of plough land, have no cottages whatever in in the parish for their labourers. Some of them have, therefore, to come from Melton, a mile and a half.

336. *H. C. Woodcock, Esq.*, magistrate, and large occupier at Rearsby.—Some of the men go a long way to work here in March, as it is not every one who can dibble beans well, and men who can do so will get employment four and five miles off. Some of the parishes too are very badly supplied with cottages. There are hardly any at Shoby on 1,200 acres, and none at Sysonby or Welby. The labour has all to go from Asfordby.

There are a great many cottages with only two bedrooms, but a few have only one. Some of the worst have been built by the occupier upon the waste, and are held at a nominal rent. Many of them have allotments. They are very often managed by the sick clubs, which invest all their funds in land, and let it out in plots of half a rood each. A garden of that size is as large as a man can manage with a spade.

Many fewer lads are hired by the farmer now to lodge with them; the result is these lads have to go on living at home. Besides this, in many villages near me there is a great deal of knitting and sewing done by the girls, and they are kept at home instead of being sent out to service. This makes the crowding very much worse.

The children do not go very readily to school. We have a charity for six children to go free in our parish, and we can't get children to attend regularly even by that means.

There is very great evil about statutes; the worst class of servants go there to be hired. The better class are now much more hired at register offices than they used to be.

337. *Mr. J. Hames*, farmer, Rotherby.—We employ boys in tenting and dibbling, and after 10 years of age in plough-driving. When I take a boy of 10 for leading a horse I employ him regularly all the year. We must find something for our horses to do every fine day. It would be no use for such boys to go to our school; we have only a schoolmistress, and she could not manage them. They might go to Hoby, one mile from us, where there is a school with a master.

I find the lads who lodge in my house practise reading and writing by themselves; they are constantly writing letters. Such lads are hardly ever hired in the villages where their families live, but in adjoining parishes. We should otherwise never know where to find them.

Every house in my parish where there is a family has two bedrooms; very few have three. A few years ago the most of them had one only, but a second has now been built on behind. All have gardens, and are rented at about 2*l.* 10*s.* or 3*l.*

Leicestershire.
Mr. Stanhope.
C.

338. *Rev. W. M. Colles*, vicar of Melton Mowbray.—In this place (population 4,446) we have a good free school for boys and girls, a free British school, and an infant school; they are well attended, and there is little or no field-work, except at harvest time, to take the children away. Of the four hamlets belonging to this parish, Sysonby (population 67, 1 mile from here) has no school, and no children; Welby (population 64, 2 miles) has none; Burtou Lazars (population 233, 3 miles) has a private school, supported by E. B. Hartopp, Esq., M.P., and Freeby (population 126, 4 miles) has none. The children ought to go one mile from there to Wyfordby, where there is a school.

These and other parishes about being "close" parishes, the poor come into Melton, and some live in places unfit for human habitation. Small owners have turned outbuildings into dwellings, and charge high rents for them. There is a great deal of crowding in them. A more efficient inspection is much needed. To have it would not be infringing on the rights of private property more than is done at present, for power is already given to inspectors of nuisances; but these inspectors have got up a sort of public opinion that they are not required to visit unless they are sent for, just as the registrars of births get it up on the subject of registration. The inspection therefore is very inefficient.

ASFORDBY.

Population, 485.

339. *Rev. J. Cartmell*, rector.—The attendance at school does not vary much here in summer and in winter. Boys will stay till 10 or 11 years of age, when they leave altogether. I find when these boys come back to me at confirmation, that they have forgotten about all that they had learnt; their time spent at school is no longer any use to them. If they have been at Sunday school they will have kept up their reading pretty well.

Bird-scaring is a demoralizing employment; it gets the children into a sort of listless state. I tried once to induce the farmers to employ a sort of half-time system at it, but they would not do so.

Many fewer lads lodge at the farmhouses than formerly; a growing independence seems to take them home.

340. *Mr. Wm. Inett*, large occupier.—Grazing land predominates about here, and we employ few children. I have 10 now dibbling beans; three are girls; one is not 8 years old, the oldest 14. This will last only a short time, but it would be a disadvantage to us not to be able to employ them, and it would be a very great hardship. The ordinary wages a man would earn here are 13*s.* or 14*s.* a week; but this is piece-work, and with his children a man can earn as much as 6*s.* a day for a short time. Then there is a little singling turnips and tenting. About 12 boys get regular employment with horses; but before that they are certainly not employed 100 days in the year, and might well go to school much the largest of the year. But the parents allow them to spend so many days doing nothing. If I were to employ three boys, and they had to be at school alternate days I couldn't get others to fill their places. They might well be spared eight days in every month, but it would be very difficult to organize them in that way.

Very few lads are now lodged in farmers' houses. The poor man therefore misses the sort of apprenticeship he used to have, and also the kindly influence which his master and mistress had over him when he lodged in the house.

[An open parish. Cottages belonging to small proprietors. "A good many with one bedroom, some with families in them." "None with three bedrooms."]

HOBY AND ROTHERBY.

Population, 503.

341. [A little bean-dropping and bird-scaring for young boys. Of those on the books of the schools, four boys of 8, five of 9, and five of 10 and upwards; two girls of 8, and 2 of 10, were taken away to bean-dropping. Boys were leaving for good at 10 years old.

Cottages fair; all had two bedrooms. Rent, 4*l.* Gardens and allotments let by rector.]

THRUSSINGTON.

Population, 574.

342. [Five boys of 8 and five of 9 were bean-dropping; one boy of 9 had just left school altogether to plough; another, going 9, was ploughing instead of his brother.]

ABKETTLEBY.

Population, 371.

343. [Children go bean-dropping and tenting. They go plough-driving, and leave school altogether at about 10 years of age.

The school closed. It supplied Holwell and Wartnably also. To be re-opened in March.

Several cottages with one bedroom; one of them let at 3*l.* a year, another at 2*l.* 10*s.*, and the rates to pay. In one, built on the waste, two married couples and a single man are living.

There are free allotments, and most of the labourers keep a pig.]

FRISBY.

Population, 424.

344. [Belongs to many small owners. Most cottages with two bedrooms. Five of them were a disgrace to the place; "they have one bedroom, or perhaps a lean-to for a second," built of mud, and rented at 4*l.* a year. At Kirby (1 mile off) were four very bad ones of a similar description.]

MARKET BOSWORTH.

Population, 997.

345. *Rev. N. P. Small*, rector.—We have a fine school here for boys over 7 years of age, and free schools for boys under that age, both here and in the the four chapelries attached to this parish, under the direction of mistresses. Even books are found. The chapelries are from 1½ to 2 miles distant.

The cottages here belong to Sir Alex. Dixie and Lord Lovelace. There are many with one bedroom and one room below, and no back door; some of them take in three generations at once. In the chapelry of Barlestone they are very bad.

[The chapelry of Sutton Cheney (population 352) is two miles distant. One boy from there attended Market Bosworth school, and three of 8 were at the school there. In Barlestone (population 546), three miles distant, three boys over 8 were at school, and one went to Market Bosworth school. One or two of a similar age went to a school at Barton. From Cadeby (population 422), one mile distant, three boys over 8 were attending Market Bosworth school.

I speak of children of the agricultural class; so in the two parishes of Thornton and Bagworth, with a population of 989, one boy of 11, two of 9, and one of 8, were the oldest boys of this class attending school.—E. S.]

346. *Mr. Wood*, farmer and guardian.—No girls at all are employed in the fields here. Women cannot be got to go out much. I don't like such labour myself. It's dear labour; and how can a woman with two or three children at home look after them properly if she goes out?

Boys are not much employed here under 12 years old, except for a short time. In the winter, boys under that age have nothing whatever to do. For ploughing we employ lads of 13 or 14.

All boys under 12 ought therefore to go to school, and there ought to be something to compel or induce them to go. Here the school is free, and yet there are lots of boys "at a loose end," idling about the streets doing nothing. I've often said I wish the

free school were miles away; they might care more about schooling if they had to pay for it. I have a great difficulty with some of my men; they seem scarcely to know right from wrong, and I'm sure that a better education is wanted to improve this.

The wages here are about 14*s.* a week. Some give 13*s.* and beer, but I always give 14*s.* With these wages, if a man has three or four children, he has to make two or three pounds of mutton last him all the week.

A good many of the allotment gardens here have been done away with; they are no great loss, because they were ill-drained, exhausted, and encumbered with fences. Those let by Lord Lovelace remain, and, if drained, would be valuable. However, one of the great uses of such gardens is that a man likes to have a place that he can call his own to go down to. There are five benefit societies here, all of which meet at public houses; so much drink is provided every club night. I feel very strongly about this practice, which takes away very much from the value of those clubs. Some room ought to be provided in which they could meet. The hamlet of Coton, in which there are five farms, has no cottages; hence the labourers have to walk a mile and more every day to and fro.

347. *Mrs. Everett*, labourer's wife.—I go to "clout-"ing" (knocking manure), to pick twitch, and to hay harvest. No girls go, and not many women. There isn't enough work to let all go that would go. I have to be at work at a quarter before 9, and leave off at 5. I don't always stop for dinner; sometimes it isn't fit to stop, it's too cold. If we don't, they don't like us to leave any sooner. At haymaking time we are not nice to an hour or two.

Boys don't get work till 11 or 12 years old. I've got a boy that goes; he's turned 12, he's plough-driving. It's earlier than many of them, but they ought to be 12 before they go out. My boy has been all the year; he was hired at Michaelmas last. I find him victuals, and he gets 3*s.* 6*d.* a week.

I've another boy of 15 at home. Neither of them are good scholars; they didn't like schooling, they were bad boys about it. I've a girl of 12, and two other children. They all sleep in one chamber, boys and girls. My house is better than many; I've two rooms. The rent is 4*l.*; it's more than many of them, but I've three "hundred" (square feet) of garden here, and six "hundred" of allotment in Lord Lovelace's field, but I have to pay for that. It helps to pay the rent.

SUTTON CHENEY.

Population, 352.

348. *Mr. A. Brickwell*, large occupier, and vice-chairman of the Board of Guardians at Market Bosworth.—The occupations here do not exceed 200 to 300 acres at the most. I have never seen a young girl employed on any of them, and I certainly never employed one myself. Women do go, but not nearly so much as they did. I don't see much profit in it myself; and as they have garden allotments to work in, and in busy times can get a little seaming from Hinckley, I don't wonder that they prefer staying at home.

I have just asked the boy whom I employ how old he is, and he says he doesn't know, and has gone to ask his mother. He has been with me over three years, and I think he must have been about 10 when he came to me. Under that age they are very little use; but at 10 they can often get regular employment. Last year there was quite an outcry for boys of that sort. They are sometimes hired by the year as young as 11. As soon as a boy goes to work here he is wanted to go to plough; now that goes on all the year, and I don't see any way to his being taken off work at any time whatever after 10 years of age. In October and November he could be best spared. To me it only makes the difference whether I should pay 13*s.* a week to a man to do the work which this lad does for 3*s.* 6*d.*; but to large families it would be a downright hardship if such boys could not go to work. If all such boys are to go to school, could not some plan be devised of giving certificates of exemption in the case of large families, where there was real want. The parents here certainly value education more than they did.

The cottages have mostly two bedrooms here; those with one only in no case contain a family; but there are hardly any with three bedrooms. They are scarcely ever let with the farms here, except where they are actually built upon the farm, and that is very seldom the case.

BARLESTONE.

Population, 546.

349. *Rev. H. Homer*, curate in charge.—School work is affected here not only by work in the fields, but by that in the collieries, the brickfields, and, in the case of girls, by seaming. Yet I believe that almost all the young children are sent to school here. It is free; but girls leave early for seaming, and the boys, who have the right of attending Market Bosworth school after 7, if they can read, leave early also.

The cottages here are very bad indeed. Most of them belong to small proprietors; the majority have only one bedroom, and often contain a family. Many of them take in lodgers.

NAILSTONE.

Population, 302.

350. *Rev. R. Watts*, rector.—Some of our labourers here have turned into colliers since the pits have been opened, and the wages have consequently risen. But most of the respectable men go to work a little in the fields here; the farmers do not like their not doing so. One of the commonest sorts of work they do is stone-picking; they are then usually paid by the basket, so that they can work their own hours. They usually do go from 10 till 4 or 5. Girls never go at all, but are kept at home a good deal after 11 years of age for nursing, so that the mothers may go out. Boys of 9 or 10 are taken for plough-driving, and are then often kept regularly; before that age they are not often wanted, except for a little tenting; they sometimes go to that as young as 8.

I farm 56 acres myself, and I have sometimes had two boys to tent, sending them to school every alternate day. This I could manage; but for the farmers it would be much more convenient if the year could be divided, and the children compelled to attend school a part of it; some such measure is much needed here. The houses all belong to Lord Howe, and are very good; they have three bedrooms, and are let, with a garden of three "hundred" (square yards), at 2*l.* 10*s.* a year, and each cottage has besides an allotment of 900, at a rent of 13*s.*

[In the school there was a certificated mistress, and one boy of 11, three of 10, and three of 9, attending.]

351. *Mrs. Jones*, labourer's wife. — I have seven children; the youngest boy is now 15, but there are younger girls. This girl is at home now to mind the baby, but she ought to be at school. I'm not a scholar myself, but I see the privilege of it, and I have sent my children as much as I can. I see in the Langboro' paper they're going to make the children go to school. So they ought. My boys are good scholars; the youngest's a very good reader and writer, but he never could do much with his sums. They went to school till they were pretty nearly 12. In some places I suppose poor folks couldn't afford to send them; but in a village like this, where a man gets regular work, if he has four or five children he can send them. But it's a bad time now, because flour's at 2*s.* 10*d.* a stone, seconds.

I don't go to work myself, except an odd day or two. When there's a family women are better at home. There's Mrs. Price, she goes and John's kept at home to mind the baby. He ought to be at school. There's Mrs. Twigg, she is picking stones; she'd make 1*s.* a day on the fallow, but in a general way she works to get 6*d.* to 8*d.* a day.

Leicestershire.

Mr. Stanhope.

c.

[This woman came to the parish with her husband and small family 17 years ago. At first they had only 8*s.* a week, very soon 10*s.*, which were the regular wages of the place, and now 14*s.*, with extras.]

352. *Mr. Hollier*, farmer, Higham-on-the-Hill.—I farm 300 acres, and employ two boys. The usual proportion about here is one plough-driving lad to every 150 acres. Of course we have other boys for tenting; they come very young for that work.

My plough-driving boys are 10 and 12 years old. They live in the village. I employ them all the year round every day, except on Sundays. If they were to be taken away I don't know where I should get another. There is not one in the parish of that age.

I employ women all the year round nearly. They "pyke" stones, pull "squitch," knock manure, and so on. We employ them for weeding. We never employ boys for that here; we could'nt trust them to do it, and the farms here are not big enough to send a man with them. But we can't get women easily now; they will hardly come for 10*d.* a day, to work from 8 to 5, and then, of course, they never come in bad weather, so that they don't work more than three or four days a week.

353. *Mr. Thorpe*, farmer, Shenton.—We want all the boys that we can get of 11 years of age for plough-driving. Before that age I don't think we ever want them, except for a little bit of tenting. I dare say after that age they could be spared a bit in the winter, if we were obliged to do it. But I don't know where I could get another if my boy went to school. We can get any quantity of boys about 13 or 14 years old, if we like to engage them to live in the house. But it's not very pleasant to hear these boys about the house, and so we like to get day-boys. It's good for the lads to be in the house, because they are well fed, and they make the stoutest men. We only give them their food and a sovereign or two at the end of the year.

The boy I employ is 13 or 14 years old. He can't read or write at all; he never cared to go to school and never will now. There is a free school in the village. One reason for keeping boys in the house is to have them on the spot to milk the cows or look after them. The first thing we begin to teach boys here is to milk. My boy has to be with me at 5 in the morning to milk, and I give him breakfast. He gets home by 6 in the evening.

SIBSON AND HAMLETS.

Population, 480.

354. *Mr. Samuel Adams*, farmer.—All our lads over 11 are taken up for ploughing; some go even younger. Boys between 8 and 10 we send tenting; but boys of that age we could spare most of the year. But it's the plough-driving lads we should find it difficult to spare, because they are really worked every day.

Our women don't care to be employed much. My farm is 1¼ mile from Sibson, and I get most of my labour from there; but in consequence of being so far I am obliged to take some lads to lodge with me. I don't like to do it, because of the dairymaids and girls of that sort that we are obliged to have in the house also.

They made an attempt here to get rid of statutes, and one year I said I would not go to them but to the register offices. But I found at the register offices that I could not get the sort of servants that I wanted, and that year I was without servants for some time; so I gave up the trial, and the statutes here flourish as much as ever.

355. *Mr. R. H. Chapman*, farmer, Upton.—There are lots of men growing up that cannot read or write. I am afraid that there is a considerable percentage of young lads from 12 to 18 years old that cannot read intelligently, that is, so as to understand what they read. But it is much better than it used to be.

356. Extracts from the Returns sent to the Commissioners by Messrs. Chapman and Arnold.

Boys employed between	8 and 10 -	- 5
" "	10 and 13 -	- 13
" "	13 and 18 -	- 6
Married women -	- - -	- 26

We consider that the necessary education for boys after 9 years of age should be given in the winter months.

About 20 of the labourers have full a mile to go to work, but the others are generally conveniently situated. During the last few years 43 cottages have been built or renovated. The size of the rooms, ventilation, and drainage are good. The labourers have good gardens or allotments, and pay for cottage and garden about 3*l.* a year. One-third of the cottages are rented with the farms, the others direct from the landlord.

NEWBOLD VERDUN.

Population, 708.

357. *Mr. Joseph Gimson*, farmer.—The number that usually make a practice of going out "pea-pulling" during the season varies from 30 to 50 young girls and women; the work lasts from five to six weeks. The wages paid vary from 9*d.* or 10*d.* to 2*s.*, or even 2*s.* 6*d.* per day, according to the state of the crop, and dependent also on its being the first or second gathering, &c.

The peas are picked stooping, or, when the ground is dry, kneeling. The pods are gathered into an apron, emptied into a sack; and the workers are paid by the piece.

Some of the workers come several miles, say from two to four; but when the gathering is beyond our own parish, it is usual for the man who has bought the crop to convey the gatherers to and from the field. I believe that the moral effect of this work is decidedly bad.

As regards boys, they are of little or no use to us before 10 years of age, and we could spare them during three months in the year, (say) November, December, and January, for the two following years.

CONGERSTONE AND SHAKERSTONE.

Population, 712.

358. *Rev. R. E. Hall*, rector.—The whole of these parishes belong to Lord Howe, and are occupied by his labourers, or those of his tenants. The cottages are very good, some of those containing families having three bedrooms; the greater number have two only, of a good size, and all the out-buildings and arrangements are excellent. If we did not happen to have an unusual number of widows there would be enough cottages for all the labourers in Congerstone; as it is, two only have to come from the neighbouring village. Nearly all the cottages have allotments, and all have gardens; there are, therefore, no really poor families. Few of the women go to work; perhaps three in the parish go. Female agricultural labour is discouraged, except during the hay harvest. There is a school intermediate between the two parishes (they are one mile apart) for the accommodation of both. Few boys are employed, except at occasional tenting, before 12 years of age, and some of them attend school up to that age. We have only a mistress, and a master in the afternoons.

359. *Mr. John Savidge*, farming bailiff to Lord Howe, Gopsall Farm.—There is scarcely a boy sent to work here under the age of 10, and the few that are sent are only employed for a few weeks in seed time to scare crows. The average age for beginning is 11, but till 12 they can go to school four months in winter. We employ many boys on this farm, but all of the age of 10 and upwards. I do not see of what use they can be to the farmer until they have obtained that age, excepting as I said before, for a few weeks in the year to scare crows.

Women are occasionally employed, and generally during both hay and corn harvest; besides this they

Leicestershire.

Mr. Stanhope.

c.

are of little use, except to untie sheaves on threshing days. Many never go out to work at all, and those that go will only, on an average, three or four months in the year.

Girls in this district are never employed at all, but when they attain the age of 12 go out to service.

359. In Leicestershire I received returns from 15 parishes, containing a population of 7,818. The approximate number of children of the agricultural labouring class in attendance at school was—

In Summer.	On the Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10	405	320
Between 10 and 13	151	101
Girls:		
Under 10	336	251
Between 10 and 13	115	82
In Winter.		
Boys:		
Under 10	486	405
Between 10 and 13	226	172
Girls:		
Under 10	388	298
Between 10 and 13	152	120

Thirteen parishes out of 22 had night schools in winter, in which the number of pupils was—

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Under 12	29	19
Over 12	204	147

360. The proportion of marks in the marriage registers, though a very unsafe guide as to the condition of education, is of some value as a *comparative* test between counties. The proportion of marks to every 100 marriages is—

	1855.		1865.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
Lincoln	29·7	36·1	21·5	22·7
Notts	30·	43·5	24·6	35·2
Leicester	28·4	38·9	21·7	29·7
England and Wales	29·5	41·2	22·5	31·2

Showing that Lincolnshire, a purely agricultural county, has made a far more rapid advance from 1855–1865 than the other two counties, and that its average is better than that of the whole of England taken together, especially in respect of female education.

EVIDENCE ACCOMPANYING MR. PORTMAN'S REPORT.

Cambridgeshire.

Mr. Portman.

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CAMBRIDGESHIRE.

ELY.

1. *Mr. Claxton*, clerk to Board of Guardians.—There are two public gangs that go out of Ely. The boys at the workhouse school are taught agricultural labour in the fields belonging to the Union. The girls are taught washing, cooking, &c., and remain at school till 15 years of age, when they go out to service.

2. MINUTES of the MEETING of the BOARD of GUARDIANS, ELY.

MR. H. MARTIN, *Chairman.*

It was generally agreed that the winter months, from end of November to March, should be the only period of the year during which any compulsion should be used with regard to the education of the children.

That it is desirable in legislating to avoid any interference with the maintenance of a family as aided by the children's earnings.

That 8 years is a fair age at which to place a limit, and that from 8 to 10 certain restrictions as to education may be placed on children.

Some were in favour of 10 years as the limit.

Schools are wanted in some parts of the fens; in many cases children are unable to go to school on account of distance.

Night Schools.—It was thought that there would be a difficulty in finding competent persons to conduct and teach. Sunday schools of all denominations said to be well attended.

Boys go to plough at 8 years and under. Girls go to field from 10 to 14 years, then some go to service; they are not improved by field work; but are said to be necessary for it.

The feeling generally was against compulsion as to the mode of employment of children and against legislative interference, except with much elasticity, and to a limited extent.

Many private gangs in the district. It was not their opinion that the Agricultural Gangs Act, 1867, would do away with public gang masters, and convert the system to that of private gangs. Statute or hiring fairs exist for the engagement of domestic servants, but not of farm labourers. Half-time system would not work. Perhaps one day in a week might be given for education.

THORNEY.

Population, 2,219 - Acreage, 17,697.

3. The whole of this parish is in the possession of the Duke of Bedford. The cottages are very good, but it is said that there are not enough for the population. There are good schools, but there is no night school. It is a fen district. Cottages and farms at a great distance from church or school are common.

4. The subjoined extracts are from a letter written by Mr. Whitting, a resident in Thorney.

"In all corn-growing districts juvenile labour is largely and essentially required. It will, I believe, be found that occupiers of tillage land require during the summer season the assistance of three or four children for every 100 acres. A farm of 400 acres will employ a gang of 12 or 15 from about the middle of March to the end of October, with an interval of perhaps a month or six weeks before harvest, when all the weeding and cleaning of land will or ought to have been done. The employment of this labour is at once an important source of support to the labourer's family, and the means of training the children for their future work in life. The farmer, therefore, rarely finds any great difficulty in procuring hands for the work. His difficulty is to determine the best method of employing them consistently with their moral and physical interests. For this object I know of no more effective or convenient arrangement that can be suggested than that of placing them under the care and direction of a superintendent, who is himself under the direction and in the private employment of the farmer; in other words, the system of private gangs.

"I am no advocate for 'public gangs;' I would have them absolutely abolished by law. The system is bad in principle, and disadvantageous alike to the employers and the employed.

"But while I concur with the Commissioners in their condemnation of the public gang, I entirely demur to their observations, so far as they seek to place the private gang in the same category. Let the legislature enforce some slight modifications of the system in the way of restriction as to the age at which, and the time during which, the children should be employed, and I doubt whether any better arrangement could be substituted for the employment of juvenile labour than a properly constituted private gang.

"Judging from my own experience, and having regard to the interests both of the employers and the employed, I think, that as a rule, boys are fit to work in the gang at 8 and girls at 9 or 10 years of age. At 15, the latter should be altogether excluded from the gang. Boys gradually pass off to a higher class of labour, and girls should, at the age I have stated, begin to engage themselves in domestic service, or if necessary assist in their families at home.

"With reference to the hours of labour, I have found that children may very fairly work nine hours in the day, beginning at 7 o'clock, allowing a rest of half an hour for breakfast, and an hour for dinner, and leaving the field at half-past 5 or 6, according to their distance from home.

"Nor need it be thought that two or three miles is any great distance for children to go to and from their work; their out-door labour, under such conditions as I have described, promotes great buoyancy of health and spirits, and rarely produces undue fatigue. Where the children are living too far from their work to walk, it might well be made obligatory upon the farmer to send a light waggon or cart for them, as is now frequently done in the case of public gangs. I may add, as an important consideration in dealing with this subject, that the usual payment made to children working in the gangs, or otherwise employed on the farms in this part of the country, varies from 6*d.* or 7*d.* to 9*d.* a day, thus averaging 3*s.* or 4*s.* a week to each child. Then as to the education of the children who are thus employed, I have no hesitation in saying that this can be fairly and sufficiently attended to during those periods of the year when the demand for their services in the field ceases, namely, the four or five winter months, and the month or six weeks in the summer, to which I have referred. Every child of ordinary abilities, who is made to take advantage of these leisure intervals may, at least, be taught to read intelligibly, to write legibly, to do common accounts with accuracy, and otherwise fit himself for the practical purposes of life. Many of them, as a fact, avail themselves to a far greater extent than I have indicated of the educational advantages which are now so universally offered in

Cambridgeshire.

Mr. Portman.

d.

rural districts, and which are also more universally sought for and appreciated. I have, at the present time, working in my gang, children of the third generation, whose parents and grandparents preceded them in similar occupations, most of whom I am glad to know have long since creditably established themselves in their respective spheres in life, while some of the younger ones, under a higher degree of education, have qualified themselves for offices of private trust, and for appointment on railways, or in the police force, or other public services, or as mechanics and artisans. This year my gang began to assemble for the season on the 1st of April; on the 6th there were 12 children at work, but on Monday the 8th only two presented themselves, all the others having gone to attend at their schools to meet the inspector; the two remaining children had, unfortunately, been prevented by sickness, during the winter, from so qualifying themselves.

"I have no doubt that many farmers could give as favourable a report as I have done, perhaps more so, of children who are working, or have worked, in their private gangs; and I know of no supervision by licences or otherwise that can much improve the system. Farmers generally have too much self-respect, and too kind a feeling towards children under their employment, knowingly to appoint an immoral or an improper person to superintend them, and I don't think they will require the aid or would approve of the interference of the rural police to instruct or control them in the management of their gangs, while at the same time I fail to see how the children, thus usefully and profitably employed in the field, are likely to have their morals less safely guarded than they would be in a school-yard or in the village streets.

"One word more and I will conclude this letter. The Commissioners, in their report, record their opinion that the gang system is the direct result of the pulling down of cottages in close parishes, and of the formation of large farms without providing an adequate number of cottages to contain the workpeople required for the labour of the farm.

However true in some respects this may be, I am inclined to think that the observation is one which may give rise to a wrong impression on this subject of cottages, and which if acted upon by the legislature would lead to abortive results.

"It should be remembered that where parishes are very large, in the fens of Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Lincolnshire, and parts of Yorkshire, it is desirable that the labourers should reside in or near to the principal villages or hamlets for the general convenience of their families, for the sake of domestic economy, and for the opportunity thus afforded them of attending places of worship and sending their children to school. Many also prefer the village as the more social position. Now, a farmer will gladly make arrangements for sending his foreman, his shepherd, and yearly servants to places of worship on Sundays, and their children to school, but this could not be expected of him by all his labourers, if they lived on his farm, perhaps three or four miles away from the parish church and schools. As an instance in point, I may mention that a relative of mine, some few years ago, built several cottages for his tenants on a remotely situated estate, only one of which has at present found an occupant. If families had to walk three or four miles to places of worship on Sundays, and their children to go daily the same distance to school, throughout the winter, they would assuredly lose the advantages of religious, moral, and secular instruction.

"I am, &c.

"Wm. Whitting, J.P.

"Thorney Abbey, Isle of Ely,
"May 13, 1867."

MANEA.

A hamlet of Coveney, five miles distant.

Population, 1,206 - Acreage, 4,768.

5. *Thomas Norman*, gangmaster.—I have been a gangmaster for four or five years. When the gangmaster's trade comes to an end, the farmer will find it very expensive to send out a man with five or six children, and the small farmers will have a job to get the work done one or two days in the week, if there are no public gangs. The large farmers have plenty of hands among their own labourers. If the farmer paid me to take charge of a private gang, it would not be so good for me in money as the public gang. The parents want the children's earnings; they can't afford to keep them at home. There are three or near four months in the winter when there is no work to do in the fields. I can read and write enough for what I want.

6. *Mr. Plowright*, farmer.—I farm nearly 1,000 acres. Am opposed to the public gang system, but employ many children; their labour is necesary for farming operations. I do not think that the gangmaster's occupation will cease in consequence of the Agricultural Gangs Act. The children's earnings are necessary for the support of the family. Adult's wages are 12*s*. and 13*s*. a week.

WHITTLESEY.

The parishes of Whittlesey, with the hamlets of Coates, Eastrea, and the surrounding fens, contain a population of 6,967. Acreage, 25,131.

7. *T. Bowker, Esq.*, J.P.—Under a proper ganger the children are well taken care of. It is very desirable that the ganger should see the children under his charge home to the village. Girls should leave the gang at 13 years of age. I have never known a case of complaint of ill-usage in a gang during the 42 years I have been on the bench. The average distance to work is three miles.

8. *Mrs. German*, wife of ganger.—I have often been out with the gang. The children go to school in the winter. I have known many girls go to service from the gang after 13 years of age. Private gangs are collected by giving 1*d*. a day more to each child than in the public gangs [that is to say, the children get all the money, instead of 1*d*. a day being deducted by the ganger.—E. B. P.].

It will be difficult to keep boys and girls apart in private gangs, as there are often two or three of one family working at the same job, and they want to go together. It is very hard work for a woman to superintend a gang. A great many parents don't care where the children are, so long as they are out of the house.

9. *Mr. Greig*, schoolmaster.—Would like to see infant schools established. The children are very rough and saucy when they return to school after field work.

Rev. W. Waller, St. Mary's vicarage.

Extract from Return.

10. I think enforcing some amount of school attendance, during the time the children are not at work, would be the method most applicable to this parish.

There are many parents who are too poor to pay for their children's schooling, but even when it is paid for, they are careless about the attendance.

The want of cottage accommodation has a bad effect on the morals of the poor.

Night schools have failed in this parish; the children are too tired to give the requisite attention.

There are seven dame schools.

11. *John Morris*, gangmaster.—Have been ganger for six years. I never took my wife to field to help look after the gang, and I do not think a woman can manage a gang. I do not think a gang of girls would be employed as much as one of boys.

[It was his impression that the Gangs Act will, by separating the sexes, greatly put a stop to the employment of girls in field work, as a woman cannot keep them in order, and the farmer knows that in weeding time, if the girls romp about, much corn is spoilt.—E. B. P.]

Where private gangs are employed the overlooker does not see the children home to the village.

12. MEETING of the BOARD OF GUARDIANS, WHITTLESEY. Mr. LIVETT, *Chairman.*

Seventeen guardians present.

It was agreed that 8 years should be the lowest limit for field work, though some were in favour of 9.

There was a feeling that an alteration should be made in the Poor Law to enable relief to be given to families where fathers' wages are not enough to support the family, in case of children under 8 or 9 not being allowed to work, and that, as in that case the burden would fall on the ratepayers, there should be a general tax on all descriptions of property to meet this want, and not only on the land.

It was suggested that women from 15 years upwards should not be allowed to go to field, unless married.

Girls' labour cannot be dispensed with in weeding and twitching time.

It was stated that the state of morals in the gangs is not nearly as bad as has been represented.

As to the separation of sexes in private gangs, a difficulty would arise on account of several of one family going together with one victual bag, and taking care of each other; also that it would be extremely difficult to get a woman to go with the gang.

They were of opinion that the question of distance to work would, and is righting itself.

That the health of the children is by no means injuriously affected. Half-time or alternate day system unanimously condemned.

It was thought that three months winter, or from mid-November to mid-March, might be devoted to education, or a system of compulsory night schools for lads might be established.

One guardian was opposed to employment of girls altogether.

The bad state of the cottages was considered to be the root of demoralization of both sexes, and to demand the attention of landlords. In Whittlesey there are many small owners of cottages; in some instances cottages are owned by labourers, who inhabit them. In the fens there are cottages uninhabited; people do not like living a long distance from villages.

Union Chargeability Act does not apply to Whittlesey.

Good schools and every facility for education in the town.

13. RETURN made by COMMITTEE of GUARDIANS of WHITTLESEY.

Private gangs exist in the parish. The cultivation is chiefly arable.

The employment of the gangs is:—In spring, in cleaning the land; in summer, in weeding; in autumn, in spreading manure and taking up roots.

For those who live near the farm the hours are 11; for those at a distance, 12; with 1½ hours allowed for meals.

The sexes work together.

Three-fourths of the children are able to read and write; among the adults the proportion is not so large.

We do not think legislation is required for private gangs.

There is always plenty of leisure time, especially in winter, when the children can attend school, therefore the best mode of enforcing school attendance is that under the Print Works Act, for a certain number of hours during the preceding six months.

Children can be sent to the National and other schools at 1*d.* per week.

The cottage accommodation is very insufficient, and has its inevitable results on the health and morality of the poor.

There are several night schools, open generally for two hours on five nights in the week, where reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught. They are well attended, but there is an occasional deficiency of teachers.

14. NATIONAL SCHOOLS, WHITTLESEY.

In Winter.

Average attendance of boys -	115
" " of girls -	97

In Summer.

Average attendance of boys -	51
" " of girls -	50

15. POND'S BRIDGE SCHOOL, ST. THOMAS'.

In Winter.

Average attendance of boys -	48
" " of girls	47

In Summer.

Average attendance of boys -	37
" " of girls -	40

16. RETURN of PRIVATE GANG employed by MR. SHEPPERSON.

Age.	Boys.	Girls.	——
8	2	—	Can read and write.
10	3	—	One boy cannot write.
11	2	1	Girl cannot read or write.
12	2	4	One girl cannot write. One boy cannot read or write.
13	2	3	One girl cannot write. One boy cannot read or write.
14	1	3	One boy cannot write.
15	—	2	Can read and write.
17	—	1	" "

17. RETURN made by JOHN LITTLE, of ELDENWELL, COATES, near WHITTLESEY.

Population about 7,000 - Acreage, 26,000.

Private gangs are employed.

A private gang employed in—

——	Males.	Females.	Total.
Spring - -	19	9	28
Summer - -	19	9	28
Autumn - -	13	9	22
Winter - -	13	5	18

Males:

Between 8 and 10 - - -	2
" 10 and 13 - - -	12
" 13 and 18 - - -	6
	20

Females:

Between 13 and 18 - -	9

They are employed in spring, in hoeing, weeding, twitching, and sometimes driving teams; in the summer, in weeding, twitching, or gathering cooch grass; in autumn, in knocking manure, taking up and cleaning roots, and twitching; and in winter the younger children are at home, and the elder ones are employed in shaking stubble, and the light work in thrashing.

Hours of work, from half-past 6 a.m. in summer to a quarter before 6 p.m. They leave home at a quarter past 6 and get home at half-past 6 as a rule.

They are allowed for meals—breakfast, 20 minutes, and dinner an hour.

The sexes work sometimes together and sometimes apart.

The state of education is low, of a mere elementary kind; such as is taught at a mixed day school, Sunday, or evening school.

Cambridgeshire.

Mr. Portman.

d.

I think private gangs might very well be left without legislative interference, except for education and the age at which children should be employed; 9 years is early enough for girls to go to work, and 8 for boys.

It would be impossible for our children to go to school for half or alternate days. School attendance might be enforced for three months in winter. Nearly all the children live in the village. Most of the parents can afford to send their children to school. Cottage accommodation is very insufficient, and overcrowding is the cause of much disease and immorality.

There are too few cottages on the farms, but the village is conveniently situated.

The number of cottages in the village of Coates is 131:—

With one bed-room.	With two.	With three.
33	82	9

The rents vary from 60*s.* to 160*s.* Average rent about 73*s.*

Seventeen cottages are occupied by the owners.

In a large village like Coates it is impossible for me to collect the necessary statistics to answer all your questions, but I know there is a great deal of overcrowding, both in families and with lodgers, and very deficient ventilation and drainage. I am not acquainted with the provisions of Act 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114.

Supposing the above Act applies to landed estates only, could it not be extended to owners of cottages as a loan or second mortgage, at a moderate rate of interest, to be expended on additional sleeping rooms? The tenant would, I believe, be willing to pay the interest as an additional rent.

SCHOOL.

In Summer.

Boys:	
Under 10 - -	26
Between 10 and 13 - -	0
Girls:	
Under 10 -	30
Between 10 and 13 -	4
Total—Boys -	26
Girls -	34
	60

In Winter.

Boys:	
Under 10 - - -	25
Between 10 and 13 -	6
Girls:	
Under 10 - - -	35
Between 10 and 13 -	10
Total—Boys	31
Girls	45
	76

There are two evening schools kept by labouring men for 21 weeks in winter, for boys only, for two hours a night for five nights a week; average attendance about 30; they are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic. It does not adequately supply the deficiencies of the day school. The want of a room and a good teacher are the principal difficulties in supplying a night school.

There are three public gangs in the village of Coates, consisting of 32 boys and 16 girls; total, 48.

SUTTON.

Population 1,731 - Acreage, 6,970.

18. *The Hon. and Rev. C. Spencer*, vicar.—The state of education is very deficient; very few can ever sign the marriage register. Many of the farmers are very illiterate. The cottages are rather crowded; they mostly belong to small owners, who get all they can out of them. Thinks children's labour is necessary at weeding time. The women also go very much to field work.

EXTRACT from RETURN made by the Hon. and Rev. C. O. SPENCER, Sutton.

I would make the same regulations for private as for public gangs. I believe the regulations for private gangs should be *most rigid*, especially with regard to the gangers.

No girl under 10 years of age should be employed upon the land, nor any boy under 9 years in spring and summer, or under 12 years in winter.

Every child under a certain age should be required to attend school for five months, from end of October to April; but no system of half time or alternate days would answer.

SCHOOL.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 -	18	15
Between 10 and 13 -	10	7
Girls:		
Under 10 -	15	10
Between 10 and 13 -	8	5

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 -	25	22
Between 10 and 13 -	15	13
Girls:		
Under 10	20	15
Between 10 and 13 -	10	8

There is a night school with 30 scholars.

HADDENHAM.

Population, 1,976. Acreage, 8,912. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

19. *Rev. H. Hughes.*—Private gangs exist. There are not often boys as young as 8 years employed. There is a great want of female servants; the girls who have been to field work will not stay in service. Little boys are much employed in driving manure carts. There are some families in his parish who get on very well, and keep their children from going to work till 10 years of age; it depends on the prudence of the parents. Girls should not go to field work till 13 years of age, if at all. Farmers employ women and girls on account of the cheapness of their labour. There are in the parish a boys' school, a girls' school (National), a Baptist school, and a night school every night in the winter.

20. EXTRACT from RETURN by REV. H. HUGHES.

Boys should not go to work under 8 years of age.

The 10 hours for work should include the going to and returning from work.

I would recommend that attendance should be enforced by alternate whole days at school and whole days at work. If children go to work in the morning they are not fit for school duties in the afternoon, and the farmers would require the first half of the day at work, if any.

The girls' and infant schools are free to the children of the poor, but the attendance is very irregular, owing to out-doors employment.

Most of the cottages have two bed rooms.

The great evil of the out-door employment amongst females under 13 is, that their evenings and Sundays are free to themselves. After work they will dress up and walk about in the evening; this is a fruitful source of immorality. If the females under 13 were restrained

from out-door employment, they would not get an early liking for it, and I think the parents would be more anxious to get them out to service in families; and if they were kept at school till 13 years of age, out-door employment would be distasteful to them.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	84	36
Between 10 and 13 -	41	30
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	103	61
Between 10 and 13 -	15	8

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	80	30
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	114	66
Between 10 and 13 -	32	19

LITTLEPORT.

Population, 3,800. Acreage, 16,000. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

21. Return made by Rev. W. B. Hopkins, vicar.

Private gangs exist.

Almost all the children of agricultural labourers in this parish, between the ages of 10 and 16, are employed. In a few cases, children under 10 years have gone into the fields. Every farmer employs the labour of children and young persons.

They are employed in cleaning the land, weeding, picking potatoes, &c.; boys are employed at all times to lead horses in carts and waggons. Hours in summer from 6 to 6, hours in winter from 7 to 5, with one and a half hours allowed for meals. The sexes work most commonly together. I believe it has much the same effect on the morals as any other gathering of boys and girls, *e.g.*, in the village street during the evening and at night. The effects are very bad upon girls. They become unwilling to submit to the restraint and regular hours of domestic service, and too often they become unthrifty and slatternly mothers.

The state of education among the young and adults is bad. In five years ending 1866, 42·25 per cent. of the signatures in the marriage register were made by marks.

In Littleport the private gangs are managed in a humane way. I should define a private gang to be a company of not less than 10 children, or young people, working for a farmer in the fields under the superintendence of a respectable labourer.

It would be much better if females did not go to field work at all, except in hay-time and harvest. No girl under 12 years should go at all. Boys under 9 years should not be sent to field work.

It seems right that children under 13 years should not be required to work more than eight hours a day.

Many labourers in this parish live more than three miles from any school, and their dwellings are widely scattered. To them the education of their children at school is practically impossible.

[There is a new school being built by subscription in the fen, at a distance of three or four miles from Littleport, at "Dairy Houses" hamlet, where service has hitherto been held in a barn.—E. B. P.]

An agricultural labourer earning 12*s.* a week cannot afford to pay much for education.

There are two kinds of cottages here—

1. With one lower and one upper room, sometimes two rooms on basement. Are unfit for a family. Rent, 2*l.* 10*s.* a year.
2. With two lower and two upper rooms, fit for a small family. Rent, 4*l.* 10*s.* to 6*l.* 10*s.*, according to size of garden.

Water supply and drainage are bad. There are some belonging to the feoffees of the town charities, which are rent free, the tenants being subject to some good regulations. These have been improved during the last 20 years.

The difficulties in the way of maintaining a good night school are—

1. Want of efficient paid teachers.
2. Want of funds to provide a staff of teachers.
3. Unwillingness on the part of young people to begin again the drudgery of elementary learning when they have once left it off.
4. The distance which the young people have to walk to school after their work.

22. Agricultural Private Gangs, Parish of Littleport.

An opinion, as requested by the Commissioners, on th matters referred to on p. 6, questions 23—26.

1. There is a very important difference to be noted between the cases of (*a*) children, young persons, and women employed in a factory, or in print works, or in a mine, and (*b*) children, &c. employed in agriculture in a private gang.

In the former case (*a*) the bulk of the children, &c. employed in a factory, &c. remain the same; their names and ages must be registered and changes can be easily traced.

In the latter instance (*b*) the children, &c. are never long the same, even on the same farm, but are constantly changing, sometimes working for one farmer and sometimes for another; employed for a few weeks and then scattered. In fact, a private gang is a sort of earthly nebula; you can see it from time to time, but it is most difficult to resolve or to define.

2. It follows from this peculiarity that the Legislature cannot so readily deal with a private gang as with a factory; for,

(1.) It is far more difficult to trace the children and to find out whether, and where, and for how long a time they are employed; and,

(2.) Any law would be more easily evaded and detection would be far more difficult.

3. If, therefore, legislation on this subject be resorted to, it becomes of very great consequence that the sympathy and co-operation either of the employer, or of the parent, or of both, should be cordially given to any measure which may be proposed. Should the new law prove utterly distasteful both to the employer and to the parent, it will only issue in evasion, or in contraband practices. It seems, too, as we have seen, that from the very nature of the case evasion will not be difficult, whilst detection must be almost impossible. There is, therefore, no slight risk lest the law should become a dead letter, and tend to demoralize the people whom it was intended to elevate.

4. It seems desirable, then, to ascertain whether there be an age below which the labour of the child is worthless (or of little worth) to the employer, and his earnings inadequate to the supply of the extra food and clothing he will need in the gang. For if there be such an age, no hardship can be inflicted either upon the farmer or the parent by making it illegal for any child to be sent into the fields to work below this age.

5. What, then, is to be done with children, during this nonage, whilst they are forbidden by the law to go to work? Can we trust to the parent to do his duty, and to send his child to school? In some remote homes, in this parish, no school is within reach; are the children in these homes to be compelled to live in idleness? Theirs is a case which seems to require exceptional treatment. But when there is a school within reach it is tolerably certain that the respectable labourer will make an effort to secure an education for his child. And, with regard to orphan

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children, or children for any cause receiving out-door relief, the permissive Act of Mr. Denison might be made compulsory, and the rates be fairly charged with the cost of their education.

6. There is of course a further question which demands a reply. Is it right to insist by law upon a compulsory attendance at school? Must a parent be compelled to produce a certificate that his child has attended school for a defined number of years, and for a specified minimum of times in each of those years, before the child can be allowed to work at all? I should say no to both of these questions, because I have no faith in compulsory education; and I am certain that a lad who is partial to marbles, chuck-farthing, or truant-playing cannot by Act of Parliament be made fond of school. But I may remark that these questions cannot receive an affirmative unless—

(1.) An efficient school is within reach of the child's home, say within two miles; and unless—

(2.) The parent may reasonably be presumed to possess the means of paying for his children's schooling; and this is a question either of higher wages, or of free schools, *i.e.*, of schools made free by grants from local or Imperial taxation.

7. So far we have considered only the case of very young children; but when a child grows up beyond the unprofitable age, it seems fitting that the employer should not be deprived of his labour, nor that the parent should forfeit the advantage which may accrue from his wages. It is important, too, that they who must expect to work for their daily bread, should at an early age be inured to some of the hardships which they will have to bear; it is, in fact, a part of their training, and therefore of their education. But whilst this is freely granted it must also be added that in agriculture, as well as in manufactures, the State is bound to interfere so far as to secure, if possible, that no child shall become stunted in the growth of soul or body either by improper or excessive labour, or by being entirely removed at a too early age from school influences.

8. What kind of legislation, then, is required to provide for these children? Can legislation be adapted to their case at all? I am disposed to think that it may be; and in such a way as to do no wrong either to the employer or the parent.

9. I am intentionally leaving out the question how far bodily health is likely to be injured by working in the fields. The only kind of toil which is dangerous to health is weeding when the corn is high and wet. Even this kind of labour is perhaps not more unhealthy than some kinds of work in factories, print works, and mines; and its danger might be modified or removed by proper precautions as to food and change of clothing. The question of health ought to be referred to medical authorities; but I believe a very general experience proves that almost all kinds of field work to which women and children are put is healthy and health-giving, rather than the contrary.

10. Nor is it my intention to speak of the moral or immoral influence of field work, because I am at a loss to understand that in a private gang (and these only are now under consideration), directed by a respectable conductor, there can be any special or peculiar moral danger to young persons over and above that which springs from the common temptations of a life of toil. No rank and no employment can be exempted from the need of watchfulness and Christian prudence.

11. I confine myself, therefore, to suggesting what may be done by the legislature to secure that a certain amount of education shall be given to children employed in agricultural labour. I may at once state my conviction that the only way in which education can be combined with agricultural labour is by means of the evening school. I may confidently assert that no boy or girl ought entirely to give up being taught before they attain to the age of 14, for after 12 a child begins to understand the value of education, and becomes willing to give his whole mind to its acquirement. But if a child leaves school at 10, he will very rarely encounter the difficulty and overcome the shame of beginning again when he is older. If, therefore, children are sent into the fields at an early age, care should be taken to keep up their education, and not to allow them to forget the little they have then acquired. This, however, owing to the peculiar nature of field work, can, as I believe, only be done by their attending a night school; and, to be able to do this with any prospect of real advantage, they should be allowed to leave work two hours earlier whenever they go to the night school.

12. My suggestions may thus be summed up in a tabular form:—

(1.) Prohibit the employment of children under 10 years of age, except in cases where no school is within two miles; and then only allow the child to work with its own parent.

(2.) Between the ages of 10 and 14 require all children employed in the fields to attend an evening school four days in every week whilst so employed; and whenever they attend evening school, require also that they shall leave work two hours earlier than the usual time.

An exception must be made when there is no evening school kept within two miles of the child's home.

13. In order to carry out this suggestion into practice, the management of elementary schools in agricultural districts will have to be modified; for instance, the school might meet three times a day on the four days when there is evening school, so as to allow the lower classes of the school to be taught in the afternoon, whilst the upper classes might assemble with the evening scholars; thus:—

—	—	Lower Classes.	Evening School and Upper Classes.
	a.m.	p.m.	p.m.
Monday -	9 to 12	2 to 3	5 to 7
Tuesday -	9 ,, 12	2 ,, 3	5 ,, 7
Wednesday	9 ,, 12	2 ,, 5	—
Thursday -	9 ,, 12	2 ,, 3	5 ,, 7
Friday - -	9 ,, 12	2 ,, 3	5 ,, 7
Saturday -	holiday.	holiday.	holiday.

In schools managed thus an assistant teacher might be employed, either with or without pupil teachers, according to the size of the school. Of course, also, Her Majesty's Committee of Privy Council must be consulted, in order that the Revised Code may be modified to suit schools in agricultural districts, and to give them adequate assistance.

14. In conclusion I beg leave to say that I make this suggestion with great diffidence; in fact, I only do so because the Commissioners ask for opinions. Out of respect for them and their labours, as well as from the interest I feel in the question, I have attempted to sketch a plan, which could be worked out in practice. I shall be rejoiced if by any means some method can be devised by which the general education in this district may be raised to a higher level, and made a better training both for this world and for the next.

W. B. Hopkins,
Vicar of Littleport.

11th February 1868.

23. Meeting at the Vicarage, Littleport.

Present—Rev. W. B. Hopkins.
Rev. W. Newton.
Mr. Joseph Martin } farmers.
Mr. J. Luddington }

Labouring parents are jealous of any interference as to the earnings of the children.

All children up to 10 years of age might have regular schooling during December, January, and February.

It was suggested that children's labour might be regulated by age at different seasons of the year.

Legislation for school attendance should be restricted to a certain distance round the school. There are many outlying farms and homesteads at a great distance from a school.

The children walk to their work in the employer's time. The parents refuse to let them go any great distance. The separation of sexes in private gangs would be difficult, as many members of one family are employed together; however, girls and boys of 12 years and upwards should not be employed in same gang.

BOYS' SCHOOL.

24. *Mr. Leech*, master.—I have been here for 20 years. Average attendance in 1867 :—

Winter quarters - - -	124 151
Summer " - - -	98 85

They usually cease to attend regularly at 8 or 9 years of age. Some as old as 13 years come in the winter. The Sunday school is well attended. Average age of 20 boys in first class is 13 years. It would be well that boys should be kept at school till 12 years of age. The children are neglected by their mothers; they are left at home in charge of some woman, and are dosed with laudanum to keep them quiet. Some of the parents make great efforts to send the children to school, but many complain that they have not the means to do so. I think the condition of the people is improving; they are struggling to get on. Some labourers hire a bit of land and work overtime. The children are then employed with them.

GIRLS' SCHOOL.

25. *Fanny Webb*, mistress.—Average attendance:—

Two winter quarters - -	94 117
Two summer " - -	99 67

Some of the girls go to work at 8 years of age. In winter those up to 14 years come to school. Those who go to field seldom go to service. Some girls only get six weeks' schooling during the year. Those who go regularly to field work never get into the higher class; they lose a class while out at work. There is a night school for girls, which is attended by those who have been out at field work, of the age of 14 up to 17 and 18 years. If girls could be kept at school till 14 years they would have no taste for field work. I have known the big girls ashamed of their field dress when I have met them wearing it. I was at a school at Kelshall, near Royston, where we kept the girls till 14 years. Regular attendance, even up to 10 years, would be better for girls than if they remained till 12 years with a long absence in the summer months. Their general health does not suffer much. They get faceache and earache, and those who work at the threshing machines have their eyes affected by the dust.

26. *William Butcher*, labourer, aged 81 years.—There was no gang-work in my early days. There was not half the corn grown then, and there was no work for children on the land then as now. Very small children now come by my cottage from work, all muck and dirt; I don't think it pays the parents. When you come to look at use of clothes, and what not, the money ain't much. Parents think they must get the money as a nice help to the rest. Wickedness is more *after* than *at* work. When I was a boy we always drawed-in at dark, had supper, and were sent to bed. Not so now, the parents don't look after their children. Farmers won't allow ill usage. I don't think there is any bad work of that kind. Weeding could not be done without the children; men won't do it. It is a bad thing for girls to go to field work at all. Young people now-a-days like to be free; don't care for service, and don't like to be restrained.

27. *Mrs. Titmarsh*, labourer's wife.—My husband's wages are 12*s.* a week, and it takes them all to buy flour. I have two boys at field work earning 6*s.* 6*d.* a week between them. Eldest is 13 years old; will work all the winter, the younger one perhaps not. They have a long way to go to work. Don't get home till 6 p.m.; can hardly get round enough to go to school. They can't read much. I should like them to go to school. I am not fond of sending a girl to field; would rather do with a little less and keep them at home. I don't like the boys and girls mixing at work. I was better off when the children were mites, less food and clothing to find. I went out to field when I was young, and then to service.

28. *Mrs. Goddard*, labourer's wife, lives in feoffees' houses.—I have six children; two of them are at field work; one, a boy, earns 8*d.* a day; the other, a girl, earns 6*d.* a day. Husband's wages 12*s.* a week, out of which I have to spend 10*s.* 6*d.* a week for flour only. We could not live without the children's earnings. The boy went to night school last winter; he can't read as well as I should like. I went to field myself; have been wet up to my waist; constitution need be very strong to stand that. I have never had my health. Girls don't ought to go out so young. Poverty makes parents send their children to field; they ought to be kept indoors at night. The children often do what men might do. Others know it as well as I. If children did not go it would be better for the men. My little girl of 10 years was yesterday throwing up mangel into a cart, which is man's work.

MARCH.

Population, 5,455. Acreage, 19,140. Cultivation, 18,000 acres arable; 1,000 acres pasture.

29. RETURN made by T. TUSTING, Clerk to Board of Guardians of North Witchford Union.

Private gangs exist partially. Forty-nine males, from 8 years to 15; 31 females, from 10 years to 18, so employed. In hoeing, weeding, planting, and taking up root-croops in spring, summer, and autumn; in winter, in stone-picking, bird-tending and forking twitch. They work nine hours in summer, and seven in winter. They all live in the town at a distance from the work. One and a half hour is allowed for meals. The sexes work together. It would be desirable to keep them apart, but there is not the same evil existing in the "private" gangs as in the "public." The employment is considered healthy, except in cases of weeding high wet corn, and of taking up roots.

There are scarcely any young persons who have not had a fair amount of schooling.

In a purely agricultural district the females, as a body, adopt field employment, and look forward only to become wives of agricultural labourers, and to rear families to follow the same employment. The abandonment of the employment by the female could not alter her future prospects, or make her other than the wife of an agricultural labourer. A tone of morals follows on the employment which it would be desirable to improve; but there is no other mode of earning a living for the bulk of the population.

No boys should be allowed to work under 8 years of age.

There are many small occupiers of land in this district, and the cultivation is done entirely by the man and his family. These voluntarily adopt the same hours of labour as those who let themselves for the day; this would show that the hours are not excessive, and restriction not required.

BOYS' SCHOOL, MARCH.

30. *Mr. Chamberlain*, master.—I have been here 30 years. When I first came there were only 22 children in the school; there are now 226 on the books, and an average attendance at the Sunday school of 180. The numbers in attendance begin to decrease immensely early in April, and to increase at the end of

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November. Children are frequently out in the gangs for nine months in the year. When they return from field work they are not fit for the same class as when they went out. Children go to infant school till 7 years old, and then come to day school. I think 10 years of age would be a good limit for work, as the boys would then get three years in day school, and be fairly grounded in reading, writing, and simple arithmetic. Night school did not answer.

GIRLS' SCHOOL.

31. *Mrs. Jones*, mistress.—I formerly had a factory school. I consider that in the last three years there has been great improvement in the behaviour of the girls in the streets here, though the gangs make very offensive remarks if you meet them on the road. I should like girls to be prevented from going to work before 11 years of age. The girls go out in March, and do not come back till the end of November. The women and children are employed by farmers on account of the cheapness of their labour, while the men are idling about on the bridge (the hiring place in March). Field girls cannot get places as servants in respectable families. They are hired at statutes. The statutes are just like a slave market. Boys ranged on one side of the street, and girls on the other, waiting for hire. They are pulled about and turned round like buying a slave. I consider the state of education even among the middle class at a low ebb. Heads of labouring families don't care about education. No industrial training school for girls exists in the neighbourhood.

32. MEETING of the GUARDIANS of the NORTH WITCHFORD UNION, held at DODDINGTON.

Mr. J. POPE, *Chairman.*

Seventeen guardians present.

It was agreed that 8 years would be a good limit below which children should not go to field work, and that to fix it at 10 years would be a great injury to the labourer as well as to the employer.

That the loss of labour (if 8 was the limit) would be very trifling, and would not create any great demand on the rates.

Women's labour was said to be necessary, though one expressed his opinion that field work was very hurtful to girls.

The question of regulating the distance to work was said to be more a question of hours, as the gangs go and return from work in the farmers' time.

Waggons are occasionally sent to fetch the children. As to extending to private gangs the separation of the sexes clause, it was said that a difficulty would arise from the fact of brothers and sisters being employed together, in many cases living on the farm where their labour is required.

A great difference of opinion existed as to the benefit or otherwise of doing away with "public gangs." In the event of the public gang system coming to an end, the small occupiers would be the sufferers, the larger ones only being able to keep private gangs constantly employed.

The feeling was against public gangs, and I pointed out to them in what way the control of abuses in the system was placed in their hands by the Gangs Act.

In the case of a large gang in Chatteris women are frequently employed with one or more portions of the gangs, the master going with another.

Education.—Half time and alternate days system not approved of. Four months in the winter might be devoted to school.

The distance from some of the cottages in the fen to any school should be considered in any scheme of compulsory education.

The union very well off for schools. Sunday schools well attended.

A scheme of compulsory night schools in winter was much approved. Immorality of gangs denied to be as great as represented in Report. Girls frequently go to service from field work.

The feeling was general that the state of the cottages, and the overcrowding of sleeping rooms, was the root of the immorality. Sleeping rooms not sufficient for decency. An instance was quoted of 10 people in a room.

It was felt and urged that the attention of the Commissioners should be turned to the cottage question, and a hope was expressed that some scheme for their improvement might be devised.

Many cottages are owned by labourers. Union Chargeability Act has not yet much affected the district. Occupiers at a distance from towns would be very glad if landlords would build more cottages; the poor for the most part draw to the towns.

Number of cottages requisite for 100 acres may be put at three.

Private gangs exist in some parts of the union.

33. MEETING of the BOARD OF GUARDIANS, WISBECH, Dec. 12.

Mr. DIEPPE, *Chairman.*

Twenty-seven guardians present.

The private gang system does exist, but not to any great extent; public gangs are mostly used. The union is divided into three districts:—

1. Isle of Ely.
2. Tidd St. Giles.
3. A portion in Norfolk.

Many farms cannot be worked without gangs.

The Agricultural Gangs Act was highly approved, but it was not thought possible or advisable to apply it to private gangs.

The separation of sexes in private gangs was considered a difficulty, as the children of one family are employed together under the eye of the parents or relatives.

Mr. Little expressed an opinion that the Act will throw a number of children out of work, and bring the families on the rates.

A large occupier, *i.e.*, of 500 acres and upwards, can afford to keep a private gang, say of 30, at work through the spring and autumn, if mixed; but cannot keep two, one of boys and one of girls.

The small occupiers are forced to employ public gangs to do the necessary work at certain seasons.

It was agreed that 10 years would be a proper limit as to age. It was stated that the desire for education was increasing; that schools and mission houses are being taken to the population. That the distances to school from outlying cottages and hamlets are at present so great that it would be difficult to enforce school attendance. That the boys get winter schools and Sunday schools.

There is often a gap from the time they leave day school till 16 years of age, during which they get no education, after which time they will come to night schools, and try to pick up what they have lost and feel the loss of. It was thought that compulsory education would damp the efforts being made under the voluntary system.

That, in applying the principles of the Factory Acts to agricultural labour, many exemptions must be provided, *e.g.*, in limiting the age for work the words "for hire" should be inserted, to meet the case of a father of a family requiring the aid of his children on his own four or five acres, or any land he may have, there being in the fen district many such cases.

The board expressed their opinion to be in favour of simple education, reading, writing, and arithmetic, but opposed to any compulsion or interference with parental powers.

The board was unanimous in the opinion that the overcrowding of the cottages was the root of the evil. Three-roomed cottages rare. The land in this district is very much subdivided. Cottages are increasing in number.

It was said that the gang system will vanish when there is a sufficiency of good cottages on the farms for the working of each farm.

That the tenants would gladly pay four per cent. to have cottages and get labour on the land.

That good cottages, with a small piece of land, will keep the labourer from moving away.

Mr. Wright said he had one man who had been with him 20 years who had two acres of land, and he had no reason to complain of the man's inattention to work.

Average wages	- -	13*s.* per week.
Sometimes	- -	15*s.* „

Men can earn more by piece work, which is much the custom.

UPWELL.

34. *John Barnes*, ganger, Upwell.—[Had applied for relief at Wisbech Union the morning I saw him.] Said, I am sure a woman can't manage a gang. If public gangs system is done away with I shall lose my occupation. I cannot now make enough in the months of work to keep me during the winter. I get 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* a day from the farmer, and take 1*d.* a head from the children's earnings if they work for me over three days at a time.

UPWELL SCHOOL.

35. *Eliza Cousen*, aged 9 years.—Have been out two years with gangs. I was not fit for same class at school when I came back as when I went out. Sometimes girls have books with them in the field, but don't often read anything.

36. *Mrs. Aworth*, mistress, girls'school.—Sixty-three on books in the winter, numbers not much less in May. The number of attendances increases in November and decreases in March. The gang system demoralizes the children.

37. *Mr. Aworth*, master, boys' school.—Average attendance in November, 50; they remain in school till April. Children of 6 years go out to field; if they could be kept regularly at school till 10 years of age they would be fairly grounded in reading, writing, and arithmetic. There is only one school in the parish, which is seven miles square. No night school in existence. Some of the lads get no education at all. The parents are quite uneducated themselves, do not value education, and will not send the children to school regularly. Boys of 8 or 9 years earn 1*s.* a day. I do not see any chance of getting the children to school without compulsion.

FRIDAYBRIDGE—ELM.

38. Fridaybridge is united with Elm for rating purposes, but separated ecclesiastically.

Population, 1,718. Acreage, 11,037. Cultivation, mixed.

EXTRACT from RETURN made by CAPT. CATLIN.

There are principally "private gangs" here. The numbers employed in them are—

In Spring	-	20	to	30
„ Summer	- -	30	„	40
„ Autumn	- -	20	„	30

Their work is, in spring and summer, planting potatoes, hoeing, and weeding, and gathering twitch; in autumn, in gathering roots and twitch; they are not employed in winter.

The distances to work are from one to four miles. The hours between leaving home and returning are from 12 to 13 hours. In spring and autumn one hour only is allowed for meals; in summer one and a half hours.

The health does not suffer, even in cases of weeding high wet corn.

The state of education among the young is low and deficient, but much worse among the adults.

It does not appear desirable or practicable to subject "private" gangs to the legislative regulations for "public" gangs. There is ample time and opportunity for school attendance during the winter where schools exist.

A private gang usually consists of the wives and children of the labourers usually employed on the same farm, and of a few others, being widows and orphans.

The women have no training for domestic duties. I would not place any restriction on female labour. Boys should not go to work under 8 years. I see no reason for restriction on the hours of work.

An amount of school attendance might be enforced in winter.

School attendance is not affected by distance, and scarcely at all by the pecuniary resources of the parents, as the boys only pay for the stationary. The girls pay 2*d.* a week.

The subject of industrial training for girls has been brought before the Board of Guardians, but without success.

There is a miserable deficiency in cottage accommodation; the whole evil has its origin in overcrowded cottages. Labourers, as a rule, are worse lodged than cattle, and less cared for. Morals are first corrupted in over-crowded cottages.

Tenants would be benefited by better cottage accommodation on their occupations, and could well afford to pay interest on the cost of the same.

There are about 200 young males and females growing up with insufficient education.

There are two night schools with 25 scholars; they are open one and a half and two hours, on two nights a week. Reading, writing, and arithmetic, are taught.

39. *Capt. Catlin and Rev. S. Charlton.*—There are some good new cottages built by the landlord of the estate held by Capt. Catlin. Men will remain on the farms if they have good cottages with a plot of ground attached. There were many wretched cottages built on land "cribbed from the waste." Capt. Catlin told me the price at which he had bought up two of them—

1. With one room only, for - - 5*l.*
2. „ „ „ - - 2*l.*

[The following instances of the state of the cottages in this parish speak for themselves.]

1. A cottage with one sleeping room, in which are a man and his wife, and four children aged 14, 12, 8, and 6 years respectively.
2. Cottage with one sleeping room; man and and wife, and five children aged 12, 10, 8, 6, and 3 years respectively.
3. Cottage with one sleeping room; man and wife, and five children aged 15, 14, 12, 9, and 7 years respectively.
4. Cottage with one sleeping room; man and wife, and six children aged 18, 14, 12, 9, 6 and 4 years respectively.

PARSON DROVE.

40. *Rev. F. Jackson.*—It is not necessary to apply the provision of the "Gangs Act" to private gangs. School attendance by half day, or by alternate whole days, could not be worked. Compulsory attendance on one day in the week would be beneficial. If no child was allowed to go to work "for hire" under 10 years of age, the parents would send them to school; and it would be desirable that a certificate of a certain amount of education should be required before children are allowed to work. I would suggest the addition of an education clause to the "Agricultural Gangs Act." Night schools do not work well in this district. Government aid is much required for day schools in poor districts where a certificated master cannot be got. The cottage accommodation here, as elsewhere, is insufficient, and has injurious effects morally and physically. Here we have no wealthy landlords, and little owners are unable to build and improve. Two cottages per 100 acres are sufficient. The cottages are being gradually, though slowly, improved. There are many instances in which parents and grown-up children occupy the same sleeping-room. The outhouses are insufficient, but in regard to garden ground they are well supplied, as I have given up the glebe for cottage gardens, at a low rent. Rent of cottages, 6*l.* per annum, with land; wages. 15*s.* a week.

On the question of education our poor are indifferent, the wages of the children are preferred to

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their instruction. The farmers would certainly do what they could to resist a compulsory system and a rate.

MURROW.

A district of the parish of Wisbech St. Mary.

41. *Mr. Newsham.*—I farm 500 acres, and have a private gang for most of the year. I have hardly ever employed a "public" gang. I should like the limit of age, below which no child be allowed to work, to be fixed at 10 years. There is an endowed school at Murrow, to which boys are admitted at 8 years of age, and generally discharged at 12 years. The master gets 10*s.* a quarter for each child from the trustees. The children do not attend regularly. I should like to see endowed schools placed under Government inspection. I am opposed to a compulsory system of education; there is much voluntary aid given now which would then cease entirely, and less interest would be taken in the schools. We are building a new National school.

42. *Rev. P. H. Le Feuvre*, curate, Murrow.—Average attendance at school 23, out of 40 on books. Boys do not attend more than two and a half months in the year. The parents are indisposed to send their children to school, partly because they want their earnings, and partly because they do not appreciate education. I would keep the children strictly at school till 10 years of age. The age must be fixed by law, as only the more liberal among the farmers would refrain from employing children at any age when it is supposed they can work. There is not one boy in the school who can read fluently. Children attend Sunday school pretty well, but one of the great objects of such school is defeated by the inability of the children to follow the subject of Bible reading, and consequently the education on Sunday must be to a certain extent secular.

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43. *C. M. Bidwell, Esq.*, land-agent, Ely.—Occupiers of land are very anxious to have good cottages built on the farms, inasmuch as the good labourers will not go any great distance to work, and the outlying farms get the worst mem. The occupier should pay four per cent. to the landlord for building cottages, as he would get his profit out of the increased power of the workman on the farm, even if he let the cottage to him at a low rent. The gang system under proper supervision is not a decided evil, and it would be difficult at certain seasons to carry on the operations of the farm without gangs of children. The prevalent immorality is chiefly owing to the crowded state of the cottages, and want of proper sleeping accommodation.

44. C. M. Bidwell, Esq., to Hon. E Portman.

"Dear Sir, Ely, Jan. 20, 1868.

"Since my interview with you I have obtained and read the Lands Improvement Act, 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114., and I certainly think sec. 17 is very objectionable. If a party wanted to borrow money for the improvement of his estate, provided the security is fully sufficient and the proposed outlay is judiciously made, I do not see why you want to publish it to the world. If a report is made by a competent person that the estate wants improvement, and the money borrowed is laid out with care and judgment for that improvement, where is the necessity to make it public?

"I have also obtained and read the 29 Vict. c. 28. (Labouring Classes Dwelling Houses Act), and I think it is a very good measure, and if you could get landowners in the rural districts to adopt the Act, I think it might be very advantageously applied. The labourers' cottages in many parts are very bad, and there is a growing necessity on most farms, particularly large farms situated two or three miles from the villages, to build cottages. Cottages cannot be built with sufficient accommodation for a family, with three bed-rooms, besides keeping room and pantry, to pay five per cent. on the rents now paid for cottages in the rural districts which do not exceed 4*l.* a year, so that, if money could be borrowed inexpensively at four per cent., it might answer the purpose of many landowners to take up a loan.

"I am, &c.,
"C. M. Bidwell."

45. W. R. Grove, Medical Officer, St. Ives Union, to Hon. E. Portman.

"Sir, 27 Sept. 1867.

"As to the effect of field labour upon children and young females, my experience at present leads me to consider such occupation as not detrimental to health, for generally speaking the children in my district enjoy good health, nor have I yet met with any disease or deformity among young women, or those more advanced in life, which could be traced to out-door employment. I am, however, of opinion that the stooping posture required in weeding, stone-picking, &c., which is so often performed by young girls, is calculated to produce deformity of the pelvis which would most likely impede parturition. In a tolerably extensive midwifery practice during a period of nearly four years (the time I have been here), I have only met with one or two cases of deformed pelvis.

"With regard to cottage accommodation, it is wretchedly bad. Old and young, husband and wife, and grown up sons and daughters, sometimes sleeping in the same room, which is frequently so small and badly ventilated as to be positively injurious to health, setting aside any consideration with regard to morality and common decency.

"Your obedient servant,
"William R. Grove."

46. Edward Ireland, Medical Officer, Linton Union, to Hon. E. Portman.

"Sir,

"Having only been medical officer for this union for a short period has been the cause of my delay in answering your communication, till I had had time to make enquiries of the other medical officers of the district with regard to the information you require. I find that they agree with me, as far as regards the employment of children, young persons, and women in agriculture, that it has a beneficial effect upon their health, for for the most part they are healthy and robust, with the exception of the tendency to rheumatic affection, which may be traceable to long exposure to wet and damp in the fields. I should be inclined to think that the children are sent into the fields at too early an age, having known frequent instances of children being employed at ages varying from 8 to 10 years. Of course the education of such is, as a rule, deplorably bad; but, in many cases where there are large families (wages being so low), the parents are compelled to send out the children to earn their mite towards gaining a subsistence. The cottage accommodation in my district is very bad. * * * * While attending cases of scarlet fever, I have found the accommodation so bad as to necessitate a young man of 19 years and his sister of 17 years lying in the same room, the only other bed-room being occupied by the father, mother, and younger members of the family. I think there is very great room for improvement in the cottage accommodation, and until strenuous measures are adopted, sanctioned by Parliament, I think little can be done.

"I am, &c.,
"Edward Ireland."

CAMBRIDGE.

47. *Mr. S. Clear*, Cambridge.—I once farmed largely I do not think that field work in any way destroys the health of the children or their morals as much as crowded cottages or public-houses. The half day or alternate day systems would not answer for farming operations. It is doubtful whether a compulsory system of education would succeed as well as the present

voluntary one. Night schools exist in many places within my knowledge, and are very beneficial. Cottages require the attention of the legislature. I would suggest that Government should build here and there in parishes a set of cottages for the poor, which scheme would operate beneficially by causing landlords to improve the bad ones or lose their tenants. Small owners are too much inclined to force a high rent for their cottages, which causes the tenants to take in lodgers, and produces overcrowding.

GREAT PAXTON, HUNTS.

48. *Mr. Paine*, farmer.—I employ children, in a private gang under a steady man, for weeding, bean setting, &c., 10 or 12 together; their ages are from 7 years upwards. I can always get as many as I want, if I let them know they are wanted. I do not think the system a bad one, when under proper supervision. Boys must learn their work when young, or they are useless. I keep boys on through the winter, if possible, as the money is most wanted then. Girls should go to service after 13 years of age. I do not think any Act could be enforced which restricted the age for boys to go to work. I do not employ girls. The cottages want improvement; the overcrowded state of many of them leads to much immorality. Rent averages 3*l.* 10*s.* per annum. Education of the boys is defective, though most of them go to school.

COPROLITE DIGGINGS.

49. Extract from Letter from the Rev. J. B. James, rector of Gamlingay, to Hon. E. Portman.

"The coprolite diggings in our neighbourhood have "occupied very many of our boys, many of whom earn "at them 8*s.* and 9*s.* a week, which is more than the "farmers can give them."

SANDY.

50. *Mr. Coulson.*—Girls of 7 years up to 18 years are employed in the coprolite works. The work is taken by the piece; they get a sum per ton for picking over the fossils. A girl of 10 years would earn 7*s.* a week by day work, but more by piece work. The state of education among them is very low; some can read, hardly any can write. The parents also are very uneducated. This and the adjoining district of Polton is a gardening tract; children are much employed in large numbers in peeling onions and such like work. I have seen gross cases of immorality and indecency, even among the smaller children, at leisure moments at the coprolite mills when waiting for the carts, and have heard much bad language, which is readily learnt by the young from constantly hearing it round them. The foremen do not check them. The sexes should be separated at the mills, by means of different sheds, or even by separate mills for boys and girls. In one instance the foreman keeps a public-house, where the wages are paid, and the men and children are allowed to have as much drink as they like during the week on credit, and the money is deducted on pay-night. These children have no time for learning, except in the evening.

GAMLINGAY.

Population, 2,000. Acreage, 4,358A. 2R. 25P. Cultivation, chiefly arable. Much land is devoted to market gardens.

51. *Rev. J. B. James, rector.—Extract from Return.*

Persons of all ages from 6 years to 60 years are employed in the fields in spring in weeding, seeding, &c.; summer, in gathering early potatoes; autumn, harvesting; winter, in sundry field work. The women, however, are much employed at home in straw plait work. The hours of work are from 6 to 6; of those who live at a distance from their work, some are out from 4 or 5 a.m. till 7 p.m. One hour allowed for breakfast, and the same for dinner.

School Statistics.—National School.

	On Register.	Average Attendance.
In Summer.		
Boys	51	38
Girls	48	36
In Winter.		
Boys	56	46
Girls	48	38

In addition to the National school there is a British and a dame's school, comprising a total (mostly young children) of 161 scholars. All children are at work from the earliest age at which they are able to work. A night school is open for 18 weeks from September to February, for two hours on four nights a week (number of scholars 35), at which they are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic.

I do not consider that the night school adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school. There is an indisposition on the part of scholars to attend.

[Dr. James expressed himself in favour of compulsory education, and of legislation for preventing the employment of children in field work at an early age.]

LONGSTOWE, near Caxton.

Population, 260. Acreage, 1,500. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

52. *Return made by Sidney Stanley, Esq., Longstowe Hall.*

There are no private gangs; women and children are only employed occasionally, except boys to drive plough. They live near their work. When women are employed their hours are from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., with an hour allowed for dinner. The health is not injuriously affected, nor do I know of any ill-treatment. I would not prohibit or restrict female labour. Boys should not work till 10 years of age, so as to attend school till that age. A certain number of hours' schooling in the week after that age would be desirable up to a certain age. School attendance is not affected by distance, or by the pecuniary resources of the parents. Good cottage accommodation is most important as regards the health and morality of labourers' families. There are 40 cottages and small houses in the parish; eight of them being charity houses in a very bad state, and the accommodation wretched, the rest pretty good; none owned by persons with whom labourers are obliged to deal. An average of about 40 children per quarter attend the school. There is no night school.

BOURN.

Population, 883. Acreage, 4,031. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

53. *Rev. J. D. Ridout*, vicarage.—No private gangs. Of those employed singly, &c., there are 62, as near as I can learn; there may be a few more—

Males:	
Under 8 years	1
8 to 10 years	5
10 to 13 years	12
13 to 18 years	20
Total	38
Females:	
Under 13 years	None
13 to 18 years	10
Over 18 years—Mar., 9; Unmar., 5	14
Total	24

The little boy merely attends to some cows. The women go out only occasionally; never in very bad

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weather. Their employment is twitching, hoeing, cutting and gathering turnips, collecting stones, weeding, cutting docks, dropping beans, &c. Most live near, very few on the farms. Some few go two or three miles to work, but very rarely; mostly under one, or one and a half miles. Hours for males 6 to 6, with 1½ hours for meals; females, 8 to 6, with one hour for meals.

I do not think the health is injuriously affected. The young and females are certainly not subject to ill-treatment. I used to think that field labour had a bad effect on the morals of the females, but I doubt whether they are at all worse than those who do not go out in the fields. If any interference is necessary, I would restrict the employment of females to those over 18 years.

Of late years many of our young men have earned wages at coprolite digging, and therefore I believe the farmers have wanted, at particular times, all the labourers, young and grown up, and when wages are low the parents are too glad to send their children. As a general rule I should not recommend any restriction on the hours of work, but I think where lads under 18 are horsekeepers, and therefore have to be on the farm an hour before the ordinary labourers, the work must be very trying; but they have an extra shilling a week for it, and I am speaking more from my own feelings than from having heard any complaint. I think I should incline to half-day at school and half-day at work. Some houses on the different farms are so far off that the children in them get very little schooling, but the number of these is not great. Morality is at a low ebb; I fear it must be traceable to the want of a sufficient number of bedrooms in our cottages. The cottages are crowded. There are fresh cottages built from time to time. Union Chargeability Act has not yet caused any increase.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys - -	48	35
Girls - - -	50	33

In Winter.

Boys - - -	44	32
Girls - - -	47	37

The education is, in few instances, such as to give them pleasure in reading. There is a night school, open about 20 weeks between October and March, for one and a half or two hours for three nights a week. Number of scholars—

Under 12 years - - - -	3
Above 12 years - - - -	21
	24

Reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught. I fear the night school does not adequately supply the deficiencies of the day school.

[Mr. Ridout informed me that the cottage question is occupying the attention of the Bishop of the Diocese, and of the Rural Deans.]

54. *Mr. C. Harradine*, agent to Lord De la Warr.—Says the cottages are bad, and that it is difficult to get the people to be cleanly in their habits. The parents are so uneducated themselves that they do not know the value of education, and do not care about sending the children to school. Thinks that children who earn wages should be compelled to attend night schools. Cottage rent is very low.

SWAVESEY.

Population, 1,365. Acreage, 3,800. Cultivation, mixed.

55. *Rev. H. J. Sharp*, vicar.—On the 24th October 1867, a meeting was convened of the principal farmers of the parish. The opinions expressed in this Return are those of a majority of the farmers who attended the meeting. Private gangs exist in the parish. The numbers so employed in spring, autumn, and summer are 25 males and 25 females; none in winter. Of the males—

	15	are between	8	and	10 years.
	10	„	10	„	13 years.
Females—					
	10	„	8	„	10 years.
	8	„	10	„	13 years.
	7	„	13	„	18 years.

The work in spring is dropping beans and queeching; in summer, weeding; in autumn, queeching. Distance to work, half a mile to two miles. Hours, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., with half an hour allowed for breakfast and one hour for dinner. The sexes work together. Health is not injuriously affected, nor is there any ill-treatment. The state of education among the young is very good, among the adults pretty good. They would not place any restriction on the employment of females, nor on the age at which boys should be employed. The distance to work might be regulated according to proposed table.

With regard to school attendance, it was suggested that the children should go to school when not wanted on the farms. The school is in a central position; the attendance is not affected by distance, or by the pecuniary resources of the parents. There are sewing-classes for the girls.

Cottage accommodation is pretty good in the majority of cases. Three cottages per 100 acres said to be sufficient; that proportion exists in the parish. Cottages have mostly two bedrooms, some have three; they are not overcrowded. Rent 3*l.* 10*s.* per annum.

School.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	95	67
Between 10 and 13 -	18	11
Total - -	113	78
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	67	57
Between 10 and 13 -	28	10
Total - -	95	67

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 -	94	79
Between 10 and 13 -	19	15
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	60	53
Between 10 and 13 -	30	17

There is a night school open for 19 weeks, from October to February inclusive, for two hours on five nights a week.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Under 12 - - -	13	8
Above 12 - - -	38	24

Reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught. It partially supplies the deficiencies of the day school. The difficulty in maintaining it is, that of obtaining a proper staff of duly qualified teachers.

56. *Letter from Rev. H. J. Sharp.*

" Swavesey Vicarage,
" My dear Sir, Jan. 30, 1868.

" I have to-day forwarded to you by post the school statistics. You will see by the note which I have prefixed at the head of the Return, that I do not hold myself individually responsible for all the opinions which I have written down. Those opinions are the opinions of the majority of the farmers who attended the meeting. From some of those opinions I entirely dissent, but they may be taken as representing the general feeling on the subject among the employers of labour in this parish. I have made inquiries as to whether another meeting should be called for the purpose of further discussion, and I have stated that you had kindly offered to attend, but the general opinion is that the answers contained in the Return sufficiently indicate the views of the parish.

" Yours faithfully,
" Hon. E. Portman. H. J. Sharp."

57. *George Long*, farmer, Swavesey.—The children are mostly employed in February in dibbing beans. Education is well attended to in this parish. Most of the children can read and write; they get schooling for more than six months in the year. The labourers earn 12*s.* a week, out of which it is hard to live and keep a family without the aid of the children's earnings. The cottages are good; rent averages 20*d.* a week, without a garden. The parish is full of small holders of from 50 to 100 acres, who combine butchering or some other trade with that of farming. The poor eat a good deal of meat. I am the only Church farmer in the parish. When I lived at Carlton I used to have a night school, and have taught old people and lads.

WILLINGHAM.

58. *The Rev. Dr. Phelps*, Master of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, rector.—Does not reside in the parish. The state of education is not very good, though there are good schools of different sorts, one of his own and others British. The farmers are a rough and badly educated class. Should like to see school attendance compelled by law, and, if necessary, a rate should be levied to find money for the payment of extra teachers. At the same time the sons of labourers must begin at an early age to learn their work as agricultural labourers, and should have a good and simple education suited to their station in life; and the girls should be trained for domestic service, and for their household duties as wives and mothers.

Extract from Return made by Rev. E. J. Laughlin, curate, Willingham.

Population 1,630. Acreage, 4,528. Cultivation, mixed.

There are no private gangs. Children, young persons, and women are employed in spring and summer in weeding, in autumn in picking potatoes. They live near the farms. Hours of work are from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., one hour allowed for each meal. Health is not injuriously affected, nor is there any ill-treatment. Field labour most injuriously influences the morals of the females, and unfits them for domestic service. There should be some restriction on the employment of females. I would prohibit female labour in the fields altogether, except in harvest. No boy should be employed under 10 years of age. I would enforce school attendance by alternate whole days at school and whole days at work. School attendance is not affected by distance, or by the pecuniary resources of the parents. There is no industrial training school for girls. The accommodation in the cottages is inadequate, and injuriously affects the health and morality of the labouring poor. The cottages are generally conveniently situated; there are not enough with two or three bed-rooms. The general size of rooms is about four yards square; the ventilation is defective and the drainage imperfect. There are but few gardens to the labourers' cottages. The ownership is principally in the hands of small freeholders or tradesmen. Rent varies from 4*l.* to 5*l.* per annum. There is no progress being made towards increasing the cottage accommodation.

School.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 -	230	86
Between 10 and 13 -		36
Total - -	—	122
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	76	42
Between 10 and 13 -		20
Total - -	—	62

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	—	107
Between 10 and 13 -	—	45
Total - -	—	152
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	—	53
Between 10 and 13 -	—	25
Total - -	—	78

There is no night school.

OVER.

59. Meeting at the vicarage. Present:—Rev. C. Warren, vicar; Mr. N. Dring; Mr. Robinson.

Children are not employed in greater numbers than nine or ten together; very few girls are employed. The work is weeding and potatoe picking. The hoeing and weeding is done by men, each accompanied by some of his own family, or by a relative's children. The age of going to field varies from 8 years to 12 years. Gangs of twitchers are employed for a few days at a time, when the sexes are mixed; they go two miles to work. There is no public gang.

The cottages are small, and not in sufficient number; some with two bedrooms. They belong to small proprietors. Rent £3 10*s.* to £5 a year. Men's wages 11*s.* per week. Boys should not go to work before 10 or 11 years of age.

Mr. Dring finds those who have been at school till 11 years of age the best lads for farm work. Girls' labour in field should be prohibited. School attendance might be secured for five months in winter, though when wages are low in winter many parents can hardly afford to pay for the schooling. There are no funds for maintaining a night school with a separate master.

Womens' wages are 10*d.* a day; boys ditto, 4*s.* a week. Hours of work, 7 a.m. to 5 or 6 p.m., with 1½ hours allowed for meals.

60. *Return made by Rev. C. Warren, vicar.*

Population, 1,130. Acreage, 3,600. Cultivation, mixed.

The state of education among the young is low The occasional instruction they get in the schools is of little use, and the discipline and moral training they ought to have from their parents is in most cases very

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small. The education of adults is also low. More harm is done to the morals, in my opinion, in the going and returning, than in the field itself. The number of children, young persons, and women employed, not in gangs, varies from 40 to 150, according to the time of year.

In general the effect of field labour on the morals of females is very bad, and most of the mothers in my parish feel it to be so, but they say they are driven to send the children out to work. I do not recommend any restriction on the employment of females; the remedy is, I think, to be sought in the landlords looking to the conduct of their tenant farmers. I think no law could sufficiently define the kinds of work in which young boys might be employed, and legislation would be inoperative without an official prosecutor in every parish.

At certain times of the year school attendance might, perhaps, be made compulsory, but I do not look for any great result. School attendance is not affected by distance, but a good deal by the pecuniary resources of the parents, and at the very times when from there being little work the children might be sent to school. But I am bound to add that the want of foresight of the parents is the main cause. Girls are taught needlework and knitting.

Better accommodation is wanted in the cottages. The effects of insufficient accommodation on morality and health have been very bad. The cottages are not conveniently situated. In the fen districts the population is unavoidably gathered into villages. The cottages are often over-crowded. There is no progress towards increasing cottage accommodation. I would suggest that the owners of the soil should look to the cottage question, and not leave it in the hands of speculators. They might get a fair rent for the capital invested.

SCHOOL.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	85	60
Between 10 and 13 -	15	15
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	65	50
Between 10 and 13	20	10
In Winter.		
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	70	50
Between 10 and 13 -	25	20
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	55	45
Between 10 and 13 -	20	15

There is a night school for 26 weeks in the winter half-year, for two hours on two nights in the week. Average attendance, 40 above 12 years of age, out of 50 on register. Reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught. I do not think that it adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school.

61. *Return made by Mr. Nathaniel Dring and Mr. Charles Robinson, farmers.*

Legislation is not needed for the "private" gangs. Children and young persons employed are from 10 years to 16 years, and are only 12 in number. We do not recommend any restriction to be placed on the employment of females.

ROYSTON.

(Part in Cambridgeshire, part in Hertforshire.)

Population, 1,882. Acreage, 323. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

62. *Return made by Henry Thurnall, Esq.*

Private gangs of from 10 to 20 children are sometimes employed in weeding in the spring. The hours of work are from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., with an half an hour allowed for breakfast, one hour for dinner, and half an hour at 4 p.m. The sexes more frequently work apart, but in some cases together. I should think the children employed in gangs are generally too young to be injuriously affected "morally." There is no injury to the health, nor is there any ill-usage. I think that the education of those children who are habitually employed in field work is below that of the children (especially females) not so employed. No labourers of adult age are employed in private gangs.

I think that it would be well to restrict private gangs to a maximum of 20, and that the sexes should not be allowed to work together. Children, young persons, and women who do not work in gangs are employed in spring in weeding and bird-scareing; in summer, in bird-scareing and haymaking; in autumn, in picking twitch and bird-scareing; in winter, in cleaning turnips. The distances to work are very short. The hours of work depend on the time of year; in summer they are from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., in winter from light till dark.

I should say that the young females employed in agriculture are quite equal in morals to those employed in straw-plaiting and other similar employments. I would not place any restriction on the employment of females in field work, except as to age. They should not be allowed to work under 11 years of age. I would not place any restriction on the age of boys, as one boy of 9 is as strong as another of 11 or 12. As the agricultural operations, on which children are chiefly employed, are generally of short duration, and dependant upon the weather, neither the half day or the alternate day at school would be practicable.

Our schools are easy of access, but I should think that distance might have great effect on the attendance. In the case of large families, the earnings of a child, though small, are a great temptation to the parents to send him to work instead of school. There is no industrial training for girls.

I consider the want of proper accommodation the greatest evil against which the agricultural labourer has to contend, both in point of morals and of health and comfort. The circumstances of this parish are exceptional; it is a market town, with a small quantity of land, consequently the cottage accommodation is in excess of the requirements of the land.

I am of opinion, that, in course of time, the Union Chargeability Act will operate beneficially. I think in cases where the advance was required merely for the building or improvements of cottages within certain limits, the notices required by the 17th section 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114. and some of the preliminary inquiries might be safely dispensed with, but until the owners and occupiers of landed property begin to see that, although the erection of comfortable cottages for their labourers will not pay directly, it will do so indirectly by promoting the moral and physical improvement of their labourers, I fear that no increased facility in borrowing money will have much effect, if any alteration in the Act referred to should be contemplated. I would draw your attention to the 25th section, and ask how this would affect buildings, which might not directly increase the yearly value of an estate more than the annual sum to be charged thereon. I have taken some pains in drawing plans for labourers' cottages, and have superintended the building of many on Lord Dacre's property. In groups of three, each cottage containing two rooms below and three above, with outbuildings, the cost of each cottage has been 80*l.* And I believe, if any philanthropic body of men were to form a cottage building society, they might get three per cent. for their money, and do more good than they could in almost any other way.

BURWELL.

Population - 1,987. Acreage - 7,232

63. *Rev. J. W. Cockshott*, vicar.—The Crown owns a good deal of land, and many cottages which are in

the hands of the tenant farmer are sub-let to the labourer at an increased rent. It is a very large parish. There are two sets of National schools, one at each end of the parish, and night schools at work four times a week, which are fairly attended. The young farmers are worse educated than the labourers. Efforts are being made to establish a good middle-class school at Burwell.

64. *Letter from Rev. J. W. Cockshott to Hon. E. Portman.*

" Burwell Vicarage,
" My dear Sir, 22nd February 1868.

"I regret very much that I have mislaid the paper of enquiries you left with me some time ago. I do not, however, think I have any further evidence to furnish in the matter to which you refer. I can only bear my testimony to the evil effect of the employment of children, whether boys or girls, unless a guarantee is required from their employers that they are sent for a reasonable time each year to school. I hope that before very long girls will cease altogether from field employment. Mothers are beginning to see that such employment is acting as a serious barrier to, and injuring the prospects of their daughters for, domestic service.

" The case is far different with country lads. In spite of the offer of good schools at 1*d.* or 2*d.* a week the majority of our country lads are growing up in great ignorance, and consequently in many instances thoroughly demoralized. What to do with them I know not. Earning, as they do, at a very early age sufficient for their support, their parents lose all influence over them, consequently they soon become victims of every kind of vice; and yet, if efforts were put forth, much good might be done among these lads. It is a sad pity that the Committee of Council on Education do not remove some of the restrictions for conferring grants in aid of evening schools. I have had a most interesting night school since October. In order to carry this on I have given up all society, and devoted four evenings every week to the instruction of these boys. To enable me to conduct this school, I have required the assistance of a paid teacher. I hoped to have secured a Government grant for the payment of this master. The inspector of schools, however, holds out no encouragement to my obtaining help because this man is not a certified teacher. I have thus not only to devote my time to the benefit of these boys, but the prospect before me of having to pay this assistant out of my slender income; this is not very encouraging. I think also I pointed out to you by ocular demonstration that the labourers have need of better cottages. We have at the present time some most flagrant cases of immorality, owing to the wretched bed-room accommodation. This is a wide subject. * * *

" Believe me, &c.
" J. W. Cockshott."

65. *Extract from Minutes of a Ruri-decanal Meeting held at Burwell, November 8th,* 1867.

The meeting discussed suggestions for half-day system and alternate day system in agricultural labour, and the discussion was resolved into the question of infant and night schools.

Resolutions agreed on:—

1. It is desirable that infant schools be more encouraged by the Committee of Council on Education, and that the children be admitted (if deemed desirable by the managers) at 2 years of age; and in this way the boys may be better prepared to go out at an early age, as they now do, to enter on manual labour, and at the same time be better prepared to profit by night schools.

2. It is highly desirable to have a well-conducted evening school in every parish, and it would facilitate the establishment of evening schools if the Committee of Council would pay for results independently of requiring a certificated master.

BURWELL GIRLS' SCHOOL (National).

66. *Miss Campbell,* mistress.—The school has been in existence from seven to eight years. The spring is the worst quarter for attendances. One girl had only attended six times in quarter ending 22nd November; some only 27 up to 37 times in the spring quarter. When the girls return from the field they corrupt the others, and, though not fit for the same class as when they left school, they must be put in it or they would leave the school. Some go out as young as 7 years of age for a short time in the spring. Many do not go out at all, but go to domestic service. The health of the children does not appear to suffer from field work.

[I visited several cottages, and found them very bad and highly rented, and in some cases overcrowded. The drainage and accommodation were very bad, and yet these cottages belong to persons quite able, pecuniarily, to put them into good order.—E. B. P.]

SOHAM.

Meeting at the vicarage.

67. Present:—Rev. H. Tasker, vicar; and several of the principal farmers.

It was agreed that 10 years would be a proper limit to fix, below which no child should be employed. The children are employed from March to November. The employment of girls is very much discouraged in this parish, and many go to service. It was believed that in the case of a young family the parents really want the earnings of the elder children for the support of the family. Wages for men, 13*s.* a week. Larger earnings are obtained at the coprolite diggings. Farming operations require children's labour for weeding. The gangs are mixed. The system tends to harden the children; girls become very unruly. The gangmasters pay the money to the children, but there is no deduction as in the case of public gangs. The ganger, a regular labourer, gets the children when wanted; is paid by the week, and perhaps makes 2*s.* over his regular wages. It was thought that women would be glad to go with the gangs. Women are much employed in field work in this district. Distance to work is sometimes five or six miles. Any boy of 8 years could easily go two miles to work. The health of the children does not suffer. If girls did not go to field, there are not boys enough to take their place; but there would be more work for men and women, who could do it as well as the girls, but more expensively to the farmer. Parents would probably send their children to school if a limit of age for work was fixed. The parish is well off for schools. Compulsory education would not be approved. Half-time system not considered practicable. Boys of 12 and upwards are at work all the winter. From three to four cottages per 100 acres were considered sufficient for the farms. The cottages are generally good; many belong to the labourers, who have with them rights of pasture for cow on the common. The cottages have of late in many instances been improved.

68. *Return made by Rev. H. Tasker, vicar, Soham.*

Population, 4,283. Acreage, 12,700. Cultivation, about $\frac{3}{4}$ arable, $\frac{1}{4}$ pasture.

Private gangs exist. There are about 135 males and 135 females employed in spring, summer, and autumn; the greater number in April, May, and June; none in winter.

Males:	
Between 8 and 13 - - -	85
" 13 and 18 - - -	50
	135
Females:	
Between 8 and 13 - - -	25
" 13 and 18 - -	60
Over 18:	
Married - - - -	10
Unmarried - - - -	40
	135

Cambridgeshire.

Mr. Portman.

d.

They are employed in spring in hoeing and hand-weeding; in summer, in weeding the growing corn; in autumn, in picking up weeds behind the harrows and in taking up root-crops (mangold). Distance to work from one to five miles. Hours from 7 a.m. to 5.30 or 6 p.m., with an allowance of one and a half hours for meals. The effect of field work on the morals is undoubtedly bad.

The treatment of the young is good. The leaders of the gangs in this parish are generally respectable men. The state of education among the young is defective, in some very defective; some are without any education. Many of the children (boys and girls) who work in the gangs attend the schools regularly during the winter months, and irregularly at other times; but much that is learnt in the school is forgotten in the field, and must be learnt again. The effect of the system upon the girls is most prejudicial.

The adults are for the most part uneducated. I should desire to see the gangs composed of males only; of boys not under 10 years of age and of lads. I think it unnecessary to put any restriction on the number to be employed. It is most desirable that young females should be kept from field work generally. Of those not employed in gangs I should say there may be 100; their work is of the same kind as that done by the gangs.

The effect of field work on the morals of females, and on their training for domestic duties, is decidedly bad. The contrast offered by the interior of the cottage and management of the family of the wife who has been trained as a domestic servant, and of one who has been habitually employed in field work, is most striking. I believe that at the present time labour is so much more scarce than it was that the farmer could not dispense with the labour of grown-up females; but I am prepared to recommend that restriction should be placed on the employment of female children. The time has been that, whilst women were employed in the fields, many men, often the husbands, were at home unemployed, because they could not obtain work, the wages of the women being only about half that of the men. Boys should not be employed under 10 years of age.

The difficulties in enforcing school attendance are such that I am not able to make any recommendation. The farmers say that under a half day or alternate day system they could not get their work done. The attendance of the younger children at school is affected by distance in the winter. Our payments are very small, but many children are prevented from attending school by defect of pecuniary resources. We pay especial attention to needlework and knitting. Many girls have gone to service in good families and have turned out well.

For the most part our cottages are of a good description. There is but very little overcrowding. They are not conveniently situated for the farms. Almost all have two bed-rooms and a sitting-room. A large number of the cottages have good gardens, and the cottagers whose rents are under 4*l.* per annum have the privilege of turning out cows and geese upon commons appropriated to them. The extent of these commons is 200 acres. Another 100 acres appropriated to them are let, and the proceeds applied to the purchase of coals. Rents are low. The large landowners have not much cottage property. The owners of most of the cottages are tradesmen, but with the exception of a very few cases, the tenants are not obliged to deal with the owners. It is not a crying evil here.

SCHOOL.

In Summer.

——	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	103	78
Between 10 and 13 -	56	
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	90	64
Between 10 and 13 -	31	25

In Winter.

——	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	103	106
Between 10 and 13 -	56	
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	90	49
Between 10 and 13 -	31	25

There are two night schools open from middle of October to the end of February for two hours; in one case every night, in the other for two nights in the week. Average attendance, 25 out of 30. Those who are most deficient in education are the least disposed to attend the school for instruction. Boys who have been kept at school up to 10 years of age would be more likely to go willingly to night school afterwards. I think it would be a very great assistance in maintaining an efficient evening school if the Committee of Council would make a payment for results, after inspection, for an uncertificated master. The night school does not at present supply the deficiencies of the day school.

STAPLEFORD PARISH.

Population 500.

69. *Mr. Rowbottom*, steward to the Duke of Leeds, Gogmagog hills; daughter, a teacher at the parish school.—Children much employed in light work in the fields, such as weeding corn, singling turnips; they go ten or a dozen together, under the superintendence of one of the employer's labourers. They leave school at 8 years of age, and only return at intervals. The girls and boys work together; the former prefer, as a rule, field work to domestic service. The wants of the family necessitate field labour for the children; the demand for hands is great at certain seasons, and the parents are tempted by the pay to send their children out, though they only earn 4*d.* a day, or 2*s.* per week.

[Mr. Rowbottom is of opinion that field work is bad for the health and morals of the girls, that the girls should not be allowed to go out till they are 10 or 11 years old, and that the sexes should be kept separate; but believes that boys who are accustomed at an early age to agricultural labour do not suffer in health, and further, make good and active labourers as they grow up. He does not think that a system of half-time could be worked. The hours of labour are from 8 to 5, resting one hour for dinner.]

70. *Extract from Return made by Mr. Rowbottom, Parish of Stapleford.*

Average employed in gangs (both sexes, and of all ages), from 35 to 40. In spring employed in weeding and twitching; in summer singling green crops, &c. The sexes should be separated. About one-third of the young cannot read and write.

It is my opinion that no licensed person is required in private gangs. I do not consider it necessary to register the names of children employed in private gangs. I think no boy should be allowed to leave school for work of any kind under 10 years of age and no girl under 11 years.

I think no boy under 10 years of age should go more than two miles to work; that boys from 10 to 12 years of age should not be allowed to work more than 10 hours a day.

I do not think the factory acts would answer in agriculture, as the children have long distances to go to their work, and are exposed to changes of the weather. I think the six months system would be most available.

The cottage accommodation is very deficient; many have only one room up stairs and one down, with a family of from six to ten in number. Some cottages are without back doors, and without water supply.

The owners are chiefly farmers. Rent from 3*l.* to 5*l.* per annum.

71. *Rev. R. Hawthorn*, vicar.—The boys lose their education from the time of going to field work till they return to night-school at the age of 14. Would prevent boys from going out until 10 years old; girls till 12, as they would not imbibe a taste for such work but would go to service.

72. *John Sneath*, schoolmaster.—Number on books, 90. Average attendance of children 65; has not been lower than 50 this spring. Boys and girls leave for field work as young as 7 years, but not under. Boys generally going out in March, some returning to school in summer, others not till Michaelmas. Not one boy of 10 years old in the school. The girls return to school at intervals till they are 12 or 14 years old, going to field in the spring. They are always worse for the field work, or forget much that they had learnt. The children are collected for work when wanted by the farmer sending a message round to the cottages to say that a certain number are wanted; they work under the charge of a man who keeps a stick, and uses it. They hear very bad language, and are generally demoralized by the system.

NEWTON.

73. *W. Hurrill, Esq.*—Farms his own land, from 800 to 1,000 acres. Employs no girls. The boys who work on his land are sons of his own labourers. There is no gang in the parish. Does not see how the weeding is to be done without the boys. Would not allow girls to be used in field work. Women of 16 and 18 years of age do piece work, *e.g.*, turnip hoeing, on their own account, and are paid by the piece in the same way as men would be. Soil, chalk.

GREAT SHELFORD.

74. *Rev. A. Crisford*, vicar.—Private gangs exist in the parish. Boys only are employed on most of the farms, but in one instance girls also. The farmers are, with this one exception, opposed to the employment of girls. I do not think there is any occasion to employ girls, and I think that in some instances, such as bird keeping, old men who are receiving parish allowance might be employed. The wages of men are 11*s.* a week. The population, as compared with the acreage, is the highest in the county except Sawston, where there are paper mills. The cottages are not over-crowded, and have of late been improved; that is a landlords' question. The cottages are mostly two-roomed. The land for the most part belongs to non-resident landlords, and the cottages are under the control of the farmers.

75. *Girls' School.*—78 on books; 50 average attendance. 18th July, seven away at field work; four have been away for nearly six months. Girls are generally absent in spring, but return in the winter, quite spoiled, and having forgotten most of what they knew. The school funds are affected by the absence of the children.

76. *Emily Poulter.*—Age 12 years. My father earns 11*s.* a week. I have been to field one year. Was weeding corn. Often wet over the tops of my boots. Employer would not let us go into shelter. I earn 5*d.* a day, and 6*d.* for overtime. Work from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.; stop half an hour for breakfast, and an hour for dinner. Seven girls work together, and one little boy of 7 years old. Father takes me with him, and minds all the girls.

77. *Sarah Wright.*—11 years old. I have two sisters. Began field work this year; been out since March. Just come back to school. I work for same employer as last girl. Do twitching, weeding wheat, barley, and peas. I get very wet, and am out in the rain. I earn 5*d.* a day. Poulter looks after us; gives us the stick sometimes. Mother asked me if I'd like to go. I keep earnings, and mother lays them out for me in clothes. The girls get tired of work and would rather go to school. I come to Sunday school.

78. *Betsy Jennings.*—9 years old. [Very small.] I live at Little Shelford. Have one brother and three sisters. Have been two years at field work. Work with eight others; three boys. I get very wet weeding corn. Begin work at 8, stop at 6; have an hour for dinner. Man who looks after us has "breaks" in the day. We are left alone. Man uses stick to us if idle. Earn 6*d.* a day; spend it in clothes. Am very tired after work. Other girls about 12 years old. One sister works with me.

[N.B.—Was very sharp, now quite stupid.]

79. *Boys' School.*—Average absent in spring, 10 out of 59. They generally leave school before 12 years. Those who go weeding young are not fit for same class on return as when they went out.

80. — *Boutell.*—7 years old. I work in field, pulling charlick. Eight boys together, under a lad 14 years old. I earn 4*d.* a day.

81. *F. Saunders.*—8 years old. 10 in family. I earn 4*d.* a day, field work. Work from 6 morning to 6 evening. Half hour for breakfast, one hour dinner. Get the stick sometimes.

DUXFORD.

Population - 141. Acreage - 3,051

82. *The Rev. H. J. Carter*, vicar.—A gang of 30 to 40 children was employed in weeding this spring on one farm, and under superintendence of one man. Many of the women in the parish are drawn off to the paper mills at Sawston (*i.e.*, from 16 years of age and upwards), where the immorality is probably greater, though more refined than in field work. The children go three or four miles to work, from 8 years and upwards. Cottages very bad. I know an instance of a father and mother and six children in one room. I consider the want of proper accommodation in the cottages to be the cause of much demoralization. There is no resident squire. The gangs are paid by the farm bailiff; there is no paying of wages at the public houses. I think it would be difficult at present to find a substitute for the children's labour. The women are much employed. I have a night school for lads in winter, which opens at 7 p.m. The parents are very indifferent about the education of their children. There is a good deal of emigration from this part of the country.

[N.B.—Says two men and a boy are the proportion to 100 acres. Number necessary must depend on soil and customs of husbandry.—E. B. P.]

83. *Extracts from Return made by Mr. Carter.*

There are two or three private gangs in this parish consisting of boys and girls. Very few of the children are under 8 years of age, and scarcely any over 18.

The usual hours of work are from 8 a.m. till 6 p.m., one hour being allowed for dinner. The sexes work together; the moral effect is bad, especially at meal-times and on the way home.

I should not say that the health is injuriously affected.

The young and females are not subject to ill-treatment.

The state of education is unsatisfactory. Field work and the indifference of the parents are both great obstacles to education. I have seen very little desire for education amongst the agricultural poor. The little that is learnt in the day school is soon forgotten, so that at the time of their marriage the majority cannot sign the register.

I think it desirable that the age of children employed in a private gang should be restricted; that the sexes should be separated, and that a certain amount of school attendance should be compulsory on all children from the time of their beginning to earn wages in a private gang; above all, care should be taken by the employers to select respectable men as gang-masters. I do not see how it would be practicable for those placed over private gangs to be licensed.

Under existing circumstances I do not see in what way female labour in the fields can be dispensed with altogether. No girl should be employed in agriculture under 13 years old, and no boy under 8.

Cambridgeshire.

Mr. Portman.

d.

I do not see any difficulty in adopting the principles of the Print Works Act to the case of children employed in farm labour. Each employer might be required to obtain a certificate from the school (whenever such school is within two miles of the residence of the child), that there has been an attendance of 100 days of three hours a day within the preceding six months.

School attendance is not affected by distance, nor by the pecuniary resources of the parents. The charge is merely 1*d.* and 2*d.* per week. It is only in rare instances, arising from the improvidence of the parents, that the money cannot be found.

I should say, from an experience of 12 years in different parishes in the county, that much of the evil, physical and moral, amongst the poor arises from insufficient cottage accommodation. I have not unfrequently seen 10 or 12 in a family living in houses with only two small bedrooms, the elder children at the time being over 14 years of age.

From three to four cottages per 100 acres are sufficient. Cottages are not conveniently situated. Men have to walk two or more miles to work.

Description of cottages.—One small sitting room and a small back room on the ground floor, with one bedroom, and sometimes two. Ventilation and drainage indifferent, with a fair water supply. Generally a small piece of garden and an outhouse. In most cases where the families are large the accommodation is totally insufficient. The landowners for the most part own the cottages. Rent on an average 4*l.* a year. Very little progress is being made towards increasing the cottage accommodation in any part of the county with which I am acquainted.

The question (*i.e.* of cottages) has always appeared to me to be a landlord's question. The rent received from a labourer for a good cottage might not be remunerative, but most tenants would be willing to insure 5 per cent. interest on any reasonable sum expended in making homes for the labourers near their work.

School Statistics.—National School.

In Summer.

——	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys - - -	47	40
Girls - - -	46	33

In Winter.

Boys - - -	39	31
Girls - - -	54	41

I should say that at other elementary schools there would be an average attendance of about 15 little children in summer and 25 in winter.

There are about 50 males and 50 females growing up with insufficient education. Very few are found to be able to read and write fairly at the age of 18, although they may have attended the day school when younger. What they learn is seldom kept up.

There is an evening school for boys in winter months open for 16 weeks two nights a week, and one and a half hours per night. Average attendance 24 out of 40 on register.

The difficulties in maintaining an efficient evening school are the indifference of the young men about education, the fact that they are tired and worn out by the day's work; the distance some have to walk home from work before they come to night school, and the difficulty of obtaining competent teachers. I do not consider night schools suitable for girls at all.

84. *Edward Willis.*—8 years old. First went to field work last summer, keeping birds. Got no money myself; it was paid to my parents, but I don't know how much. Some children go out to work at 6 years.

85. *Emma Lofts.*—12 years old. Been in fields weeding for two years; worked for Mr. Jonas. We go about 20 in a body. They come and ask for us when we are wanted. Did not go weeding when corn was wet; if rain came on, we came home. Got 4*d.* a day. Mother sent me to field. I would sooner go to service. Work from 8 to 6; one hour for dinner. Man who looks after us uses bad language. My back has often ached, but I never had to be carried home.

Chrishall Grange—Mr. S. Jonas.

86. *Nathan Andrews,* ganger.—I have been 30 years at gang-work. I see no good in schooling; the children would go to school hungry, and to work hungry, and that's no good. I never give more than 6*d.* a day. The wages are better than they used to be.

[This man is utterly uneducated and fond of the public house. He receives the money for the children, but the payments are checked by Mr. Jonas.]

87. *Emma Hammond.*—12½ years. Working in the gang. I began at 9 years, but not regularly. I live at Mr. Jonas'. I can earn 3*s.* a week. I went to school at Elmdon, but have not been for two or three years. Can read a little. Mother can't read. I work most of the year.

88. *Louisa Andrews,* daughter of ganger, 16 years old.—Have been at work six years. Cannot read or write.

89. *Rebecca Law,* 11 years old.—Been at field work three years. Went to school at Chrishall, but only go to Sunday-school since I came to work. Go 2½ miles to work. Four in family.

90. *Ann Francis,* 12 years old.—Been one year at work. Go 1½ mile to work.

91. *Samuel Jonas,* farmer, Chrishall Grange.—Holds 4,000 acres, part of which is worked by his sons; they employ gangs, as follows:—

G. Jonas, Ickleton.—A mixed gang that has to come 1¼ mile to work.

Sam. Jonas, jun.—A mixed gang; 1½ mile to work.

S. Jonas, Home Farm.—Mixed; 2 miles to work.

92. *Wm. Jonas,* Heydon.—A gang of boys only. He holds under Lord Braybrooke, who puts clause in agreement forbidding the employment of girls. The cottages on Mr. Jonas' holding are very good, and conveniently situated for the work; the gardener and wife living in a cottage at the Grange, keep a day school in the summer for the smaller children, and a night school in winter for the older ones. Almost all the people about the place can read and write. Mr. Jonas gives to men 11*s.* a week, and small beer.

93. *Extract from Mr. Jonas' Return.*

The children are employed in spring in weeding the crops; in summer, in cleaning land and hoeing turnips; in autumn, in cleaning land, pulling mangold and turnips; in winter, in cleaning turnip and mangold for stock. Usual hours of work on the land about nine hours. Sexes work together. I have never seen any ill effects. I see no better plan for enforcing some amount of school attendance than encouraging evening schools.

We have lately erected a school by subscription, which cost about 500*l.*, in the centre of the village. I provide school and education for those living near me.

I have lately erected blocks of cottages of three each block, and all have three bedrooms, a plot of garden, and are in the centre of my farm. They all live rent-free, or 1*s.* a week rent. By the interest I pay my landlord, I lose 5 per cent.

94. *The Commissioners on the Employment of Children in Agriculture.*

"Gentlemen,

"I have returned your circular filled up to the best of my ability and the information I possess. At the same time I feel it my duty to address you by letter on the subject also.

"I am of opinion that no good will arise by the proposed interference of the Government in the employment of the children of our rural population in agricultural labour. I and my four sons, whose farms adjoin mine, employ all the children of our labourers who are able and willing to work, and this on arable land to the extent of 4,000 acres; but with the present improved system of farming, this can only be done by having them placed under the superintendence of a proper person, forming, as you term it, private gangs, which vary in number from 8 to 16; and we feel it would be an act of oppression on our part, and injury to the parents of large families, if we refused to permit the female children to participate in the advantages arising from the wages paid to those thus employed; and we are obliged to allow them to work with the boys, as there are but few girls; but I never saw any ill effects arising to the morals of those so employed; as they get older, they either get married or go to service.

"If the Government should unwisely carry out their proposed plan of interference, I fear great dissatisfaction and discontent would be created amongst our rural population; it would be the cause of lessening the capability of the parents of large families from providing sufficient food for their children; and this to a considerable extent, for we could not, nor should we employ as we do now all those children under any of the proposed restrictive measures, and this at a period of time when the deficiency of the wheat crop every where will cause prices to rule very high, and thus increase the calamity, and add to the misery of those with large families, whom the Government by unnecessary interference, an interference from which no good can arise, have thus caused. I go further, and add, I consider it an act of great oppression, cruelty, and injustice to interfere by legislative enactments with the manner in which every person, young or old, are willing and anxious to seek their own living, unaccompanied with crime! The independence of the subject is the great boast of Englishmen.

"In regard to education at the present moment, I believe few parishes can be found in which a school is not established and supported by the landowners and tenant farmers, and also by the parents of families by their penny per head weekly payments. I believe a more injurious step could not be taken than forcing education on the people, without causing them to participate in the natural duties and feelings of parents, by contributing in a small way to the funds providing such a blessing for their children.

"I do not think any practicable plan can be devised so beneficially adapted to educate the children who are earning wages as that of evening schools.

"In regard to cottage accommodation, great an advocate as I am for the advantages arising from proper cottages, I do not see how the Government can interfere. I have lately had several blocks of cottages of three in a block erected by my landlords, and which I let to my men at 1*s.* per week rent, or rent free, deducting 1*s.* per week wages; they have the one-eighth of an acre of land attached for gardens to each cottage, and three bedrooms in each. I lose 5 per cent. by the interest I pay landlords on cost of erection. I may add, such have been the conduct of the occupiers, that I have not had cause to change one of them. I have imported them from a distance, and they are all considerably improved in comfort, appearance, and general conduct. But I must add, they have no cursed beer shop within reach, but they have free access at all times to weak wholesome table ale.

"I am, &c.

"SAMUEL JONAS.

"Chrishall Grange, S. Walden,
"Nov. 4, 1867."

95. *P. H. Frere*, Dungate.—Employs children in gang under one of his own men. Does not consider that the practice leads to immorality between the ages of 8 and 14, so much as at a more advanced age. The health of the children is very good. Has a school on his farm kept by a labouring woman. Thinks that six months, being from October to March, when children are not so much wanted in the fields, might be devoted to education.

96. Fleam Dyke Cottages, the property of Mr. Frere.—Two rooms above, and one below, with small back room, warm and comfortable, and not overcrowded. Situated at the extreme of West Wratting parish, two miles from the village. A woman living in centre cottage told me "that the children go to field as "young as 7 years, a lot together, sometimes under "a girl, sometimes under a man. You may be sure "they get into mischief if they can." That the children do not "get much schooling, as it is too far "to send them. They talk of having a school at this "place, in a room called the school-room, where they "used to have preaching. The parents are glad to "get the money for the children's work. Man's "wages 11*s.* a week."

97. *Clement Francis, Esq.*, Quy Hall.—Owns a large part of the parish of Quy. Employs children in field labour, under one of his own labourers. The children so employed are healthy. He strictly forbids the taking in of lodgers in his cottages. The able-bodied labourers are much employed in coprolite diggings, but return to the farms for harvest. Women, but not children, are employed by one of his neighbours. Women earn 1*s.* a day; children from 4*d.* to 6*d.* a day.

[Mr. Francis is opposed to the employment of girls, except under certain restrictions. Says there is a great want of steady regular education and training for domestic service.]

98. *Extract from Return made by Mr. Francis.*

QUY.

Population, 400. Acreage, 1,900. Cultivation chiefly arable.

Children are generally employed in gangs, from 8 years to 13 years of age. Field labour is injurious to training for domestic service. Would recommend that boys should not be employed under 8 years of age. That girls should not work in fields after 12 years of age. The cottages, for the most part, belong to the landowners; have a fair amount of accommodation, gardens, outhouses, and allotments. The rent is moderate.

SCHOOL STATISTICS.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	24	24
Over 10 - -	None	
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	20	20
Over 10 - -	None	
In Winter.		
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	19	19
Over 10 - -	4	4
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	20	20
Over 10 - -	18	18

I consider the state of education extremely low throughout the parish. There is no evening school.

BOTTISHAM.

Population, 1,600. Acreage, 5,581. Including Bottisham Lode. Part fen, part upland.

99. I visited the school in Bottisham Lode. The children work in the fields, and usually commence such work at 8 years of age; some few, however, under

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d.

7 years. Mr. King, a farmer in this parish, sends the children to their work, a distance of three miles, in a waggon. The education of these children is defective. The schoolmaster reported some amount of ill-health resulting from field work. Cottages not very bad except in cases of small owners, who let at the highest possible rent, and thereby compel the lessee to take in lodgers.—E. B. P.

100. *The Rev. John Hailstone*, of Anglesey Abbey, formerly vicar of Bottisham.

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PERSONS, AND WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE.

" DEAR SIR,

" In the extreme difficulty of obtaining such accurate information as would enable me to fill up the tables in your circular of July 8, 1867, I have ventured to send you the following remarks upon such points as have come within my experience (of 30 years) in the agricultural parish (entirely) of Bottisham, in the county of Cambridge, referring to numbers in page 1.

" 1. Bottisham, near Cambridge.

" Rev. John Hailstone (formerly vicar), now a resident.

" Population about 1,600, and acreage near 6,000 acres, and with chiefly arable cultivation.

" 6. 'Private gangs,' so called, *i.e.* a number of children from 8 to 12 years of age, employed by the farmers, under the supervision, generally, of some elderly labourer, for March, April, and May, in weeding, &c.—('queeching,' couching). If October is a dry month, more or less employed then for the same purpose. (Very difficult to thoroughly clear a field of weeds, when harrowed up to the surface, except by hand-picking, the threads of grass being so small, and so readily growing if left on the land.)

" 10. Many of our children walk between one and two miles for their day work.

" 11. From 7 to 5 p.m.

" 13. Breakfast, 8 to 8.30; dinner, 1 to 2 p.m.

" 14. Sexes work together.

" 15. If 'young persons' of 13 to 18 years of age, which is very seldom with us, work together or with children, it is most destructive to morals.

" 16. I have never observed any ill health arise, rather the contrary. Our school-rooms, if not well ventilated and looked to, have the effect of enervating our country children, and causing them to wish for and require a little more dainty food than the good 'hunch' of dry bread, which an out-door boy is well content with and fattens upon.

" 17. In some cases there is ill-treatment, but very rarely. Our good farmers take care, and in one instance, under my notice, sends his children every morning in a waggon when over two miles for work.

" 19. Upon the answer to this question hangs the whole matter. If we can get our girls to school constantly till 12 or 13 or 14 years of age, we do not fear for them; with a strict eye to their moral education, and a constant deprecating of out-door work for young girls, we can nearly get them all to go out to service, and feel the degradation of out-door dirt and half-male sort of occupation. If we cannot obtain this result, we see inevitably, in nearly all the growing girls who go out to field work regularly, the low and wretched condition of early bastardy or improvident marriage. Much depends upon the advice and anxious teaching of the clergyman's wife in this matter.

" No girl can go out to work in the fields, at all hours, in all company, and at all sorts of occupation, without certain depreciation of character and moral sense.

" The children of both sexes who regularly are employed in these small gangs at an early age, at certain seasons, before mentioned, of the year, grow up under a very small type of education; they learn and unlearn by regular turns, and eventually very little remains in their possession of what may be called knowledge, either secular or religious. We can do nothing for boys unless they are kept at school constantly till 10 years of age. A couple of years afterwards at school, even irregularly, is tolerable, for the want may be supplied by night schools, and the more so after that age. The first requirement is imperative, and may be well the subject of legislation. Something effective may be done by strictness in the boys asking leave for a given time, and its being recorded, to prevent the notion that when leaving in March (say) it is not meant that they are to keep away till harvest.

" 20. The difficulties of legislating are very great. If the schools were free and no payment demanded of the children, the force of an Act of Parliament could apply to them, requiring them to go to school for a given time; but as each pays his own 2*d.*, say per week, out of their parents small earnings of 10*s.* or 11*s.* per week, some one would have to pay for them, if under compulsion to attend. The payment would be, in fact, a compulsory income tax, upon which serious difficulties would arise. Who to pay? who to enforce? who to punish if compliance be refused? not to say constant collision between clergyman, farmer, and labourer.

" Page 6. I think week by week is preferable to day by day, as more conformable to village habits and country school management.

" The want of proper accommodation in cottages, and the undue and unhealthy crowding in the dwellings of our poor, is a serious hurt to their morals and their health. All we can do at school is undone at home. The wonder is more immorality does not exist considering the undisguised habits of old and young, married and unmarried, sleeping together in crowded rooms. Legislation on this point seems more practicable and quite necessary.

" JOHN HAILSTONE."

LITTLEBURY, COUNTY OF ESSEX.

Population, 970. Acreage, about 4,000. Cultivation chiefly arable. Light soil.

101. *Frederick Hooper*, schoolmaster.—The children go to field work. I know one girl under 7 years who is at work singling turnips. Most girls after 9 years go to field. There is an evening school for boys; 19 out of 36 working boys attend on an average. Most children can read and write when they go out to field work. Respectable parents do not, as a rule, send their children to the fields. Childrens' wages, 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. There is another school at Littlebury Green, which takes about 20 children belonging to the parish.

102. *J. Clayden*, farmer, holds 1,000 acres in Littlebury under Lord Braybrooke. Never employs girls. Mens' wages, 11*s.* a week. No dearth of labourers. Also holds land at Sewer's End, near Saffron Walden.

Extract from Mr. Clayden's letter to Mr. Portman.

" I really do not see that I can in any way fill up the Government paper, as really there is nothing like the gang system in work around here, nor are there any very young children employed in agriculture, except for a few weeks in the spring, when the charlock grows on some farms. Small children occasionally work with their parents, and where a man has from four to six little children no doubt they are an assistance to him.

" Most of our children go to school when young, and are very many of them able to read and write a little, but of course there are exceptions.

" Comfortable cottages, and, if possible, not grouped too nearly together, with gardens, lead to industrious and frugal habits, and, where these proper examples are set by the parents, I need not tell you it has a beneficial influence on the rising generation.

" Night schools for adults or large-sized boys are very useful, and ought by every means to be encouraged. I believe when properly conducted they are much appreciated.

" Yours very truly,
" JOHN CLAYDEN."

SEWER'S END, HAMLET OF SAFFRON WALDEN.

103. Mr. Clayden's bailiff says the children are employed; they come from school on Saturday to earn money to pay for the next week's schooling. The land here is heavy.

Evidence of schoolmistress.—79 on books; average attendance, 50. Boys are out at work from 9 years of age, from April to end of harvest; they come to school in the winter. Girls go out in charlicking time; very little ones go to that work. The parents are anxious to get them out. They are out about three weeks at a time. Girls and boys are mixed in fields under a man.

On a Farm near Audley End belonging to Lord Braybrooke.

104. *Henry Auger* was in charge of a number of women. Had been at that work for 20 years. There were 26 women, married and single, at work; four unmarried. The youngest 16 years of age. He said he only looked after them in hay time, but that sometimes a few were used for weeding. The women earn 1*s.* a day for ordinary labour. Wages for weeding, 4*s.* 6*d.* a week. Some of them could read and write.

105. *Extract from Return made by the Rev. Joseph Wix, Littlebury.*

Scarcely any gang system; though for weeding and stone picking several children are taken away from school.

There are two hamlets in this village, distant about two miles from the school. The attendance is undoubtedly in some measure affected by such distance, especially in the winter and in bad weather.

The girls are taught needlework. Generally the cottage accommodation is bad, and being so, has an injurious effect on the morality and health of the people. Most of the cottages are built of lath and plaster. A few only of the cottages have anything deserving the name of a garden, or outhouses. The owners are chiefly tradesmen or persons to whom rent is an object, which is therefore high, and beyond the resources of the tenants,—I mean in comparison with their wages.

I think something might be done by cottage associations formed for the purpose of buying up cottages at a fair valuation, which would be without pecuniary disadvantage to the tenant, but of immense advantage to him in point of health, comfort, and morality. New cottages also might be built by such associations.

Average attendance at school:—

In summer, 35 out of 49 boys.
" 41 out of 57 girls.
In winter, 44 out of 49 boys.
" 46 out of 57 girls.

There is a night school open from November to March for two hours on each of two nights in a week. The average attendance (all being over 12 years of age) is 21 out of 36. I do not consider that a night school adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school. The principal difficulty in the way of maintaining an efficient night school is the want of teachers, which obliges boys of unequal attainments to be placed in the same class.

HILDERSHAM, NEAR LINTON.

Population - 227 Acreage 1,499.

106. *Rev. R. Goodwin.*—The girls are hardly at all employed in the fields here; their names are taken off the school list if they go out except during harvest. Men's wages are from 10*s.* to 11*s.* a week; at piece work a man can earn 15*s.* a week. Piece work is much in vogue in these parts. Gangs come from Linton, two miles distant, to work for a farmer in this parish, but there is no gang in the parish. Many girls go to domestic service. The cottages are not overcrowded. A night school is open in winter, and is attended by 8 or 9 lads. There is also one in the neighbouring parish of Abington, which is attended by about 20 lads. I think it is necessary for boys to go early to field work, in order that they may learn their business as agricultural labourers, but a system of alternate days for school and work, or a necessary attendance at school for a given number of days in the week, would be of great advantage.

LINTON.

Population, 1,833. Area, 3,775 acres. Soil principally gravel and chalk.

107. This is a small town, formerly a market town, and apparently supplies a good deal of labour for the neighbouring small villages. The houses are bad, and thickly inhabited, and I was told that there is gross immorality among the lower class.

Mr. Mutimer, schoolmaster.—I have been master here for 27 years. The average number in the school is 170, boys and girls. The girls go to work in the fields, but I do not think there are many who go out under 8 years of age. Their work is principally weeding and singling turnips just before harvest. I think that high farming lessens the demand for juvenile labour. Boys go out in a gang to work at Hildersham, and have been out all the year. Labouring men go as far as Babraham, a distance of six miles, for their work. The houses are bad and crowded.

[The Rev. E. W. Wilkinson, vicar, also bore testimony to the bad state of the cottages.]

FULBOURN.

Population, 1,310. Acreage 5,221. Cultivation chiefly arable, about 200 acres of grass.

108. *C. W. Townley, Esq. Extract from Return.*

There are three private gangs in the parish, employing in all 15 males, 17 females—32 persons. They work at weeding corn and picking grass out of the fallows during three or four months, say, from beginning of April to July. Hours of work from 8 a.m., to 6 p.m., with a rest of half-an-hour at 10 a.m., and 1 hour for dinner. Distances to work half-a-mile to 1½ mile. The sexes work together. Their health is not injuriously affected, nor do I know of any cases of ill-treatment. All the children attend school when not at work.

Number of persons employed singly or with a few others:—

Males between 13 and 18 years -	- 50	
Females between 13 and 18 years	- 12	
Over 18—Married	- 14	
Unmarried - -	- 8	—34

Are employed from April to July; hours of work from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. The employment of females in the fields must be against their making good domestic servants. Labour is at times scarce, and the parents could not do well without the children's earnings.

I think it better not to employ females after 13 years, or before 10 years. I would not employ boys under 8 years. Needlework is taught in the National school.

The cottages generally have one sitting room, a kitchen, two bedrooms, and gardens, at 4*l.* a year. There are 229 cottages in the parish. There are four schools. 1, National, 1, endowed, and 2 dame schools. The average attendance at the National school is 100 boys and girls, and their average age is 7 years 7 months. The endowed school has 25 boys. The number of children neither at school nor at work is:—

In Summer.

Boys—25.	Girls—22.
Of whom 20 are between 8 and 10 years.	Of whom 16 are between 8 and 10 years.

In Winter.

Boys—22.	Girls—23.
Of whom 18 are between 8 and 10 years.	Of whom 15 are between 8 and 10 years.

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There is sometimes a night school during November, December, and January, open for 1½ hour on three nights in the week. Number of scholars, 30 to 40; they are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic. There is a difficulty in getting teachers.

The bigger boys do *not* work in the gangs. The single women employed in field work are usually those who, on account of bad character, are unable to obtain places as domestic servants.

CROYDON.

Population, 508. Acreage, 2,665. Soil, clayey; subsoil, chalk and gravel.

109. Downing College, Cambridge, possesses most of the land in this parish. The cottages are much crowded, but the college has lately built some good ones at a rent of 3*l.* 15*s.* per annum. Some of the old cottages let for 1*l.* a year. There is a good school-house. Here the children work in the fields; 4*d.* a day is the pay for young children. A women told me "she did not think it paid for wear and tear of "their things, but they must go out." Mens' wages in this part of the county were low, but are rising in consequence of the demand for hands in the coprolite diggings.

SWAFFHAM BULBECK.

Population, about 900. Acreage, 3000. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

110. *Mr. B. Giblin*, farmer, has farmed in the parish for 27 years. Employs in months of April, May, June, and July 10 children (five of each sex) in picking grass and weeding corn; in the autumn and winter, three boys in trimming turnips. Hours of work from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., two hours being allowed for meals. The sexes work together; does not think their morals or health are injuriously affected by field labour. It is unnecessary to subject "private" gangs to legislative regulations similar to those applied to "public" gangs; does not think half-time could work. Considers 10 or 12 children quite a sufficient number for one person to have the control of, and that field work is beneficial if a trusty man is put over them; thinks it better to keep the sexes apart. Few children are employed under 12 years of age, nor many women except for hoeing; does not know of *any* at work between 15 years and 18 years. Mens' wages 11*s.* *stated*, most *earn* 13*s.* a week The state of the cottages generally tends much more towards immorality than any employment they are subject to in this neighbourhood, chiefly owing to the crowded state of the cottages. There is not a sufficient number of cottages with two or three bedrooms and a sitting room. The Union Chargeability Act is not causing an increase of cottages here. The cottage question is one for the landlords. The children might have six months' schooling in the year.

111. *Rev. W. Fleetwood*, vicar.—The parish is well off, and in a good state of education. There is a National school and two dame schools. The number of children employed singly, or with a few others, in the parish is from 75 to 102 between ages of 8 and 13. Hours of work 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., with allowance of 1½ hour for meals. Distance to work from 1½ mile to 4 miles. Health not injuriously affected by field labour, but it deteriorates their manners, impairs their morals, and unfits the females for domestic duties.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - - -	40	22
Between 10 and 13 -	None.	None.
Girls:		
Under 10 - - -	30	28
Between 10 and 13	6	6

In Winter.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - - -	33	—
Between 10 and 13 -	22	—
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	40	—
Between 10 and 13 -	17	—

There is a night school from October to March, open five nights a week for two hours per night. The average attendance of children above 12 years is 18 out of 21 on register; reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught. The night school does not supply adequately the deficiencies of the day school.

SWAFFHAM PRIOR.

112. *Return made by James Witt, Esq.*

Population, 1,300. Acreage, 6,107. Cultivation, chiefly arable. Field land, ⅓rd skirt land, and fen land.

There are two private gangs, employing 30 males of from 8 to 13 years of age, and 20 females of from 9 to 14 years of age; also some married women. They are employed in weeding and picking twitch in spring, summer, and autumn.

Their usual hours of work are ten, with an hour and half allowed for meals. The sexes should be separated. The education among the young and the adults is such as requires great improvement. A private gang should be under 20 in number. I would restrict the hours of labour for females, on account of their domestic duties. Boys might be employed from 9 years upwards. I agree with the proposed table of restriction of distance to work according to age, if ample time is allowed for walking. In agriculture I would have no half days, but should prefer the alternate whole day system.

It appears to me that the wet weather during the summer months, together with the period when employment ceases, would afford opportunity for school hours, if attendance could be insured during the winter months, thereby securing industrial education likewise. I would make compulsory on proprietors and occupiers in the rural districts the supply of schools, almost independent of the pecuniary resources of the parents.

There is not industrial training for girls to the extent there ought to be.

Two cottages are sufficient per 100 acres. There are not enough of the right description. Many of the cottages have small gardens, but the larger number belong to private individuals and the shopkeepers with whom the poor have to deal. Average rent, 3*l.* 10*s.* a year. I do not see how to provide good cottage accommodation on self-supporting terms, till such property will yield a better per-centage.

COTTENHAM.

Population, 2,415. Acreage, about 7,000. Cultivation, about 5,000 acres arable, 2,000 pasture. Soil, partly fen, clay, and loamy, called "Skirt Land."

113. *Extracts from Return sent by Rev. S. Banks, rector, and James Ivatt, Esq.*

The private gang system exists here. We cannot make any statement as to the numbers employed; there are many small owners in the parish who employ their own children. The work is, in spring, twitching, weeding, and setting potatoes; in summer, weeding till midsummer; autumn, twitching and getting up potatoes. In winter very few are employed. The distance to work is in some cases three miles. Hours of work 7.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., with an allowance of one and a half hours for meals. Sexe work mostly apart, in a few instances mixed; no complaint as to the effect on the morals. Gleaning

time is very bad for the morals. Health certainly not injuriously affected. No ill-treatment. State of education on the whole very good. Public legislation for such parishes as this would be injurious, oppressive to the labouring class, and unpopular. Perhaps a few young children go too far to work. Half-time system impossible; alternate days impossible. The use of hands must be learnt as well as the use of heads, and the one must be taught early as well as the other. The labouring class ought to have a sufficient amount of "school knowledge," but it must never be forgotten that they earn their living by their hands, and hands must be taught for the sake of the master as well as of the labourer. Labourers are paid well here, live well and dress well; the females in general too well. Some few complain nevertheless of paying for their children's schooling; the great majority pay, and perhaps most pay willingly. Efforts for the industrial training of girls are being made in the Church School of Industry, where none but useful work is allowed. The cottage accommodation is on the whole pretty fair; we have, however, some very bad cases. A few cottages are upon outlying farms; the village lies fairly in the middle. Cottages are chiefly brick, rooms from 12 to 14 feet square. Drainage of parish on the whole good; ventilation of houses doubtful. There are in the cottages three to four and even up to five and six rooms, with, in most cases, a fair allowance of outhouses, water, some gardens, and a large number of allotments. Small landowners and tradesmen are owners of the cottages. Rent about 5*l.* Union Chargeability Act has not increased the number of cottages. We believe there is more than one night school in the parish. The Church night school is held during November, December, January, and February, for one and three-quarter hours on two nights in the week, and was attended this year by 53 lads. Want of efficient teachers is the chief difficulty in maintaining efficient night schools.

114. *Rev. S. Banks.*—Children earn 6*d.* a day; are at work from March till the end of October. The wages are paid to the children themselves or to their parents, and not through the gangmaster. It would be preferable to half-day or alternate day system to have children prevented from going to work under a certain age, and then only for a given time in the year, the remainder to be devoted to school. I have established and supported a school, not under Government Inspection. The allotment system is fully carried out; there are at least 150 allotments. Men earn good wages at piece work and at drainage work. This parish is full of Wesleyans and Baptists.

115. *James Ivatt.*—Owns 500 acres. Employs children, about 14 at a time; some as young as 8 years. Does not employ girls. Cannot do without children's labour in weeding time. Does not consider that the practice leads to immorality. When children are wanted one of his men collects them. The children are sent about in bodies from one part of the farm to another, as required. Men's wages 12*s.* a week; children's 6*d.* a day.

WATERBEACH.

Population, 1,435. Acreage, 5,500. Cultivation, chiefly arable, with some market gardens.

116. *Mr. W. Smith Wiles.*—I am the owner of an estate in this parish, and was more than 30 years the occupier of it, as also of other lands. There are three gangs in the parish; No. 1, 18 male children, average; No. 2, 18 females, average; No. 3, mixed, in number about 15. The children employed in these gangs are the children of the labourers employed on the farms. Nos. 1 and 2 are employed on two large occupations adjoining each other, and by arrangement one occupier takes the boys and the other the girls. No. 3 is mixed, but still the children of the labourers on the farm. I cannot see any better arrangement; they are employed in spring, summer, and autumn in cleaning the land, not in cropping. In winter none are employed. Distances may vary from half to two miles. Hours of work from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., with allowance of one and half hours for meals. I have never heard of any ill-usuage, and do not think the employment injurious to health. The state of education is such as is commonly found in agricultural villages, far better than it was in their parents' time. Those who work singly or with a few others are about 50 in number. In spring those over 18 years, married and unmarried, in hoeing corn crops; in summer, mostly in the fruit gardens. Hours of work from 7 to 5. During the period I have lived here at least half my domestic servants were girls whom I had employed in the fields, and I do not know that I had ever cause to regret so doing; of course I engaged those I thought best qualified. My opinion is that field employment has not necessarily any injurious effect upon the morals of females. No boys are ever employed at a less age than 8 years, and very few at that age, they not being useful. The employment of children in agricultural labour depending upon the state of the weather, it is manifest that the Act of 7 Vict. c. 15. ss. 31.–9. cannot apply. The season of employment extends from March till November. There is an endowed school which all the children of the labourers have the opportunity of attending, at an average rate of less than 1*d.* per week each child. The attendance is very slightly affected by distance. There is no special industrial training for girls. This being a fen parish most of the cottages are more than a mile from the farms, but as the drainage of the fen has been progressing for some years, many farm homesteads and cottages have lately been built for the greater convenience of occupation and cultivation of such lands. The cottage accommodation is good. Most of the cottages are brick and tile and slate. The drainage of the village has been materially improved within the last 12 years. The rooms are about 12 ft. by 13 ft., 7 ft. high; with outhouses, gardens varying from 5 to 20 poles; are mostly owned by the landowners. Rent from three guineas to five guineas per annum.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	50	33
Between 10 and 13 -	18	8
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	45	33
Between 10 and 13 -	26	15

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	58	37
Between 10 and 13	20	No return.
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	45	No return.
Between 10 and 13 -	33	31

As to those neither at school nor at work I have no correct data, but I should think there are but few, the general desire of the parents being that their children should have some education. The returns are taken from the endowed school. There are two or three other private schools, but the attendance is small and no accounts are kept. There are three night schools open for about 20 weeks in the winter half-year for one and a half hours on three nights in each week. Attendance, about 45 lads, all above 12 years of age. I think a night school in a great measure makes up for the deficiencies of the day school.

[Mr. Smith Wiles further said that he does not think many girls are employed in the fields under 12 years of age, and that after 15 years they are no good in a gang.

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That he thought children under a certain age should not work in winter, and that, if possible, it would be good to place restrictions on the age to which children generally should go to work, but "he did not see how "it was to be done."

Men's wages average 11*s.* a week. Much more earned by piece-work. "Piece-work sharpens men's "wits, and educated men make the best labourers. "Still farm work must be learnt early in life."]

117. *Matilda Leech*, mistress of the endowed school. —The average attendance in winter is 150, boys and girls. The numbers begin to fall off in May. There is an infant school, with an average attendance of 60, of an age from three to six years; the children then attend day school, more or less, up to 12 or 13 years of age. Needlework is done by the girls. The state of education is fair, most can read and write, but the long absences for field work throw the children back in their learning. Some mothers keep the children at home. I think the attendance is slightly affected by the distance at which some of the homes are from the school.

BABRAHAM.

118. *Mr. Samuel Webb*, large farmer, aged 73.—There are no gangs in the parish. Children are employed with their parents, and earn 5*d.* and 6*d.* a day. Labour is very scarce, and is brought from distant parishes. There is a good school and good charities. There are not sufficient cottages for the acreage of the parish. In years past many cottages were pulled down, and the poor driven out; but Mr. Adeane talks of building new ones on different farms. I am anxious to have some, and think that farmers generally would pay a fair per centage to the landlord for money laid out in this way. I do not think that the half-time, or alternate day system, could possibly be worked, as the farming operations depend so much on weather, and in weeding time a day is of great importance. Education is low; many parents are very glad to get the earnings of the children, and will not send them to school. The night school is poorly attended. I think it a bad thing to employ girls at all in field work, and do not do so myself. I am thoroughly opposed to the public gang system.

[The population of this parish is 509, with an acreage of 2,143. It was formerly a "close parish," in the fullest sense of the words, and the supply of labour is drawn from Sawston, Duxford, and even from Linton [as previously stated in evidence], thereby creating a species of gang system, as men, women, and children come together in "groups," at certain seasons when a number of hands are required for the work of the farms.]

WITHERSFIELD.

Population, 640. Acreage, 2,468. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

119. *Rev. W. Mayd*, lord of the manor.—There are no private gangs; children, young persons, and women are employed in the fields in spring, summer, and autumn, and in collecting and burning weeds in winter. Boys only are employed in land-draining and driving plough. Distance to work, not more than half a mile. Men work from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.; women and children from 8 to 1, and from 2 to 6. They all go home to dinner; time allowed for meals 1½ hours. Field work in winter is likely to produce rheumatism or rheumatic gout. I consider field work injurious to the morals of the females, inasmuch as they hear language and are exposed to indecent liberties to which otherwise they would not be subject. The demand for labour does at certain times require the assistance of females, but I think it very desirable that it should be restricted to married women. I think boys should not be employed under 9 years of age. I think two miles a sufficient distance for boys of any age to go to work; I would not allow girls to go at all. I would restrict the time of work for boys under 10 years of age to three days in the week, that they might attend school on the other days, as being more advantageous to the employer, and more conducive to the good education of the children. As regards my own parish, I should be very reluctant to introduce any mode of enforcing school attendance; there exists so good a feeling, both on the part of the employer and the employed, in favour of education, that I should be very unwilling to disturb it. I think the want of good cottage accommodation is more conducive to immorality among the lower classes than any other cause. It is by no means uncommon for the cottages in this parish to have only one bedroom for the whole family. Such a state has a bad effect on morals, health, comfort, cleanliness, and education. A large proportion of the cottages are built of clay, brick, and a thatched roof; they seem to have built on the waste ground lying by the side of the road, so that there is not room for the necessary conveniences.

[Mr. Mayd suggested, as a point for consideration, that it would be beneficial to obtain legal power for the lord of the manor to buy out cottages built on land originally "cribbed from the waste."]

No progress is being made towards increasing the cottage accommodation.

School Statistics.

In Summer and Winter.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	39	29
Between 10 and 13	5	4
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	32	31
Between 10 and 13	9	7

There is a night school from October to March, open for two hours on three nights in the week. Average attendance (all above 12 years), 20. It does not adequately supply the deficiencies of the day school. The principal difficulty in maintaining a night school is disinclination to study on the part of the young men. Some do not like to mix with those younger than themselves, who are better scholars in consequence of having had an early education, which the older ones have not had.

Men's wages here are 10*s.* a week, with a quarter of an acre allotment. The girls are principally occupied in slop-work, which is served out to them from the factories in the neighbouring town of Haverhill, and this work they do at their own homes. The money earned is very little, if at all, in excess of that derived from field labour.

HORSEHEATH.

Population, 497. Acreage, 1,677. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

120. *Rev. Francis H. Annesley*, curate in residence. —No gangs. Persons employed singly, or with a few others:—

Males:	
Between 8 and 10 - - -	4
„ 10 and 12 -	10
„ 13 and 18 -	18
	32
Females:	
Between 10 and 13 - -	
„ 13 and 18 - - -	2
Over 18 years:	
Married - - - -	10
Unmarried - - -	8
	21

In spring, in picking stones off the land and in weeding corn. In summer, in weeding corn and harvest. In autumn, in picking potatoes and pulling mangold and turnips. They live near their work. Hours of

work:—Boys, 6 to 6; girls, 8 to 5, with 1½ hours allowed for meals. Health not injuriously affected. I do not know of any ill-usage. I think the employment of females in agriculture is certainly demoralizing and detrimental to their proper training for domestic duties. I would recommend that no boy under 8 years of age should be employed in field labour. There is no industrial training for girls. School attendance is hardly at all affected by the distance from the school, nor by the pecuniary resources of the parents. Three cottages per 100 acres are sufficient, and that proportion exists here. In some cases the cottages are crowded. The cottages in this parish are tolerably commodious, and belong to different owners. The landowner has only a small proportion, and a tradesman owns several. Rent averages from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* per annum.

[In consequence of the destruction of cottages at Camps, this village is full of families who get work in the neighbouring parishes.]

There is a night school upon for 16 weeks, from December to the end of March, for one and a half hours on three nights in the week. Average attendance is 25. Reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught.

Mr. Annesley complained of the immorality in the parish.

121. *Mr. J. Webb*, farmer.—Does not employ children. A labourer cannot live and support a large family without the children's earnings, which vary from 3*d.* to 6*d.* a day. Does not consider that field work conduces to immorality so much as slop-work.

[Mr. Cook, farmer, employs a gang of boys and girls (mixed) all the year.

In this parish also the girls are much employed at home with the slop-work from Haverhill.

I ascertained that in this neighbourhood cottage rent averages 3*l.* a year. Many of the cottages having only two rooms, but usually with a piece of land attached, or in the allotment field. In the town of Haverhill, cottages of the most miserable description are rented at 5*l.* a year.

There is a considerable manufacture in Haverhill of corduroy and "white work" (as it is called), a coarse shirting.

These goods are then put out to the girls in the neighbouring villages, to be made up for the retail shops; and this kind of work, like the straw-plaiting in Bedfordshire, is said to have a most demoralizing effect on the girls employed.—E. B. P.]

SHUDY CAMPS.

Population, 330. Acreage, 1,332. Cultivation, mixed.

122. *Rev. W. Joy*, vicar.—A small and varying number of my parishioners are employed in a private gang in the adjoining parish of Horseheath, but there are no gangs in this parish. Very few women are engaged in field work. The boys from the time they can earn anything, till 14 or 15, are often nominally at school; but are so irregular in their attendance as to lower the efficacy of the school. This is becoming more the case with the girls also, since the introduction of slop-work. The hours of work are from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., or during daylight, with 1½ hours allowed for meals. Slop-work (sewing) for the ready-made clothes dealers seems to me to be worse than field work for the girls, taking them earlier from school, keeping them from service, and exposing them to temptations. The women are sadly in want of proper training for domestic duties, but not through field work. The only training of this kind open to them is domestic service, from which the best of them seldom return to us. I should dread any new source of irregular attendance in our small village schools. Their chief want is efficiency of teaching power. There are almost as many classes to be attended to as in a large school, and we cannot afford extra teachers. My aim is to economise teaching power by improved method and regular attendance. If we could be sure of our children regularly up to a definite age, say 8 years, as a minimum, I do not see why we should not ultimately give them a better education than most of them have had now 2 or 3 years later. School attendance is scarcely at all affected by distance, except in the case of young or delicate children in bad weather; nor much affected directly by the pecuniary resources of the parents, "no shoes to come in," is an occasional excuse. It is not often that the parents have any real difficulty in paying the weekly penny, if they have, it is paid for them. Indirectly it is very much affected; their wages are too small for them to do without any little addition, which the children can earn or enable the mother to earn by helping her at home, hence irregular attendance at school. We do not see our way in small schools to provide for the industrial training of girls, though we should be glad to do so. There are 20 or 25 labourers employed in the parish, over and above those who can find houses in it. There are nearly enough cottages with two or three bedrooms. A large part of our cottages are old and badly built; not underdrained, accommodation moderate. Our wells are few and very deep. Garden ground and outhouses generally sufficient. Out-door provisions for decency sometimes sadly deficient. They are owned by non-resident landowners; rent 2*l.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* per annum. Two good new cottages have been built, and two old farm-houses adapted for four labourers' families.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	15	6
Between 10 and 13 -	4	2
Girls:		
Under 10 -	21	11
Between 10 and 13 -	5	2

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	12	8
Between 10 and 13	3	1¼
Girls:		
Under 10	18	10
Between 10 and 13 -	4	2

Scarcely any children of the labouring class who are well, are neither at school, nor at work either at home or in the fields. Nearly all the young men and lads about 15 or 16 are insufficiently educated, and some of the girls. There seems to be a great improvement in the younger ones. There has been a night school, but it has been discontinued for want of sufficient attendance. I have had difficulty in getting any one fit to help me in teaching.

The girls earn from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* a week at slop-work. Men's wages are 10*s.* a week. Girls and boys as young as 6 and 7 years, are employed in the fields.

CASTLE CAMPS.

Population, 901. Acreage, 2,703. A large and straggling parish.

123. *Rev. J. E. Bode*, rector.—Wages 10*s.* a week for men, 5*d.* and 6*d.* a day for children. Children leave school early; they sometimes go out in masses in weeding time. The parents do not like to refuse the farmer if he wants them. Very few people in the parish can sign their names. Thinks that the farmers would be opposed to a compulsory system, though they are willing to admit the necessity of education.

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124. [I subsequently received the following letter from Mr. Bode.]

"Castle Camps Rectory,
31 December 1867.

"Dear Sir,

"In answer to your letter received this morning, I am truly sorry to say that I have not been able to furnish the information desired. I fully intended to attempt to do so, but * * * *

"As an indication that my information would not have been important, I may add that there is nothing like an agricultural gang in this parish; there are very few girls or women employed in field work. I do not think there are half-a-dozen regularly employed in it. They all do what is called slop-work, for a manufacturer at Haverhill. I do not think this has any favourable result on their morals, or fitness for domestic duties. Comparing them with the girls and women in a parish in Oxfordshire, of which I was rector, where they were mainly employed in field work, I should say they are quite as immoral, perhaps a little less rude, but quite as bold.

"The girls are generally taken from school to this work at from 7 years to 9 years of age; the boys to farm work at about 7 or 8. Both sometimes return to day school at dull times in the year; the former not so often. Both usually attend Sunday school, the boys till about 15, the girls till about 17.

"The only peculiarity in this parish is, that we have nearly 30 families residing in it, belonging to the adjoining parish of Shudy Camps, owing to the paucity of cottages in that parish. The cottages here are generally deficient in accommodation, there being scarcely any with more than two bedrooms, but not many I think with less.

"Part of the parish is a mile and a half from the school, and I think this makes the attendance more irregular in the winter. I have taken the liberty of putting down these remarks here; they are not sufficient to enter in the formal paper, but may be better than nothing.

"I am, &c.,
J. E. Bode."

"Hon. E. Portman.

[In this part of the county, containing the villages of Shudy Camps and Castle Camps, I found men's wages lower than in any part of Cambridgeshire.—E. B. P.]

WEST WRATTING.

Population, 777. Acreage, 3,440. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

125. *Edward Frost, Esq.*—There are no gangs in the parish; girls are not employed. The children sometimes go out singling turnips with their parents. This is a very large parish, six miles in length. The schools are good. All the children in the parish from 3 years of age up to 10 years in the case of boys, and 12 years in case of girls, attend school. There is a night school for six months in the winter season, open for two hours on three nights in the week, which is attended by 17 boys. Scripture, reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught. I consider the night school adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school. Cottages are abundant; the worst belong to small owners.

[Wages in this parish for men, 11*s.* a week.]

BALSHAM.

Population, 460. Acreage, 4,400. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

126. *Rev. C. R. Dicken*, rector.—There is no organized system of agricultural gangs in this parish. In spring, when children are employed by the farmers in weeding, &c. a person is usually appointed to overlook them, but their wages are paid by the farmers. It is quite a matter of chance whether the same children are employed from day to day, so that the ages cannot well be ascertained.

CAXTON.

Population, 545. Acreage, 2,000. Soil, stiff and clayey.

127. *H. Mortlock, Esq.*, solicitor.—This is a very poor miserable district; there is little done for the poor people. Children do not go out to field work much, except in the spring for twitching and weeding, boys and girls together; they work from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., aud get very tired. The girls are quite spoilt by field work for domestic service. A man will not take charge of a lot of children in the field unless he has extra pay. The mothers take no trouble to get their children to service. If legislation as to the age at which children should go to work takes place, he does not think the provisions of the Act could be enforced, except by making the police public prosecutors. Wages are 12*s.* and 14*s.* a week for men. Cottages are very bad, mostly with only two rooms. The overcrowding of families is the root of the evil, and the cause of immorality. Thinks the children's labour is at certain times necessary to the farmer. Caxton Union is the worst in the county.

128. *A. J. Wright, Esq.*, medical officer.—Does not consider the health of the children is injuriously affected by field labour; their morals become much deteriorated; they go out as young as 6 or 7 years of age. The cottages are very bad and are disgracefully overcrowded, a state which leads not only to immorality but also to sickness. The moral state of the people of Caxton is very low. Should be very glad to see some legislation on the subject.

GREAT GRANSDEN, Hunts.

Soil, heavy clay.

129. *T. V. Webb, Esq.*—Women and girls work together in the fields wheat hoeing in the spring; girls of 14 years and upwards and married women together. The boys are mainly employed in the care of horses. The little children occasionally go out picking charlick in the spring, not in greater numbers than 10 together. The cottages are not overcrowded and are pretty good. Education must be compulsory. Thinks that a system of alternate weeks of work and school might succeed, but not half day or alternate days. The boys should not go to work till 10 years of age. The girls are sent to service at 13 years when possible; the mothers are growing averse to sending them to the fields. Thinks that a system of night schools with liberal support from Government in case of uncertificated master as well as of certificated, is very desirable. There is one in the parish which is well attended, the average age of lads attending being 16 years. To carry out this system an additional number of teachers would be required in every parish, as the attendance of lads earning wages up to 16 years of age for a certain number of evenings during the winter months should be made compulsory; in the case of those not earning wages, there should be a forced attendance at the day school up to a certain period, whereby you would secure a continuous education and keep up the standard. At present the people are deficient in reading and writing. Men's wages 12*s.* and 13*s.* a week.

LITTLE GRANSDEN.

130. *Rev. A. Newby.*—A very small parish. The same system of employment of labour in agriculture exists as in Great Gransden.

BASSINGBOURN.

Population, 2,213. Acreage, 4,245. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

131. *Rev. H. Freeman Bishop*, vicar.—Private gangs are employed by farmers in the spring in pulling charlock, and picking up twitch. The distance to work rarely exceeds a mile. Hours from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., with an allowance of one hour and a half for meals. The sexes work together, but have their meals apart. The working together of the sexes gives the young girls

very rough habits, and does not conduce to morality. I understand that their language is at times very bad. The health is not injuriously affected, nor do I know of any ill-treatment. The state of education, both among the young and adults of both sexes, is low. The employment of females in field work interferes with their usefulness in domestic service. Boys should not be employed under 10 years of age. The over-crowding of cottages has a bad effect on the morality of the labouring classes. Most of the cottages have two bedrooms; a great many are owned by tradesmen. This is a poor parish, with no resident squire, and the parents are glad to get the children's earnings. I should be glad if something could be done to prevent the children from leaving school so early as they now do.

KNEESWORTH, NEAR BASSINGBOURN.

Population, 280. Acreage, 970. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

132. *W. Ten Brocke Crole*, bailiff and farmer.—I employ on my farm four males and eight females, in a gang in spring and summer. [About three times this number are employed in the whole parish.] The males are between 10 and 13 years of age, females between 13 and 18 years. The work is pulling charlocks and picking up twitch. Hours, from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., with 1½ hour alllowed for meals; they all live close to their work. They leave home at 7, and are at home again at 6 p.m. The sexes work together, but have their meals apart. Their health is not at all injuriously affected; they are playing about till 9 or 10 o'clock at night. The state of education varies, some read very well, some not at all. We have only "private" gangs in this parish, and the children are well cared for. I employ four males between 10 and 13 years of age not in the gang, in spring in bird-scareing; in summer and autumn, in driving hay-carts, dung-carts, and light jobs; in winter, in cleaning turnips and helping the shepherd. Hours from 6 to 6 in summer, from light to dark in winter. The morals of the girls depend on their mothers. I would not place any restriction on the employment of females in field labour, nor on the age at which boys should go to work. A boy of 12 years old will walk 10 miles every day, driving plough in wet dirty land and play hard all the afternoon. Certain kinds of work can only be done in fine weather. The half-day or alternate day might be very inconvenient; I would suggest night schools as preferable. We have a school in our parish close to the houses of the labourers, under the management of the squire. It is not unusual for the farmers in this parish to pay for the schooling of children when the families are large. No industrial training for girls is attempted. I conceive bad accommodation in the cottages, *i.e.*, having only one bedroom, to be the root of all immorality. I should say two cottages are sufficient for every 100 acres; we have that proportion. Almost all our cottages have four rooms, and all have a garden. Rent 1*s.* 3*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week.

Mr. Crole thinks that the weeding and charlick-picking cannot be done without "the small hands." The girls would be better if they did not go to field work quite so young. The parish and neighbourhood are much improved lately in point of morality, but there is still much immorality dating from "the Feast."

STEEPLE MORDEN.

Population, 913. Acreage, 3,820. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

133. Meeting at the vicarage.

Present:—Rev. W. Martin, vicar.
Mr. Strickland, „ Pain, „ Westrope, } farmers.

A large parish, and coprolite district. No school in existence when Mr. Martin came, but one has been open since January 1867. Mr. Martin expressed himself in favour of the half-day system of school and work, if it is possible to carry it out, if not then he would have alternate days. Children are employed in the fields as young as 6 years of age in charlick pulling, when they go 20 together with a man over them. The girls do not work much in the fields, as they are occupied with straw-plaiting at home. A child of eight years can earn 2*s.* 6*d.* a week in the field. Man's wages 2*s.* a day. 15*s.* or 16*s.* a week can be earned by piece-work.

134. *Return made by Rev. W. Martin.*

Children and young persons employed in agricultural labour:—

Males (constantly):	
Between 8 and 10 years	4
„ 10 and 13 „	19
„ 13 and 18 „	21
	44
Females (occasionally):	
Between 10 and 13 years	6
„ 13 and 18 „	7
Over 18 yrs. (married)	7
	20

They are employed in spring, in weeding, setting potatoes, &c.; in autumn, in dibbing wheat and beans. A few go two miles to work, but the greater part live on or near the farms. Hours, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. in summer, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. in winter; two hours are allowed for meals. I do not think the health is injuriously affected, nor do I know of any ill-treatment. While the employment of females is only on occasional emergencies, I do not think there is much harm to their morals.

I would not recommend any restriction on female labour. Boys should not be employed under 8 years of age. Distance must keep many away from school in bad weather, and prevent very young children from coming at all. Many parents keep their children from school to earn money by straw-plaiting. There is no industrial training for girls except in needlework. Owing to the coprolite works, the over-crowding of the cottages is a serious evil, and the effect of the mixture of sexes in the same sleeping room disastrous to morality.

There should be two or three cottages per 100 acres, for those employed in agriculture. There is not a sufficient number of cottages with two or three bedrooms. Rooms in the cottages are generally of sufficient area but too low, some barely six feet in height. Bedrooms badly ventilated. The ordinary cottage has two bedrooms, but some only one, scarcely any have three; some have no garden, and insufficient room for outhouses. More than two-thirds of them belong to landowners. Rent from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* a year. There is no progress being made towards increasing the cottage accommodation. One chief mode of enabling labourers to pay a rent remunerative to the landlord is to attach to each cottage a sufficient piece of land.

SCHOOL, only lately opened.
In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10	58	35
Between 10 and 13	12	7
Total	70	42
Girls:		
Under 10	47	28
Between 10 and 13	26	17
Total	73	45

Cambridgeshire.

Mr. Portman.

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There is a night school open for one and a half hours on three nights per week. The average attendance is 17, three of whom are under 12 years of age. I know of no better mode of supplying the deficiencies of the day school. The principal difficulty in maintaining a night school is, the want of a sufficient number of teachers to take different classes, and so secure sufficient individual attention to all.

GUILDEN MORDEN.

Population, 906. Acreage, 2,500. Cultivation, chiefly arable; soil very heavy.

135. Meeting at the house of the Rev. H. Thornton, curate.

Present:—Rev. H. Thornton.
Mr. Johnson, „ Chapman, „ Masters, } farmers.

There are two private gangs in the parish; they are only employed for two months in spring in weeding. The sexes work apart. Not many of the children are under 8 years of age. There are coprolite works about five miles distant. It was not thought necessary to interfere with the employment of children, as in force in this parish. Wages of children from 4*d.* to 7*d.* a day. It was thought desirable to secure a certain number of days' attendance at school for children below a certain age. Boys are employed horse-leading and ploughing throughout the year. The night school failed. It was thought that three cottages per 100 acres were sufficient for heavy land, but that a smaller number would suffice on the light lands. The middle-aged portion of the population are not at all educated.

136. *Return made by Rev. H. Thornton, curate.*

Numbers employed in gangs.
No. 1.

Males:	
Under 8 years	3
8 to 10 years	—
10 to 13 years	11
Total	14
Females:	
Under 8 years	2
8 to 10 years	4
10 to 13 years	3
13 to 18 years	5
Total	14

No. 2.—6 males and 6 females.

They are employed in weeding and twitching. Hours from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., with one and a half hours allowed for meals. Their health is not injuriously affected; they only go short distances to work. Most of the young are capable of reading very fairly. As the gang system is only adopted in this parish to a very limited extent, and only during two months in the year, it is not necessary to subject it to the same restrictions as "public gangs." Of those who are employed not in gangs there are 20 young persons—20 children—but no women, employed in driving or leading horses. There are not sufficient cottages with two or three bedrooms; the accommodation is very defective, there being in many instances only one bedroom for a large family. Rent from 4*l.* to 6*l.* a year. The average attendance at the day school is about 100, and the numbers have not varied much in winter and summer, though there has been a greater number of elder children in winter and a greater number of younger in summer. All the children, however, in the school do not belong to the agricultural class, though most do. There are not many children in the parish who are growing up without any education at all. The night school is not efficient; there is a want of Government aid on liberal conditions in parishes that have no resident landowners or wealthy people.

DRY DRAYTON.

137. I found here some very good cottages belonging to Rev. W. Smith; also a row of fair cottages belonging to Mr. Warren, a grocer at Cambridge—two rooms on ground floor, two upstairs, at a rent of 4*l.* a year. There is an allotment field in the parish.

138. *Letter from Rev. W. Smith, of Dry Drayton, to Hon. E. Portman.*

"Dry Drayton,
November 28, 1867.

"Sir,

"I have delayed writing to you on the subject of the gang system of employing women and children in agriculture in this county, in order that I might collect all the information I am able on the subject.

"In this parish we have neither public nor private gangs employed; women are employed to a certain extent in the fields, but in small parties of themselves, and occasionally a few children with them, but without any man. I am glad to say, the allowing children to work in the fields is generally disapproved in this parish, it being invariably the case that, where children are for any length of time employed in field-work, they become disinclined to go to service, and if they do go out to service they make very indifferent servants.

"In the adjoining parish of Lolworth private gangs exist for some portion of the year, and I regret to say some of our young people have been induced to join them.

"As far as I can learn, public gangs exist only in the fen districts; on our heavy clay land I believe there is not one. On the light lands of this county, that is, from Cambridge to Royston, and Cambridge to Newmarket, private gangs exist in some places in the spring of the year, and at the time of turnip-hoeing.

"My information, such as it is, has been obtained from farmers in various parts of the county.

"I am, &c.,
"William Smith."

LOLWORTH.

139. *Mr. Daintree*, farmer.—This is a small parish of heavy land, and labour is very scarce. We cannot do without the children's labour. I would employ a gang if I could get one, and do not consider it a demoralizing system, if under proper supervision, though I decidedly disapprove of the public gang system. Most of my work is put out by the piece. The cottages are good; some new ones have been lately built. There is a night school in the parish, and I think a good system of night schools would be very beneficial, as the children should be educated more than they now are. Steam plough is much used in this district. The use of steam machines does not do away with the necessity for hands.

STETCHWORTH, near Newmarket.

Population, 671. Acreage, 3,739. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

140. *Charles Jillings*, Stetchworth Hall. — The private gang system exists in this neighbourhood. I employ in spring and summer about 30 males and 15 females; in winter, 12 males and 4 females. They are employed in spring in spudding docks, raking grass, cleaning roots, and in bird-keeping; in summer, in hoeing and weeding corn, picking grass, singling beet, turnips, carrots, &c.; in autumn, &c., in storing roots, keeping stock, bird-keeping, and picking stones. They usually work for 10 hours, with 1½ hours allowed for meals; their health is not injuriously affected, nor is there any ill-treatment. The state of education among the young is improving. It is not requisite to apply the provisions of the Gangs Act to "private" gangs. Of those not employed in gangs there are about 100, children, young persons, and women; I employ from 30 to 40 on my farm. I would not place any restriction on female labour, as their services are here much required, and the work could not possibly be done without them. I would

not limit the age for boys to go to work. School attendance for four months during winter is desirable. The school is conveniently situated. Cottages are conveniently placed on the farms, and are not crowded. I consider that an evening school adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school; the night school is badly attended.

141. *Major Fryer*, Newmarket.—Children are employed in this district, though not in any great numbers together. Married women are much employed. There is not more immorality among the field women than among the idle ones. The gangs are not so much mixed as they used to be. The want of good cottage accommodation is the root of the evil state of morals. Schools are abundant. The state of education among the young is low, but is certainly improving. The lads feel the want of education, as they find the difficulty of getting places if they cannot read or write. The system of piece work, wherein a father is often assisted by his children, *e.g.*, in turnip hoeing and singling, would render it difficult to restrict the hours of work on the land. Thinks that all classes are now anxious to raise the standard of education, and that legislation might tend to retard instead of advance the cause, by checking the voluntary support now freely given. An extension of the provisions of the Labouring Classes Dwelling House Act (29 Vict. c. 28.) to rural districts might be beneficial.

Cambridgeshire.

Mr. Portman.

d.

YORKSHIRE.
EAST RIDING.

E. R. York.

BURSTWICK.

Population, 485. Acreage, 4,220.

142. *Rev. F. B. King, Mr. Mitchenson, Mr. Park.*—It was considered desirable that some system of enforced education should be adopted. That no child should go to work under 11 years of age, and that they should remain at school till that age. Mr. King would make it necessary to produce a certificate of three years education in an approved school before employment, and would place a penalty on the employer of any child without such certificate. Children are not much employed in the fields, sometimes 10 or 12 together, of both sexes with a man over them in weeding and potato picking, they are then paid by the farmer. Parents do not appreciate education, and make the children go out to earn something when they can. The health is injuriously affected by exposure to weather and hard work under 10 years of age, the children are stunted in their growth. Women when married go hoeing, but they are not so much employed now as formerly. The farm servants, male and female, are engaged at the statutes or hirings at Martinmas (the 23rd Nov.) for the year. They are lodged and boarded either in the house of the farmer or of his foreman, and are paid by the year. There are very few cottages attached to the farms and it would be a great advantage to master and labourer if there were more. The cottages are clean and in good repair and not overcrowded. Rent from 3*l.* to 5*l.* The greatest distance to work is two miles. The state of education is low, the children are not sufficiently grounded. Sunday school is well attended. Night school does not answer, the farmhouses are far apart and at a distance from the school, and the arrangements for "doing-up" the horses at 8 p.m. prevent the lads from coming to school. Wages of an ordinary labourer are 2*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 9*d.* a day.

RYHILL, HAMLET OF BURSTWICK.

Population, 243. Acreage, 1,500.

143. *Mr. Leonard*, farmer.—I farm 700 acres. I never employ children and do not consider that children under 10 years of age are of much use to the farmer. To prevent children under 10 years from going to field work would be no hardship to the farmer, though in some cases it might be to the parents of the children. Wages of an ordinary labourer are 15*s.* a week. The younger portion of the population can mostly read and write. The rent of cottages with garden and pighouse is 4*l.* each per annum. More cottages are wanted and legislation on that point would be very beneficial. When farms are situated at a distance from the village the farmers would be too glad to pay a fair per-centage to the landlord for the money laid out in building cottages.

SALTHAUGH GRANGE, KEYINGHAM.

144. *Mr. Francis.*—I occupy 900 acres. Children are not much employed in field work. They go out bird-tenting and pulling "runch" for about six weeks in spring and summer. They go at 9 years of age, and are paid 8*d.* a day. Boys do not go with the carts. It would be no hardship on the employer to forbid children working under a given age, though it might be to the parents, as the children go out to earn money for clothes, &c. The state of education is pretty good. The plough lads are hired by the year; the foreman will get 30*l.* a year and keep; waggoners, 16*l.* to 20*l.* and keep; lads 10*l.* to 14*l.* and keep. When the lads are well looked after they become good and careful men and are able to save money. The wages of an ordinary labourer are 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, and 3*s.* for special work, such as thrashing; much work is done by the piece, and earnings larger than the weekly wage are made at it. I have three or four cottages on the farm, some men come two miles to work. One double cottage for general labour is sufficient for 200 acres under the system of yearly hiring of plough lads. Single and married women go out weeding. There has been a good deal of emigration and labourers have come from Norfolk and other counties.

PARISH OF KEYINGHAM.

Population, 639. Acreage, 1,890.

Keyingham School.

145. *Mr. Kendall*, master.—46 boys and girls on register; average attendance for year, 44 boys and girls. The children are away from school 9 or 10 weeks in spring and summer, bird tenting, singling turnips, weeding, &c.; they go as young as 8 or 9 years. I would recommend 11 years as the limit below which no child should go to work, a boy who attended regularly up to that time would be able to read and write and do arithmetic up to the rule of three. They lose a great deal of what they have learnt when they go out. Girls do not go much to field work except for band-making in harvest time. There is an Infant School in the parish, but no industrial training for girls. The night school did not answer.

[There were 16 boys present of different ages who had been out pulling runch.]

146. *Ness.*—12 years old, had been out pig-tenting in the autumn for 3 years, generally got 8*d.* a day.

147. *John Beal.*—I have been out pig-tenting and pulling runch; got 8*d.* a day, and 1*s.* a day for band-making. We went 12 or 14 together, very few girls with us. I have been five miles to work, pulling runch; walked there and back, got 8*d.* a day. My back was very tired. A ganger looks after us, and pays us the wages; he is employed by the farmer to get children for the job, and is paid 2*s.* 6*d.* a day; he does not make anything out of the children. He was a labourer belonging to the farm on which I worked.

PATRINGTON.

Population, 1,724. Acreage, 4,494.

148. *Mr. R. Lambert, Mr. Marshall.*—Children of 8 to 10 years of age are employed for singling turnips and bird-tenting; in the former work they usually go with their parents. Some are used for driving horses at that age. A boy of 8 years is no good for work.

E. R. York.
Mr. Portman.
d.

Women are mostly used for weeding. Parents would suffer in many cases if the labour of young children was forbidden. Schools in the district are generally good, but the parents are very indifferent about sending their children to school. Mr. Lambert quoted a case of a man at Easington earning wages at the rate of 150*l.* a year, who refuses to allow his children to go to school. It was thought that a system enforcing school attendance for six months in the year would answer better than half days or alternate days of work and school.

149. Patrington Schools.

Infant School, for both sexes up to 7 years.

On the books	80	Average attendance -	64

Boys School.

In Winter.

On register	83	Average attendance -	64

In Summer.

On register -	84	Average attendance -	54

Girls School.

On register -	60	Average attendance -	45

150. *Mr. Plumley*, master.—I have been here four and a half years. There is in the school now, one boy of 16 years of age, one of 15, several of 14 down to 7 years. Children of labourers usually leave school at 12 years of age; some come back a little in the winter. Children go out line-weeding in a sort of gang. Those who attend school regularly up to 10 or 11 years are well grounded in reading, writing, and arithmetic. The parents are quite uneducated and do not appreciate education for their children, consequently they do not care to send them regularly to school. There is no poverty sufficient for an excuse. The payment to the school varies from 1*d.* to 1*s.* a week. The health of the children is not injuriously affected by field work, but they are often wandering about the streets in the cold and wet from the closing of the school to the time (6 p.m.) when their mothers return from the flax mill, the house being locked up during the mother's absence. There is a night school open for three nights a week. Twenty males attend, varying in age from 12 to 28; they are mostly sons of tradesmen or lads employed in shops, and they come very willingly. Very few are of the agricultural labouring class.

151. *Wrigglesworth*, boy, 10 years of age.—I have been out line-weeding; we go about 20 together, boys and girls, some girls 15 years of age. The man who looks after us goes with us from the village. Some get 7*d.*, some 8*d.* a day. The manager of the flax works pays us at the works.

[There is here a large flax mill, employing about 150 hands.—E. B. P.]

152. Extract from Letter from C. Metcalf, Esq., to Hon. E. Portman.

Sir, Patrington, April 11, 1868.

I have not had an opportunity of sufficiently examining the questions issued by the Royal Commission as to be able to answer them at all correctly, but I may add in answer to your note that the children in this town and neighbourhood as a rule are sufficiently educated, and, excepting "the Rotary," no gangs of children or women are employed, excepting for a month or six weeks during the line weeding, and then sober steady overlookers have charge of every ten or dozen children. Women are mostly employed for pulling line for a short period during the end of August and beginning of September, but then they do not go in gangs, as each family has their own lots, though there may be a great number in one field.

Very few children are employed by the farmers in this district till the harvest commences, which only lasts a month or six weeks, and then the schools are closed for a month, at least it is so here.

I can scarcely think that this neighbourhood, being so thinly populated, requires much fresh legislation.

Your obedient servant,
R. C. Metcalf.

WINESTEAD.

Population, 173. Acreage, 2,570.

153. *Mr. Stephenson.*—I have two cottages with my farm for labourers, and have yearly men in the house besides. There is with each cottage one and a half acres of land, and on a 20 acre allotment field in the low land 10 cottagers have two acres a piece. Wages for ordinary labourers 15*s.* a week. Children are not much employed in field work except for runch pulling in spring and summer; then perhaps 8 or 10 together. A trusty man is sent to look after them. They earn 6*d.* and 8*d.* a day. I think 10 years would be a good limit to fix, below which children should not go to work; they should not be kept away longer than that as they must learn their work as agricultural labourers and the parents want the earnings. Some of the lads read and write very well. Some parents, though earning good wages, will not send the children to school. There are sufficient schools in the district. I should not approve of compulsory education.

154. Winestead School.

Mrs. Cotton, mistress, 20 boys and girls on books. —The children go out young to earn wages, and forget much that they have learnt. If they were kept *regularly* at school till 10 years of age, they would be able to read, write, and do a sum fairly. The Sunday school is not well attended.

[One girl in the school of 10 years of age had been out singling turnips last year, and earned 9*d.* a day.]

ROOS.

Population, 596. Acreage, 2,414. Cultivation, mixed.

155. Return made by Rev. R. B. Machell, Rector.

There are no private gangs here. Those employed in field work are,—

Males.

Between 8 and 10	-	3
„ 10 and 13 -	-	19
„ 13 and 18 -	-	3
	Total	25

Females.

Between 10 and 13	-	2
Over 18, married - -	-	17
	Total	19

The women are employed in spring with the thrashing machine; in summer hoeing, weeding, and singling turnips; in autumn and winter with thrashing machine. The children are employed in spring in bird-tenting; in summer in singling turnips, gathering stones, and picking thistles; in autumn in tenting pigs on the stubbles; in winter they go to school. A few walk occasionally two miles to a neighbouring village. The hours of work in bird-tenting are 12, in pig-tenting 9, with an hour or one and a half hours for meals. There is no injury to the health nor any ill treatment The field work has a bad effect on the morals of the females. I would restrict female labour to a defined age. I would not restrict the age for boys' labour.

School attendance by half day at school and half day at work would be the best plan educationally for the child, but an attendance for six months during the year would be most *convenient* for the employer and the child. The school attendance is not affected by distance. 19 per cent. of farm labourers' children cannot pay the school pence—2*d.* a week for one child, 1*d.* a week for each one after the first.

Good cottage accommodation is very necessary. Two would be sufficient per hundred acres. There is a sufficient number with two and three bedroons.

The cottages generally have two ground-floor rooms, a kitchen and living room, and two bedrooms; in this case they often keep the living room as a best parlour and live in the kitchen. The ventilation is imperfect; drainage fair. Two-thirds of the cottages have gardens. Rent without garden, 3*l.* 10*s.* a year. Rent with garden, 5*l.* a year. A few are owned by the landowners, the rest by tradesmen and others. There is no compulsion on tenants as to dealing with their landlord.

For providing good cottage accommodation I would suggest that three-quarters of the cost should be defrayed by public money, to be repaid in 40 years; one-quarter to be paid by the landlord, and no interest paid on it, in consideration of the cottages becoming his property ultimately.

SCHOOL.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 -	17	17
Between 10 and 13 -	5	8
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	13	12
Between 10 and 13	7	5
In Winter.		
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	11	5
Between 10 and 13 -	8	8
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	12	12
Between 10 and 13 -	8	5

Neither at school nor at work:—In summer, five boys between 8 and 10 years, and five between 10 and 13; in winter, one boy under 10, one girl between 10 and 13 years.

156. *Mr. Sykes*, farmer.—Children are not much employed here, and rarely under 10 years of age, then at bird-tenting and weeding. There are very good infant and day schools. Day-labourers earn 15*s.* a week. I do not think children would get enough education before 10 years of age, but the winter months might after that age be given to schooling till they go to farm-service. Plough lads who go by the year do not often begin till they are 14 years old. Of farm servants, a foreman will get 50*l.* a year and his keep; a waggoner 26*l.* to 30*l.* and keep; the lads of 14 years and upwards 12*l.* and 13*l.* a year and keep. These servants are now often boarded with the foreman, instead of in the farmer's house as formerly. It is very desirable to have cottages on the farms. The Union Chargeability Act is operating beneficially in many parts.

RISE.

Population, 188. Acreage, 2,012.

157. There are some excellent new cottages on Mr. W. Bethell's estate here, but he says that where they are placed at any distance from the village, he has found difficulty in getting the people to go and live in them, as they prefer living *in the village*. Wages are ordinarily 15*s.* a week, for thrashing work he has to pay 3*s.* and 3*s.* 6*d.* a day, according to the distance to the job. (E.B.P.)

158. EXTRACT from RETURN.—Rev. W. WHATELEY.

Children are employed in the spring in bird-tenting.

School attendance is not affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents.

The farms are cultivated almost entirely by servants boarding in the farmhouses. Labour is occasionally obtained from two villages at a distance of two miles, the number of cottages in the village not being sufficient to supply at all times the requisite amount of labour.

The cottages are nearly all recently built, are well-drained and ventilated with plenty of accommodation, having mostly three bedrooms, and a good supply of water, gardens and outhouses. They all belong to the owner of the parish; rent about 4*l.* a year.

SCHOOL.

In Summer and Winter.

On register:
Boys and girls under 10 - - - 20
Between 10 and 13 - - - 5
Average attendance:
Boys and girls under 10 - - - 15
Between 10 and 13 - - - 5

There is no night school.

The system of yearly farm servants is very bad for the morals, the lads become very rough. The cases where they are carefully looked after are exceptional.

I do not know of any gangs or of much employment of children except in bird-tenting.

SKIRLAUGH.

159. *John Ford*, relieving officer.—Children go out to work as young as 10 years. We do not take children off the relief list till 13 years of age. Sometimes in spring eight or nine children will go together for weeding, where they are overlooked by one of the farmer's men. Children go with their parents for singling turnips. There is a great deal of work done by the piece; the fathers who earn good wages at it do not send their children to work young. The union generally is well supplied with schools. Night schools have not answered. The people are well off, cottages not at all overcrowded. I do not suppose you can find two families in one cottage in the union.

WITHERNWICK.

Acreage, 2,700. Cultivation, arable.

160. RETURN made by Mr. W. SIMPSON, farmer.

There are no private gangs.

I employ two lads between 13 and 18 years of age, and one girl between 13 and 18 years, and one unmarried woman over 18 years. They live on the farm, and are employed in all kinds of work.

We have no female children who go to work in the fields, except in harvest-time when they go with their parents.

Poor children pay 2*d.* a week for their schooling.

A few labourers have to walk about a mile to their work. The cottages stand airy, are well ventilated, and have good drainage, usually with two ground-floor rooms, and two chambers. Rent from 3*l.* to 6*l.* a year.

There are always some cottages untenanted.

There is no night school.

WITHERNWICK SCHOOL.

161. *Peter Atkin*, master.—There are on the books 75 boys and girls; average attendance, winter, 70; summer, 40. Some children go out at 10 years of age, some not till 12 or 13 years. The boys are employed in spring and summer in stone picking, twitching, and picking runch. I have known some children who are employed with their fathers in draining become quite stiffened up like old men before they are 15 years old. We take children into the school at 4 years. I should like to see 12 years fixed as the limit below which they should not leave school; they would then be well grounded. There are two sisters who come alternate weeks who get a long way behind in their class. I once kept a night school; 14 or 15 farm lads came from the houses, but I could not keep it on, as it did not pay. I should like to see forced attendance at night schools. The farmers take no interest in the school.

162. *C. Fox*, 13 years old.—I went out picking stones and twitching at 10 years old, and was out nearly six months in the year. We went about 20 together, some younger than me. There were two or three girls from

E. R. York.
Mr. Portman.
d.

8 to 14 years with us. I have been three miles to work, left home at 7 a.m., worked on land from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. The foreman or a labourer looked after us. Master paid the wages, 8*d.* or 9*d.* a day. I forgot my reading and other things.

163. *Wm. Harsley*, 9 years old.—I have been out one year in two farmers' places. Did little jobs about home, and looked after the cows. I got 1*l.*

ALDBOROUGH.

164. *Mr. Sherrington*, schoolmaster.—This is an endowed school, called Tory's Charity; 70 on the books; 60 to 65 average attendance in winter; 45 in summer. Children go out to field labour at 11 and 12 years of age, return to school after harvest, and attend pretty regularly from Martinmas to March. They are employed in bird tenting, in pulling quicks (twitch), and singling turnips. Are paid 9*d.* to 1*s.* a day; they work about six together, and are looked after by a labourer. Some boys go draining with their father, who takes the work by the piece; this is very hard work for them. I think 10 years too young an age at which to fix the limit; if it were put at 12 years children would be well grounded; before that age they forget very quickly what they have learnt. Their knowledge is imperfect, even if they come to school in winter, when working in spring and summer. A night school has been started this winter; it is badly attended. One farm servant comes, the rest are chiefly apprentices. The farmhouses are too far from the village to allow the lads to come, under the present regulation of hours for work. There are 13 acres of allotments belonging to Tory's Charity, which are let out to labourers in portions of 1 rood and 1 rood 20 perches to each man. Most of the cottages have gardens. The labouring class is very well off. The women work a little in the fields in spring time. Parents are tolerably earnest in sending their children to school.

165. Extract from Letter from Rev. F. Margetts to Hon. E. Portman.

"Sir, Aldborough, Hull, April 29, 1868.

"We have no gangs employed in this parish, and I am not aware that there is anything peculiar to be observed. Most of the work on the farms is done by the farm servants, who live in the farmhouses. The young people both boys and girls generally go out to service at 14 or 15, and this relieves their parents' houses from overcrowding.

"The evils attending the agricultural employment of young people in this neighbourhood are not in the fields, but in the farmhouses where several servants of both sexes live together. No doubt much depends upon the master and mistress as to the ordering of their large households, and I think a higher tone is beginning to be observed both among masters and servants, but there is room for improvement. We have a good day school in the village, and an evening school in the winter, which is yet in its infancy.

"Yours faithfully,
"Francis Margetts."

HORNSEA.

Population, 1,041. Acreage, 3,160. Cultivation, mixed.

166. *Rev. W. L. Palmes*, rector.—Children leave school at 11 or 12 years of age to go to farm work or to beach work, gathering stones with their parents. I think the system of farm lads in the farmers' houses, as at present conducted, very degrading and brutalising to both sexes.

Extract from Return, Rev. W. Palmes.

No private gangs.

Each farmer hires one or more boys and girls by the year to live with him on his farm. Very few boys or girls are employed under 13 years of age, and but few girls between 13 and 18 years.

The boys are employed in agricultural work and about horses and sheep, the girls in household work and with the cows.

The sexes are thrown together too much, and the master and mistress generally take little or no charge of the morals or religion of their inmates. A hard feeling has grown up between the classes. The life of a farm servant does not seem to be conducive to purity, and the tone is coarse and bad as a rule. Except at hay and harvest times, the females are not hereabouts employed in field work.

I would not allow boys to be employed under 14 or even 15 years of age, they go into farm service too early, and soon forget all that they have learnt at school.

As far as the health is concerned, no restriction as to the hours of work is necessary, and I fear the farmers would oppose any arrangement to enable their servants to attend school for part of the day.

The half day or alternate day system for school and work, could not be applied on account of distance from school, &c. But attendance for a certain number of hours during six months of the year might be arranged, when the labour is less required on the farm. I should prefer a compulsory attendance up to 14 or 14½ years of age.

Distance from the outlying farms affects the attendance at night school in the winter.

Our labourers could quite well afford to pay the small weekly payment of 2*d.* or 3*d.* which we charge, but they do not value education as much as they ought. Almost all our girls go into farm service at 13, or are apprenticed as dressmakers.

In the cottages the people huddle together in one sleeping-room, even when they have others, from habit and ignorance.

We have ceased to be an agricultural village, and Hornsea is becoming a town, owing to the railway bringing the families of business-men in Hull to be residents here.

School.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	68	36
Between 10 and 13 -	20	16
Girls:		
Under 10 -	26	18
Between 10 and 13 -	23	11
In Winter.		
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	75	50
Between 10 and 13 -	25	17
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	45	18
Between 10 and 13 -	15	12

They for the most part soon forget all that they have learned at school, and when they come to be married cannot write their own names.

We had an evening school for some years, but the farm servants could not or would not attend.

The farm servants, who would be most benefited by a night school, cannot well attend on account of distance, bad weather, and the objection made by their masters.

LEVEN.

167. *Rev. Geo. Wray*, rector.—Children go out as young as 8 years of age to potatoe-planting and picking, to weeding and making bands in harvest. Some boys of 10 years go to farm service, and do not return to school. The parents are uneducated, and prefer getting the children's earnings to sending them to school. The farm-servant system is very demoralizing, the servants are not looked after, and rarely come to church. Wages, 2*s.* 6*d.* a day. There are

18 women, two girls, and 23 boys in the parish employed in field labour at harvest and other times. Their hours of work are 10, with one hour allowed for meals. The half day and alternate day scheme for school attendance are inapplicable for farming which requires continuous labour. Rent of cottages, 4*l.* to 5*l.* a year.

REMARKS.

The inquiry involved in this Commission is scarcely applicable to the parish of Leven. There are no women or children constantly employed in field labour. A few engage themselves at particular seasons for short terms, but that depends on the weather and circumstances. Wages are good and work is plentiful, but the men for the most part do the work. House accommodation is good, and would be amply sufficient for the wants of the parish if a considerable number of men who dwell in the village did not take employment in the adjoining parishes. The township of Leven contains much copyhold property, which facilitates speculation in building cottages, and these are chiefly held by retired petty tradesmen and others who have saved a little money. There is a much larger population than the township requires, and yet labourers are scarce, because so many are employed in neighbouring parishes. The adjoining parish of Routh, which contains, I believe, 2,300 acres, has very little cottage accommodation, but is supplied with labourers chiefly from Leven, a distance between two and three miles. That whole parish is the property of one nobleman. What is chiefly wanted around us, and this probably applies more or less to England at large, is cottage dwellings for married men, which would give them a local interest and check the propensity to seek a new place every returning Statutes.

Boys generally go to farm service from 13 to 14 years of age. They hire for the year. Their home is broken up and they never attend school again. It would be a great advantage if farmers were prohibited from hiring boys under 14 years of age, and without a certificate from the clergyman of their parish that they can both read and write. Farmhouses are so scattered, and farm servants so separated from the rest of the world, that early neglect cannot be overcome in maturer life, but the mind becomes more and more callous and debased from frequent intercourse with evil, and the want of sound principles leaves it a prey to every vicious incentive. Where, as in the East Riding of Yorkshire, the farms are large and very detached, the farmer's house is like a barrack with a long chamber full of beds, one of which the foreman commonly occupies to keep order and rouse the men in the morning. The great moral evil from this species of farming arises from the necessary mixture of the sexes, there being many men in a house and commonly two women servants at most. Bastardy cases are consequently numerous.

There is a large number of men in this village who work in the drains. These are called bankers. The drainage here is extensive, and the cleansing takes place once or twice a year. It is done by contract. One man takes a contract and engages other men to work with him. It is severe labour but well paid.

The difficulty of dealing with the agricultural population will be found far greater than that of the manufacturing, the one being scattered over a wide area and the other grouped together by the nature of their employment.

Wages in the East Riding of Yorkshire will be found higher than in most parts of England.

GEORGE WRAY,
Leven, March 27, 1868. Rector of Leven.

ELSTERNWICK.

168. *J. Dickinson, Esq.*—I have four or five cottages on a farm; the system of attaching cottages to the farm ought to be extended. It is not often the case in these parts that there are any so attached. The labourers live in the villages. There are plots of ground of one acre with the cottages. Most of the cottages have two bedrooms. Cottages on an estate should not all be the same size; you should build some with two and some with three bedrooms, to meet the wants of large and small families; in many cases the third room would not be used, and when people have cottages larger than they want they are apt to become uncleanly and slovenly. Rent with land is usually 4*l.* a year. The cottages at Humbleton pay 4 per cent. If money could be borrowed on easy terms from the Government for cottage building people with small sums to invest might take up enough to make up the requisite amount, on repayment in 40 years. At present the machinery for borrowing money for this purpose is cumbrous and expensive. In this district the properties are for the most part small, say three to 400 acres; there are only three large properties. Labourers' wages are 2*s.* 6*d.* a day. There are plenty of good schools, and the parents send their children regularly. Boys do not go out to work young, they generally stay at school till 13 or 14 years of age. Till they can plough they are not of much use to the farmer. Farm servants do not attend church with any regularity, and "the farmers can't make them."

169. *Mr. Marsden*, Dunthorpe, Humbleton.—Very few children are employed at all. When a few hands are wanted for weeding we get some Irish; they do more work "by take" than "by day," and are paid in money and milk. Women are not employed in field labour. I have four cottages and a hind's house on my farm. There is a rood of garden to each cottage; if they paid rent it would be 3*l.* to 4*l.* a year. My four farm lads are lodged and boarded in the foreman's (hind's) house. In a large business farm lads are necessary for the horse work, and they must live on the premises, it would not do to have them scattered about in cottages at a distance from the farm premises; but you should also have cottages for the labourers on the farm. The statutes are a great evil; I should like to substitute register offices for hiring these lads. I think it would be difficult to fix a limit of age, but a sound and simple education should be secured for the children of the labourer.

COTTINGHAM.

Population, in 1861, 3,131. Acreage, 9,252. Cultivation, about 5,000 acres arable, 3,800 grass, 350 garden land.

The population has increased much since 1861.

170. *Rev. C. Overton, Mr. E. Witty, Mr. Jameson*, schoolmaster.—The school is now (24th February) full. Children are taken away for casual work at 6 years of age, altogether at 10 and 11 years. They leave at an earlier age every year. They are employed in the gardens; boys earn 1*s.* and 1*s.* 6*d.* a day, girls about the same wages, but do not go to work before 8 years of age. Parents take work by the piece and take the children with them.

There is no regular system of ganging, perhaps five or six children work together. The pea harvest is the time when most money is earned here, the children then are very much employed. School attendance is very much affected by the field work. A very small proportion of the population come to school at all, and of those who do come some only attend for two months in the year. The parents are very indifferent about education. If children could be *compelled* to attend school from 5 to 10 years of age, they would be well grounded in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and from that age they might be allowed to go to work for two or three months in the year, and have to produce a certificate of attendance at school for so many days in the year before permanent hiring. Encouragement of night schools by Government would be valuable and popular. The farm lads are the most ignorant class, and they might often be induced to attend night school. The statutes are the cause of much immorality, but have lately fallen into disuse here.

Cottages are in some cases crowded, there is a want of new ones. There are two sets of allotments adjoining the parish:—

1. Belonging to the church (12 acres, 32 poles). The land was given to those who had large families

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old holders pay 22*s.* a year for half an acre, new ones about 5*l.* for same quantity. Occupied by 20 tenants, of whom 18 have built cottages for themselves on the property.

2. A piece of land (25 acres, 37 poles) set out by Mr. Ringrose, let by the half acre to any one who will take it at 2*l.* half an acre per annum, occupied by 30 tenants.

The rent of garden land is 4*l.* to 5*l.* an acre. Ordinary labourer's wages, 2*s.* 6*d.* and 3*s.* a day. Women are much employed in field work, girls seldom go out weeding. There are only one or two large farms in the parish. Soil of all sorts, from wold land to strong warp, bog, &c.

171. Extract from Return sent by Rev. C. Overton, Vicar, Cottingham.

There are no gangs.

The number of persons employed are about, as follows:—

Males:	
Under 8	30
Between 8 and 10	20
„ 10 „ 13	60
„ 13 „ 18	120
Total	230
Females:	
Under 8	30
Between 8 and 10	20
„ 10 „ 13	40
„ 13 „ 18	50
Over 18:	
Married	100
Unmarried	30
Total	270

They are principally employed in gardening in spring, summer, and autumn. They do not go more than one mile to work. Their hours of work are nine, with one hour allowed for meals.

Young females are likely to be corrupted by contact with the older ones, but there is no ill-usage or injury to health.

I would recommend that boys should not be employed in field work under 10 years of age. It is not necessary here to place restrictions on the hours of work.

I think alternate whole days at school, and whole days at work, the best scheme for securing school attendance. I think no boy or girl under the age of 14 years should be allowed to go to agricultural labour during the months of November, December, January, and February, which season might be devoted to education.

Distance from school affects the attendance most seriously in winter, but not in summer. A good many parents avail themselves of the labour of their children to the disadvantage of the latter, in the matter of school attendance.

Girls are taught sewing and knitting.

It would be extremely desirable that those who have capital should invest it in building model cottages at a moderate rent, for the accommodation of the labourers who have families.

One cottage per hundred acres is sufficient here, there are two to 300 acres. Some of the cottages are too crowded. Cottages here are generally two stories high, a room about 12 feet square, and smaller kitchen below, two bedrooms of the size of lower story upstairs. Ventilation is neglected, the drainage is good. There are but few cottage gardens. No compulsion by tradesmen when owners of cottages. Rent, 4*l.* to 6*l.* per annum.

There is no progress being made towards increasing the cottage accommodation. I think cottage improvement should be left to private enterprize.

School.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10	128	108
Between 10 and 13	32	30
Girls:		
Under 10	110	86
Between 10 and 13	50	35
In Winter.		
Boys:		
Under 10	145	140
Between 10 and 13	76	68
Girls:		
Under 10	136	123
Between 10 and 13	51	45

Those neither at Work nor at School.

In Summer.	
Boys:	
Between 8 and 10	70
„ 10 „ 13	20
Girls:	
Between 8 and 10	60
„ 10 „ 13	25
In Winter.	
Boys:	
Between 8 and 10	40
„ 10 „ 13	30
Girls:	
Between 8 and 10	35
„ 10 „ 13	20

There is a night school open for two hours on two nights a week during 20 weeks.

On Register.	
Under 12	3
Above 12	37
Average Attendance in Winter.	
Under 12	2
Above 12	15

The night school is very popular, and if a master had a stipend, say 20*l.* a year, and were assisted by six or eight voluntary lady teachers, I think a very large proportion of the adult population would attend.

The free school in the church yard, as conducted at present, interferes with the National school, without making education more general. The children taught there would be better taught in the National school, if this were made a school for a higher grade, or even if it were made a night school for adults, it would not impede the operations of the National school, and would do much more good.

WAGHEN or WAWNE.

Population, 322. Acreage, 4,160.

172. Extract from Return by Francis Jackson.

There are no private gangs.

No boys under 10 years are employed—

	Boys.
Between 10 and 13	8
„ 13 „ 18	38
Total	46

No females employed, except in hay-time and harvest.

The boys are employed in spring in ploughing and the general work of the farm, in winter in attending to the cattle.

The hours of work are 10 hours per day, with two hours allowed for meals.

I would recommend that females should only be employed in hay-time and harvest. No restriction on boys' labour is necessary; nor on the hours of work, as agricultural labour is not constant or excessive.

I have great pleasure in stating that the feeling of parents generally is that parental duty is not fulfilled if their children have no education. It appears to grow with those parents who have not had that advantage; and in this part of the East Riding of Yorkshire, the children generally attend a day school about nine months in the year.

I think no cottage is proper or comfortable without two bedrooms and two low rooms, well ventilated. One cottage per 100 acres is sufficient. The cottages in our parish have a low room 16 feet square, a small kitchen with dairy, and pantry; two good bedrooms about 12 feet square, a yard with a good supply of water, a garden of not less than one rood of land. Rent 4*l.* a year. The cottages are conveniently situated for farm work. All children of sufficient age are either at school or at work. About one in eight can neither read nor write. These persons are farm servants whom we have thus returned as parishioners, but who have in many cases been brought up in other counties and parishes. Children go out to work with their parents, but not under 10 years of age. The weeding, at which they work, is usually taken by the piece, and they go band-making in harvest. Women and children are not employed generally in this district.

Wages for an ordinary labourer are 15*s.* a week and "not a broken day." The distance to work is not more than a mile. Cottages contiguous to the farms would be an advantage, but they should be in the hands of the landlord and not of the tenant.

Payment to the school is according to age; 3*d.* a week is the highest price. There was a night school, but it did not answer for long. The statutes are very bad, but better than they were a few years ago. This parish may be taken as a fair sample of the neighbourhood.

Miss Calvert, schoolmistress.—The spring quarter gives the fullest attendance. There were then 35 on the books; from harvest to December, 26 on books. The highest age of boys attending is 9 years; of girls, 12 years. The older boys go to school at Sutton, where there is a master, three miles distant.

Rev. J. L. B. Henslowe, curate.—I think that if a certificate is required before hiring it should be one of attendance at school in preference to one of acquirements.

[I give the following instances of cottages:—

1. One ground floor room and back places, such as dairy, &c.; two bedrooms, garden, and cow paddock. 8*l.* a year.
2. One room ground floor, back premises, and garden. 4*l.* a year.
3. One room ground floor, one up-stairs, and garden. 2*l.* 10*s.* a year. A widow's cottage.

All these cottages were very tidy and comfortable, and provided with a kitchen range in the lower room. Before the cattle plague most of the labourers here had a run for a cow in the lanes.

Meaux, a hamlet of this parish, is not so well off for cottages.—E. B. P.]

BEEFORD.

Population, 808. Acreage, 4,200. 700 acres of grass; 3,500 arable.

173. Extract from Return by George Angas, Esq.

There are no private gangs. There are about 30 children and women employed in the parish. I employ six women for 10 weeks in spring and summer. There are 10 boys between 10 and 13 years of age employed, and 20 married women over 18 years. Their work is weeding from the middle of April to the middle of June, and then a fortnight's turnip hoeing. In the winter they are scarcely at all employed, perhaps a day in a week dressing turnips. They work from 8 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. with an hour allowed for dinner. Their health does not suffer nor do I know of any ill-treatment.

Young women employed in field labour doubtless indulge in greater freedom of words and in a rougher phraseology than those in household service, and some deterioration of morals is very likely to take place.

Farmers employing hands more than two miles from home will generally fetch them in his waggon; I would therefore modify the proposed table of distances. There should be no restriction on the hours of work; they are never long, and in broken weather very short indeed. The rule is to pay every boy or woman for half a day if they put in an appearance at all in the morning, and for a full day if they stay beyond the dinner hour.

It would doubtless be better that children should be kept wholly at school for a certain number of months, and then wholly released for field work for a given time.

School attendance is to a certain extent affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents. I am told 14 or 15 per cent. are absent partly in consequence of poverty, partly of indifference on the part of the parents.

Girls are taught knitting and sewing.

The cottage accommodation in Beeford must be considered good, few standing unoccupied, and those probably the worst. Many of the cottages are exceedingly good.

In this parish I find that one inhabited labourer's cottage represents about 45 acres of arable land. There are about 80 tenanted and 10 untenanted cottages in the village.

The occupier of every cottage is free to deal where and with whom he chooses. Drainage and ventilation are both attended to. The relieving officer has power to give all requisite orders.

Attached to the village is a field of 17 acres laid out in 68 allotments of one rood each, for the exclusive benefit of the labourers at the rent of 8*s.* 6*d.* each, including all charges. This is or might be most advantageous. It, however, sometimes operates injuriously with men who dislike farm work. They have the gardens to fall back upon as an excuse in a busy season.

School.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	27	20
Between 10 and 13 -	9	4
Girls:		
Under 10 -	10	8
Between 10 and 13 -	5	4
In Winter.		
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	32	28
Between 10 and 13 -	14	10
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	12	9
Between 10 and 13 -	8	6

Wages for ordinary labourer 15*s.* a week. The occupations in Holderness are not much above 400 acres each.

Savings banks are better for the poor than benefit societies.

A compulsory system of education will probably come by degrees.

[On the question of Lands Improvements Acts, Mr. Angas suggested that the tenant when willing should be allowed to build cottages at his own expense, the

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cost to be spread over 12 years, and compensation to be given for the unexpired term if the tenant quits the farm. If the tenant completes the term of 12 years the cottage to belong to the landlord. In many instances landlords cannot afford to build or to borrow money for the purpose, and the above arrangement might obviate the difficulty.]

174. LETTER from G. ANGAS, ESQ., to HON. E. PORTMAN.

Dear Sir, Beeford Grange, April 17, 1868.

Your inquiry appears to me to embrace two subjects requiring separate replies. The first is as to the desirability of prohibiting children under a given age being employed in field work, and the second as to the propriety of enforcing a certain amount of education, or at any rate an observance of a certain routine of attendance at school by the children of agricultural labourers before going out into the world. I think I may safely answer your first inquiry by stating my belief that in this district no objection would be raised against an enactment forbidding the employment of young children, say under 10 years of age, in field labour. You cannot admit of exceptions or qualifications, or I should suggest *continuous field labour* because it does sometimes happen in this fitful climate that a single week's work by a number of children might be most valuable. However to prevent the possibility of abuse or encroachment I do not think we should ask for much modification or exemption save in harvest when all who *can*, should work. If such a scheme were adopted and fairly carried out I think it would obviate in a very great measure your second inquiry and the compulsory measures to which it points, because when parents are forbidden to send their children to any work, the almost natural tendency would be to send them to school. In our rural parish schools, supplemented as they are by Parliamentary grants and also by voluntary aid, the children of our workpeople may receive a useful education at almost a nominal rate, and this small sum I think few parents would object to pay, if it were even for no higher motive than getting rid of the children for a few hours daily. Therefore I think I may venture to embody the collective opinion of the agriculturists of this part of East Yorkshire in a few words and state that while repudiating the existence of any palpable evil here from the employment of young children in field labour, they are quite ready to acknowledge that in other counties much evil has been engendered and that for the sake of example, and in order to guard against possible contingencies, they would be willing to agree to a minimum standard of age in receiving children as field hands, but at the same time they would feel strongly opposed to any coercive educational measures being put in operation, believing not only that the feelings of the parents would revolt from what they would certainly construe into an arbitrary law, but that, left to the dictates of their own consciences and free will, with the example and assistance of those a little higher in the social scale, the education of our young rural population would surely and steadily progress. This is my own opinion stated as briefly as I can possibly condense it, and I feel persuaded it represents in substance the sentiments of the district. It would be difficult if not impossible correctly to fill up the printed queries issued by the Royal Commission. If you think proper I will endeavour to give some approximate answers most applicable to the parish, but any information I could supply would scarcely I think be a safe basis for guidance. Statistics of course might be furnished as to age and numbers, but other questions as to the moral and social condition of the parish would perhaps receive from different employers replies as conflicting as the varying shades of human belief. . . . . I assure you I shall myself and I have no doubt in common with the large body of Yorkshire ratepayers, take a great interest in your movements.

Yours most respectfully,
GEO. ANGAS.

175. Another LETTER from the same.

Beeford Grange,
Dear Sir, April 25, 1868.

I supplied the best answers I could to the several inquiries contained in the printed circular you left with me, but the information you receive through such a medium must always be more or less vague and inconclusive. However, I suppose by striking an average you will not in the end be very far from the actual state of things as at present existing in the rural districts of the East Riding. In the best parts of Holderness there is really not much call for the services of women and children, no potatoes or line being grown, and in the better class of farms not much weeding (the land is not subject to ketlocks), therefore apart from haytime and harvest the work of the farm consists very much in the heavier operations of draining, banking, hedging, &c. in which women and children are of no service; on the high wolds it is widely different, the soil there is very subject to brassacks or ketlocks, turnips are most extensively cultivated, and on the other hand villages are very thinly scattered and farmers are very glad to avail themselves of any extrinsic aid they can procure when field work is pressing. This state of things would speedily be obviated if landed proprietors could but be induced to build cottages around their several farm homesteads; tenants at will are hardly likely to do it unless under some special written agreement to protect them from loss, but I think most sensible business men would under a 14 years' lease meet their landlords half way, and it is astonishing if both sides would but apply their shoulders willingly to the wheel how expenses would be reduced, and difficulties would vanish. There need be no government subsidy I am quite sure; if a landlord begins single-handed he will be robbed on every side, but let there only be a pleasant and equitable understanding and adjustment between him and a tenant and expenses are reduced one half. I am confident my bailiff's house, which you saw, if done in the ordinary way would have cost 300*l.* at least, but by employing a builder in whom I had full confidence, by working to an approved and economical plan, by constant supervision and by the assistance of a few kind-hearted neighbours in team work, the actual cost in money was 170*l.*, of which I paid 110*l.* and my landlord 60*l.* I just give this illustration to show that where things work harmoniously improvements are easily effected, and therefore the corollary seems to be that it is most important in a very comprehensive sense that landlord and tenant should if possible be united, and that tenure should be of an enduring kind. . . . . Another year your work would be much facilitated, we have all thought the matter over more fully and carefully and could better enter into and discuss the subject than when it was first presented.

I remain, yours, &c.
GEO. ANGAS.

176. *Rev. C. Smith*, Beeford.—I do not think a limit of age for field work would have any beneficial result, unless a certificate of school attendance for a given period were required before hiring. The young children are not much employed in this parish.

NORTH FRODINGHAM.

Population, 837. Acreage, 2,975. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

177. EXTRACT from RETURN.

Rev. Heny West, vicar.—From 15 to 20 are employed in private gangs in spring and summer, but I only heard of one child and one young person being so employed.

Their work is weeding and stone picking. The distance to work is from two to four miles. Hours 10, with one hour allowed for dinner. The field work is dangerous for morals. I do not think the health suffers, nor do I know of any ill-treatment, though there is rough usage.

I think it desirable that the sexes should be separated, and that a certain amount of school attendance should be compulsory on children earning wages.

Nearly all the able-bodied women go to field work, weeding, harvesting, and pulling mangel and turnips.

Those employed are chiefly married women who neglect their families in pursuing out-door occupations. I would prohibit field work to those women with families. I would not allow boys to be employed in field work under 9 years of age, and from that age to 13 require six month's attendance at school.

Children who begin work at 8 a.m. should not work later than 4 p.m.

My parish supplies neighbouring parishes with labour, some of the labourers have long distances to walk to their work.

SCHOOL.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	47	39
Between 10 and 13 -	44	15
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	32	23
Between 10 and 13 -	20	12

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	54	38
Between 10 and 13 -	59	43
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	32	22
Between 10 and 13 -	24	15

Those neither at work nor at school in summer, five boys and five girls.

A night school was tried and failed, in consequence of the indifference of those who should have been interested in it.

North Frodingham is an open parish, a centre of labour and supplies the neighbourhood for five or six miles with men's and children's labour.

Draining is done by the piece, but children are not employed at it.

I would recommend that half the week should be devoted to school by those children who are earning wages.

NORTH FRODINGHAM SCHOOL.

178. *Mr. Geen*, master.—Some children leave school as young as 8 years for casual work in the fields. Girls do not go to field work. I think 10 years as a limit would be too young for children to derive any real benefit from their education.

179. *George Etherington.* — Went out leading horses at 9 years old; worked 12 hours a day at 1*s.* a day; father is a "hind." Farm lads lodged in his house, they never read in the evening.

180. *William Foster*, 9 years old. Went out brassacking last year, 14 boys and some girls together. I got 8*d.* a day, was paid by the man who looked after us in his house. The man was not in the employ of the farmer as a labourer.

181. *James Hasdale.*—I was 9 years old when I first went out to work; got 8*d.* a day for bird tenting and brassacking; 1*s.* a day for leading horses.

182. *Bilham*, labourer.—A ganger. I take a gang of children out brassacking. I take the work by the piece, and pay the children myself. The farmer gives me so much for the job, and knows nothing about paying the children. There is a bit of profit in it. I have had them both ways, paid by the farmer and paid by myself.

WEEDLEY, SOUTH CAVE.

Population, 900. Acreage, 4,000.

183. *John Danby.*—In spring 20 males between 10 and 13 years of age, are employed for a month for weeding, and in July, ten males and five females between 10 and 13 years of age for singling turnips. They go half a mile or one mile to work; the hours of work on the land are nine, with usually an hour for meals. The health and morals are not injuriously affected. The young can read and write, most of them attend school the greater part of the year. We have no mixed gangs of adults. There is no need to apply the provisions of the "Agricultural Gangs Act" to private gangs. There are no moral evils or hardships in our private gangs. None of the proposed methods of enforcing school attendance are needed, the children attend during three-quarters of the year when they cannot get employment. The parents can all afford to send the children to school. The cottages generally are good. Two cottages per hundred acres are sufficient for the farms, as we hire young men to live in the house. Eighty children, boys and girls, attend the Government schools during nine months of the year. There is no night school. Wages for children, 9*d.* a day, weeding, 1*s.* a day, singling turnips; men's wages, 2*s.* 6*d.* a day; women's, 1*s.* a day. My foreman gets 31*l.* a year and cottage free of taxes, &c. The occupations are large; it is a thinly populated district. Allotment fields are common, too large an allotment makes the men indisposed to turn out to field work. Ten years would not be a bad limit for children's work. The parents cannot do without the earnings.

BRANTINGHAM AND ELLERKER.

Population, 572. Acreage, 3,410. Cultivation, mixed.

184. *Rev. Thomas Westmorland*, vicar.—I have been here 10 years. There are no private gangs. Children are now more employed in the fields than they were formerly. Eight or 10 go together with a man to look after them; they are employed in weeding, potatoe-planting, and turnip singling, in spring and summer; in autumn, in gathering potatoes, taking up mangel and turnips. And at all times of the year in tenting birds, pigs, and cows. They are paid by the employer. Boys are more employed than girls. Girls who have been regularly employed out of doors, rarely settle down into good domestic servants. I would recommend a restriction on the employment of females in field work, limited to a defined age, and that boys should not be employed at all before 10 years of age, and for half time up to 12 years. The distance to work is short. I would enforce school attendance by alternate days, or perhaps, to suit the employers, by alternate weeks. The children of the labourers go out to work when work is to be had, otherwise they attend school very well. Two or three cottages per hundred acres are sufficient. In one part of the parish [Ellerker] there is a sufficiency of accommodation, in this part [Brantingham] not; in several cottages there is but one bedroom where five or six children sleep with their parents; there is a prospect of some improvement being made in this matter of accommodation. The cottages belong mostly to the landowner. Rent from 4*l.* to 5*l.* a year, with, in most cases, an allotment or garden. The allotment is one-eighth of an acre (half a rood). There are not many outlying cottages on the farms. Children's wages are 1*s.* a day for weeding.

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SCHOOL.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 -	17	14
Between 10 and 13	15	6
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	29	18
Between 10 and 13 -	8	3

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 -	20	18
Between 10 and 13 -	20	12
Girls:		
Under 10 -	28	24
Between 10 and 13	16	7

I tried an evening school about four years ago, but was not successful; the farmers did not co-operate, as they considered it interfered with the evening work of the lads for whom I principally intended it. I think the requiring of a certificate of a certain amount of knowledge, say reading, writing, and four first rules of arithmetic, before hiring, would be a good plan; the penalty for non-compliance to be put on the employer. The Statutes are improving, instead of standiug out in the streets, the lads and women are taken into a covered place in separate rooms; hitherto they have led to much immorality, but a move is being made to put them on a better footing.

HESSLE.

Population, 1,750. Acreage, 2,695. Cultivation, mixed.

185. *Rev. H. Newmarch.*—No private gangs. School attendance is slightly affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents. Girls receive industrial training at the national school. The cottages are good, the ownership various, and the rent rather high. There are also two schools, a national and an old parish school, quite adequate to the educational necessities of the parish.

[This village is rapidly becoming a suburb of Hull.]

WELTON.

Population, 863. Acreage, 2,674. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

186. *Rev. T. B. Paget,* vicar.—There are no private gangs. About 30 children in the parish are employed in the fields, not more than three or four women. They are employed in bird tenting, weeding corn, and in planting and picking potatoes. Young persons are usually hired by the year and live on the farms. The hours of work vary according to the season and the weather, and are not unreasonably long. There is no injury to health. Young females are not employed in field work with us. I do not recommend any restriction as to the age at which boys may be employed; but I think if a certificate of attendance at school for a given time during the year up to 13 years of age were required from all children earning wages before hiring, it would be a good plan. The parents send the children out to work as soon as they can, as they cannot afford to lose the earnings. In this parish all the children can attend school, and generally do for six months in the year. School attendance here is not affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents; the very few whose parents are least able to afford the school pence are paid for by myself or other persons. The girls do the school in turns, making the fires, &c. Our cottages are generally good, with two and three bedrooms. Wherever there is a third bedroom a lodger will if possible be taken. Rent of a good cottage with two rooms below and two above is 5*l.* or 6*l.* Almost every boy and girl who ought to be at school attends in winter, though many of them irregularly, from various excuses, such as minding the baby, going errands. I have found the threat of turning the mothers of children who attend irregularly out of the Clothing Club succeed in making the attendance more regular. There is a night school open for two hours on two nights in the week during three or four months, attended by 18 scholars, who are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic. Farm youths cannot conveniently attend; the scholars are chiefly boys who have recently left school to work on the land, or apprentices.

[Mr. Paget read me a letter from the parish doctor stating that within his experience no injury had resulted to the health of the children from early field labour.]

187. *W. Harrison Broadley, Esq.,* Welton.—Is building cottages on the farms on various parts of his estate. He has endeavoured in the new farm-houses to secure more complete separation of the lads and female servants by building a room for the lads connected with their sleeping-room and apart from the rest of the house, but finds that the farmer prefers having them all together in one large kitchen.

WELTON SCHOOL.

188. . *Gill,* master.—Number on register of day school, 97; average attendance in winter, 72. In the night school out of 18 on register there are two boys of 9 years, the rest of various ages up to 16 years. Some boys went out this year early in February for bird tenting, occasionally for that work on Sunday. They mostly go ketlocking.* When they get to 13 years of age they go to service. If boys were compelled to attend school regularly up to 10 years of age, they would learn enough for agricultural work; if up to 11 years they would be fitted for better places, and in both cases they would probably learn enough to give them a wish to improve themselves by attendance at night school. Some of the girls go out tenting and weeding as young as 8 years, and are absent about a fortnight at a time, sometimes longer; they earn 6*d.* a day tenting, 8*d.* and 9*d.* weeding. They seem to prefer weeding to tenting, though it is harder work. They go six or eight together, *all girls,* and are looked after by one of the farmer's men.

BEVERLEY.

189. In the three minster schools, *i.e.,* the infant, the boys, and the girls' school, there are in all 600 children receiving education, but of these, very few indeed are the children of agricultural labourers. The master stated that the indifference of parents was the greatest obstacle to school attendance with which he had to contend.

190. MINUTES taken at an interview with a Deputation from the EAST RIDING CHAMBER of AGRICULTURE.

Beverley, Feb. 20th, 1868.

Half day at school and work or alternate days are not practicable in agricultural districts.

The age of 10 would be a good limit to fix as the one below which children should not go to work, and from that age to 12 years they should attend school for a certain number of months in the year. At 12 years of age the strongest lads are fit for farm service. Private gangs exists in the neighbourhood; both boys and girls from 9 years of age are employed together in the spring, in ketlocking, as many as 20 together under the supervision of one of the farmer's labourers.

A girl's wages are 8*d.* or 9*d.* a day.

* "Ketlocking" is "pulling charlock."

The children's earnings are necessary to the parent for the maintenance of the family, but six months' schooling between the ages of 10 and 12 would be no injury to the parents.

There is a growing desire for the education of their work-people on the part of the employers.

There would be no objection to the requiring the production of a certificate of a certain amount of school attendance when the lad comes to be hired.

The statutes were admitted to be bad for the morals of the people.

Cottages on the farms are very much wanted, as in many cases the distance from the village to work is too great. Many cottages also are overcrowded.

Education will not produce good effects without decency in the homes; but good cottages on the farms would create good feeling and sympathy between the master and the labourer. All cottages should have three bed-rooms. Tenants would, as a rule, willingly pay a fair per-centage for cottage improvements.

[The feeling on the subject of cottages was very strong, and it was wished that this feeling should be recorded.—E. B. P.]

191. Meeting of East Riding Chamber of Agriculture at Beverley.

W. Bainton, Esq., Chairman, said.—He thought the children might be sent to school till they were 9 years of age, and after that from 9 to 12 years for half their time, and when they had completed their twelfth year they might be set at liberty. He believed that cottage accommodation was a most essential question for consideration, whatever amount of education you give a child, unless there were decency and propriety at home, would be of little value. He believed that many tenants would pay a good per-centage for the erection of buildings which would improve the accommodation for their labourers. He considered the present system in many places was cruel, the distance at which labourers resided from their work rendering it impossible for them to see their children more than on the Sunday. His opinion was that girls should not be employed at field labour at all. It was in domestic matters that they should be engaged, and in that alone, and they should be taught something of the management of small households.

Mr. D. Bradley, Etton.—With respect to the cottage accommodation he might say, that for a Christian country, they had in England very bad cottages indeed. He could name instances where there were no chambers at all, but where the rooms were divided by a temporary screen to separate the sleeping places. In others there were only two rooms and a smaller one lighted only by a square of glass, substituted for a tile and where the only entrance of air was the open door. In such places a man, wife, and a large family were huddled together. He thought if the Government was to turn its attention to this matter, it would, indeed, be a great benefit. He did not say anything against education. If it could be obtained without inflicting any injury upon the parents, all well and good, and he would assist it, but he thought that matters that so materially affected the social condition of the poor should be first looked at. In common lodging-houses the law interfered, and stated that no more than a certain number should occupy one sleeping apartment, yet in private cottages the law took no cognizance of them, and no restrictions were imposed to uphold even decency.

Mr. Edmund Riley, Kipling Cotes.—Thought it was very difficult to deal with the question of employing women and children without interfering with the right of the parents, and he did not think any legislative measure could affect this locality. None of the farmers hereabouts employed children under 9 years of age, and between that age and 12, more than half the year. * * * * He thought with Mr. Bradley, that Government ought to pay more attention to the subject of cottage accommodation. Alluding to the inconvenience of the present unsatisfactory condition of the labourers' dwellings, the speaker said he employed one man who had not seen his children in daylight during the whole of the winter. As his duties lay with the cattle, he had to be on the farm on Sundays, and his residence being three miles away, he had to go to his work early, and return late. Mr. Riley stated that he did not employ girls; and that he found labourers more serviceable than boys, if the cottage accommodation was such that the former could be employed.

Mr. R. Whiteing, Beverley Parks.—They all knew that two out of every three of their servants could not write at all. He had a lad in his employ who had just sent away a letter that had taken him three months to write. They could scarcely get a lad to sign his name when they hired him.

The Deputy Mayor of Beverley (T. Cussons, Esq.)—The principal thing in the discussion that had struck him (the speaker) was the erection of more suitable dwellings for the labourers who worked on the farms. It would be a great advantage, he considered, to the employer, to have the residences of his labourers as near the farm as possible. It would also be doing a great deal towards bettering the labourers' condition, if to such residences were attached a plot of land or garden ground, where he might have his children around him, and give them at the same time a moral and physical education. The speaker deprecated the system of taking labourers into the country from towns, inasmuch as the wages of the latter being better than the former, the farmers were sure to get the worst class of men, both morally and physically. It applied more especially to boys taken from towns, who were often bad when they went away, and, he was afraid, returned no better. * * * In his opinion night schools, with the aid of farmers and parents of children, might effect a good deal of good, and prevent the necessity of Government interference.

The Secretary read a communication from Mr. R. Norfolk (Beverley), who regretted his inablity to be present. As to the existing class of adult labourers, the "right hand" of the British farmer, the fathers of future tillers of the soil, upon whose labour so many depended, little could be done for them, and that little useless in elevating their moral *status*, so long as those who alone had the power to provide suitable dwellings, were content to herd them like swine, and knowingly permit a state of things to exist which was a disgrace to civilization and to England as a nation.

The following resolution was carried:—"That this "Chamber recognises the necessity of providing im-"proved education for the agricultural labourers, but "defers passing any resolution on the subject till some "definite scheme is before them."

BISHOP BURTON.

Population, 498. Acreage, 4,259. Cultivation, mixed.

192. *Francis Watt*, Esq.—There are no private gangs. There are eight males between the ages of 8 and 13 employed on an average for three months in the year bird minding. Twenty-four lads between 13 and 18 years. In summer they are employed in singling turnips, hoeing, and weeding. Those who mind birds do not walk more than a quarter of a mile to their work, and are at work for 11 hours. Times allowed for meals are from 6 a.m. to 6.30 a.m., from 12 to 1 p.m., 6 to 7 p.m. Those who do not live on the farms leave for home as soon as they have finished their supper. Females are employed in field work in this parish only in haytime and harvest. I would recommend that boys under 12 years should attend school alternate days. Either the half day or alternate day system would be most suitable if it is found absolutely necessary to enforce attendance, but in this parish the people appreciate the efforts made to secure a good elementary education. The cottages here are not large, but are clean and healthy. Rooms will average in size 15 ft. by 13 feet., and 10 ft. high; some cottages have two bedrooms, some three. Every cottage has either a garden attached or a piece of land at a nominal rent, large enough to grow vegetables for consumption of the family. Rent, 2*l.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* per

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annum. Wages for ordinary labourers living in the village, 8*s.* and 9*s.* a week and meat. The average earnings for the year, including special work in lambing time, turnip hoeing, and harvest, would be 11*s.* a week (and meat found). Boys wage for bird tenting, 8*d.* a day. On Sundays the bird tenting boys are relieved by lads living on the farm.

SCHOOL.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	33	30
Between 10 and 13 -	14	5
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	16	14
Between 10 and 13 -	9	8

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	33	30
Between 10 and 13 -	14	10
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	16	14
Between 10 and 13 -	9	8

193. *Benjamin Swann*, master.—There is no night school. There was one two years ago, but the attendance was so small and irregular that it was closed at the end of three months. The adult population of this parish is small and migratory. The hours for night school, from 7 to 9 p.m., are objectionable to the farmers, as they like their servants to be about the place; though not actually at work they are ready in any emergency, and they are expected to be in bed at 9 p.m.

DALTON HOLME.

Population, 506. Acreage, 3,090. Cultivation, almost wholly arable.

194. EXTRACT from RETURN by Rev. T. F. SIMMONS.

Women and children are employed all through the year in weeding, tenting, singling turnips, and picking flints.

Hours of work, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., with one hour allowed for dinner.

I am inclined to think that occasionally the health is injuriously affected.

The women who work in the fields are without exception married. They work alone or with other women. Young girls never work except with their mothers, or at turnip singling with their fathers. I know that it is the opinion of many industrious women who never work in the fields that they would lose more in the long run by the wear and tear of clothes and shoe leather than they would gain by the wages.

I would prohibit any girl working apart from her father or mother, or other natural guardian, and I would prohibit associated female labour except at harvest.

No boy should be employed at all under 8 years, nor any, except at light work, for more than 6 months under 10 years.

I think that except at harvest it would practically have the effect of limiting the distance children were allowed to walk, if it were provided that the day's labour of children should be calculated from and to the time of leaving and returning home. As it is, in many cases in this part of the country women and children working for daily wages do not commence work till 8 a.m.

I would adopt forced school attendance for a certain number of hours during six months of the year.

I think it desirable that the cottages should continue to be massed near the church and school. As regards education, morality, advantages in sickness, &c. labourers living in villages, and not on the farms, are less likely to be hardly used or to have a pressure put upon them in respect of wages and the labour of their wives and children.

Cottages — house 12 ft. by 12 ft., back kitchen 12 ft. by 8 ft., small pantry or dairy; the better ones have a best bedroom on ground floor, two or three bedrooms upstairs in most of them, and generally a garden.

Rent of new cottages (Lord Hotham's), 6*l.* a year; of old ones, 2*l.* to 4*l.*

Most of the cottages in this part belong to large landowners.

There is a night school in winter for two hours on two nights per week for four months. Number of scholars, 25; average attendance, 23; all above 12 years of age. It is working well.

DAY SCHOOL.

In Summer.

Boys and girls:—
On register - - - - 50
Average attendance - - - 45

In Winter.

On register - - - - 70
Average attendance - - - 65

I may mention that a few days after Mr. Portman's visit to this parish a small boy, not 7 years old, who had been bird tenting for some weeks, volunteered the remark to the mother of some boys who were sent to school, "I wish t'law would come that boys wasn't to "work *while* they was ten."

195. *Rev. T. F. Simmons, Mr. C. Wood, Mr. Riley.*—It was suggested that forced attendance at school for five days a week during six months of the year, up to 9 years of age, with reduced number of attendances up to a further age (say 13 years), might be fairly required, and that a certificate of such attendances should be produced to the employer before hiring. Wages, 2*s.* 6*d.* a day for ordinary labouring men, 3*s.* a day for machine work. Allotments of one rood, 10*s.* a year rent. Many labourers keep a cow. Mr. Riley was much in favour of having more cottages on the farms, on account of the distance married men have to go to and from their work.

ETTON.

Population, 501. Acreage, 3,790. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

196. *Rev. Canon Musgrave.*—There are about 10 males and 10 females employed in private gangs in the parish in cleaning corn and flint gathering. They are usually paid according to the number of flints gathered, and not by the day. When the mothers are regularly employed the families no doubt suffer by their absence from home during the day; very few are thus employed in this parish. I would not allow a boy to be employed under 9 years of age. There is no necessity for regulating the distance to work. The children are never wanted for field work in the winter. If their attendance at school could be secured for eight or nine months in the year it would fully answer the requirements of the occupiers of land here. Half time would not suit them. The children are within easy reach of school. Cottage accommodation in this parish is on the whole sufficient. Two cottages per hundred acres are more than sufficient, because several servants who are hired by the year live in the farm houses. From two of the farms the cottages are distant two to three miles. Some cottages are crowded; few have more than two bedrooms. Average rent, 3*l.* 10*s.* per annum.

SCHOOL.

In Summer.

—	Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	20	12
Between 10 and 13 -	7	4
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	16	11
Between 10 and 13 -	4	3

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	29	24
Between 10 and 13 -	14	12
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	24	17
Between 10 and 13 -	12	7

There is a night school for two hours on two nights a week in the winter months attended by eight scholars, one of whom is under 12 years. The difficulty in maintaining the school is uncertainty of the lads remaining in the same place, in consequence of the present system of hiring. Query whether compulsory attendance at night school between the ages of 12 and 15, when the education is considerably deficient, would be desirable. Regular attendance at school is the thing needed. The statutes are very demoralising in their effects. The farm servants on distant farms rarely if ever come to church, and as the lads remain in the same place only for one year, as a rule, they do not become acquainted with the clergyman, or take any heed to get a good character in the parish. The farmers do not sufficiently consider the *character* of the lads they hire, but look more to their physical strength. A piece of the glebe land is let out in allotments; the system is working well and is very beneficial to the labourer, as in the street of a village there is rarely sufficient garden ground attached.

ETTON SCHOOL.

197. *Alfred Witty*, 9 years old.—I went out ketlocking last year, for four weeks. There were 13 boys and girls together, we had our meals together. I went two miles to work, got 8*d.* a day, and have had 6*d.* a day for "tenting."

198. *Francis Morlow*, 9 years old.—I have been out tenting cows, Sundays and all, got 6*d.* a day. Four brothers and one sister in family, father is foreman to Mr. Whipp, and "meats" at his house.

GIRLS' SCHOOL.

199. *Elizabeth Johnson*, 13 years (oldest girl in the school).—I have been out ketlocking in the same gang with boys. Many other girls go. I got 8*d.* a day. My father looks after the gang. I have been out for three years. I go singling turnips as well as "ketlocking." Farmer pays me, one of the farm labourers goes round village and collects children for ketlocking, when they are wanted.

WARTER.

200. *Mr. Clark*, schoolmaster.—Children go to field work as young as 8 years in summer, for weeding and picking stones. They are at school from October to the beginning of May. Regular attendance at school is the thing needed. Children should be at school for five years, in order to be well grounded. They should remain till they have passed a certain standard, and a certificate of such attainment should be required before hiring. Parents, being themselves uneducated, are indifferent about the education of their children.

201. *Mr. Smith*, farmer.—Children's wages for weeding are 1*s.* a day, or 6*d.* a day and three meals. 20 or 30 children of both sexes will go together for "ketlocking." In some cases a man takes the job at a fixed price per acre, and finds the children.

202. *Mr. Storey*, schoolmaster, Nunburnholme.—I would not allow children to go to work before 12 years of age. Many go ganging at 8 years. The system of taking the weeding by the acre prevails in this part. The ganger finds the children.

203. EXTRACT from RETURN by Rev. S. WILSON, Warter.

Children of 8 years to 14 years of age are employed in weeding corn. They go distances of half a mile to four or six miles, when the latter, they are conveyed to and from their work. The hours of work from the time of leaving home are 7.30 a.m. to 6.30 p.m.; on the land, 8 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., or 9 to 6. When the number is small, the sexes work together, when large, they are separated.

The state of education is improved. Cottages all belong to the landowner, they are not conveniently situated for the work of the farms.

SCHOOL.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	20	12
Between 10 and 13 -	14	8
Girls:		
Under 10	16	9
Between 10 and 13	9	7

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	24	13
Between 10 and 13 -	15	11
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	18	19
Between 10 and 13	13	9

MILLINGTON.

Population, 340. Acreage, 2,750. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

204. *Rev. H. Ellershaw*, vicar.—There are 25 males and 15 females, all between the ages of 10 and 13 years, employed in private gangs; in spring in weeding, in summer in pulling charlocks and singling turnips. The usual hours of work on the land are 10, with one hour allowed for meals. The sexes work together, the effect on the morals is not good. The state of education is very indifferent, both among the young and the adults. Compulsory education in agricultural districts would in my opinion be an excellent thing, though the farmers generally would not advocate such a measure. Females employed in agriculture become exceedingly dirty in their habits, and indifferent as to domestic duties. I would certainly restrict their employment, except at hay time and harvest, as men's wages average from 14*s.* to 18*s.* weekly. Distance to work does not affect those above 14 years of age; I would not place any restriction, as they all take good care of themselves. Four school days per week for 20 weeks in the year, would be the best scheme of enforced school attendance for this locality. The school is in the centre of the parish, the parents have the means, but many of them not the *will* to send their children to school, even when taught gratuitously. The cottage accommodation is in many instances disgracefully bad, and injurious both to health and morals. From two to three cottages per 100

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acres are considered sufficient. There is that proportion. The cottages are crowded, there is usually one sitting-room about 14 feet square, a small scullery, one bedroom, even for a family of 10 or 12, generally a small garden, few with outhouses. They belong to landowners living at a distance from the village. Rents vary from 3*l.* to 7*l.* a year. There is no night school. The vicious morals of the cottagers, and their utter aversion to education, are obstacles to maintaining one, and the farmers themselves will not encourage either religion or education among their servants or dependants. The day school is closed for want of a master, their being no funds sufficient to pay one; there is a small endowment of 13*l.* a year, with house and garden, and a small donation from St. John's College, Cambridge.

POCKLINGTON.

Population, 2,671. Acreage, 2,520. Cultivation, mixed.

205. *Rev. J. Crosland*, vicar.—There are no gangs. About 20 children and young persons are employed occasionally, between the ages of 10 and 18, in spring in drilling corn seed, and in summer in hoeing turnips. The usual hours of work are from 6 to 6, with two hours allowed for meals. Very few females are employed here, and under the present system no restriction is needed, though they would be better employed in domestic service. I would not allow boys to be employed under 11 years of age. No restriction as to distance to work is practicable. Compulsory attendance at school during the winter months is more practicable than half days or alternate days at school and work. A few children are away from school on account of the poverty of their parents. Overcrowded and badly-built cottages are a great evil, and injurious to the health and comfort of the labourer. Some of our cottages are crowded with lodgers. The rooms are small, but fairly ventilated, and the drainage is good. Gardens may be had in allotments near the town, of which nearly every cottager rents a small portion; they belong mostly to small tradesmen, but there is no restriction as to dealing.

School.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	90	60
Between 10 and 13	70	40
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	100	90
Between 10 and 13 -	40	20
In Winter.		
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	90	80
Between 10 and 13 -	70	60
Girls:		
Under 10 -	100	90
Between 10 and 13 -	40	30

There is a night school for 24 weeks in winter, open two hours on four nights a week, there are 24 scholars. The attendance is irregular, owing to the carelessness of the foreman in getting the lads off to school. There are about 30 male and 20 female young persons growing up with insufficient education; and 30 boys and 21 girls between the ages of 8 and 13, who are neither at school nor at work in summer.

206. Meeting of Farmers and others at Pocklington, February 29.

It was agreed that 10 years should be the limit below which no child should go to work.

At 13 years they go to service, and between the ages of 10 and 13 they could have six months' schooling. A certificate of such attendance might be required before hiring, but it was thought that in times of pressure or scarcity of labour there would be a difficulty in enforcing such a regulation.

The carelessness and indifference of the parents are greater obstacles to education than want of money.

There is a private gang system, "ketlocking" is taken by the acre, but the master pays the children's wages and the railway fare, when they are so conveyed to their work.

The weeding lasts for three weeks in the year, women are employed before they send for gangs of children, it would be difficult to find a substitute for children's labour at that time.

Average wages for men, 14*s.* a week.

It was stated, that at turnip-hoeing, which is taken by the acre, a man and a singler may earn 6*s.* 6*d.* a day, but that was said to be a very rare case.

The statutes were stated to be very bad for morality. It is very difficult to get men to sign a contract for hiring; the younger lads can mostly read and write.

Men do not remain in farm service, except as foremen. When they reach 30 years of age, they marry and like to live in a cottage, and then become day labourers, taking work by the piece or otherwise. It appeared that an increased number of cottages on the farms would not do away with the necessity for farm lads, or get rid of the hiring fairs.

Pocklington Schools.

207. *Infant School*, Miss Atkin, mistress.—Average attendance in summer, 84; in winter, 45. They are taken at 2 years old and remain till 7 or 8 years. Weekly payment is 2*d.*; there are two assistants.

208. *Mixed School*, J. Ross, master.—The children go out to work about 10 years old and come back to school in winter. If they attended regularly they could pass the fourth standard at 11 years of age. Women and children are much employed in potatoe picking and hoeing.

209. *Brighton*, boy, 13 years old.—I went out to work at 10 years old and earned 8*d.* a day. 10 boys worked together; were looked after by the foreman and paid by the employer. I have been two and three miles to work on the Wolds, ketlocking; last year I earned 10*d.* a day; then we went boys and girls together; mostly have to walk to work, but have been carried in a waggon; we work in wet weather but not in wet corn.

210. *Ann Manners*, 14 years.—I went ketlocking two years ago; 12 boys and girls together; had a man over us: got 8*d.* a day; at meals boys and girls sit separate.

211. *Mary Pegg*, 13 years.—Went out twice last year ketlocking; boys and girls together; we had our meals together; got 10*d.* a day; I never was ill from the work.

BARMBY MOOR.

Population, 537. Acreage, 2,471.

212. *Rev. R. Taylor*, vicar.—There are gangs of Irish employed here in potato picking which is taken by the piece; women and children are in these gangs; the married women are also much employed in potatoe setting and picking and in weeding corn. The hours of work are from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. with one hour allowed for dinner. I would not permit boys to be employed under 10 years of age. I think a fixed amount of school attendance for six months in the year would suit best for agicultural children; that a certificate of such attendance should be required before hiring, and that Government aid should be given for attendances less than 200 as now required.

The school attendance is greatly affected by the resources of the parents; we have found the following payments secure the largest attendance; 3*d.* and 2*d.* a week; when three children in a family attend the third is at half-price, making 6*d.* a week. For four children the fourth goes free. In this parish to secure all the chil-

dren, 17 are charged 1*d.* and four go entirely free. These 17 and four are entirely independent of the third and fourth child in large families. The four entirely free include orphans.

The cottages should have three bedrooms; in large families where this is not the case the children turn out badly. Barmby has always been an open parish, and we have a sufficient number of cottages. Most of the cottages have two bedrooms and a garden. None are attached to the farms, but are owned as small investments. Rent 3*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* per annum. The 5*l.* cottage has an excellent garden.

At Fangfoss, my other parish, cottage accommodation is not good; the rents are high and the cottages not always healthy; these we are endeavouring to improve.

SCHOOL.

In Summer and Winter.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 -	39	28
Between 10 and 13	15	12
Girls:		
Under 10 -	34	26
Between 10 and 13 -	9	7

There is no night school.

There is a want of schools in the plain district between here and Howden, and there are not many resident clergymen. Farm lads are very irregular in their attendance at church, and the farmers say "they 'cannot press them."

EVERINGHAM.

Population, 321; Acreage, 2,979; Cultivation, about 2,000 acres arable, 800 grass.

213. *Lord Herries*, Everingham Park.—There are no private gangs. There are 18 males and nine females between the ages of 10 and 18 employed at different seasons of the year in topping turnips, planting and picking potatoes. Hours of work are, in winter, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.; in summer, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., with 1½ hours allowed for meals. I have never heard or found by my own knowledge that the females employed in agriculture were otherwise than good and moral. I would not place any restriction on their labour.

Boys should not be employed under 10 years of age, I think one to three miles quite far enough for any one up to 18 years to go to work, and would commence at one mile for boys of 10 years. I should object to compulsory education, it would tend to check the eagerness of parents to send their children to school. The children here are educated *gratis*. For families there should be three sleeping rooms in the cottages.

SCHOOL.

On Register.

Boys:	
Under 10 - - - -	20
Between 10 and 13 - - -	16
Girls:	
Under 10 - - - -	15
Between 10 and 13 - - -	10

Some few attend from neighbouring parishes. The attendance varies little throughout the year. There are three male and five females grown up with little or no education when young.

[This is a Roman Catholic school, but is attended by some Protestant children who do not have religious instruction. The master is uncertificated but a good teacher, and takes boys out with him measuring land and instructs them in practical agriculture.—E.B.P.]

214. COTTAGES.

Set No. 1. Two ground-floor rooms and dairy; three bedrooms, outhouses and cow-house; a rood of garden. Cost about 140*l.* a piece. Ornamental.

Set No. 2. Row of seven. Two ground-floor rooms, three bedrooms, outhouses, &c. Cost something under 100*l.* a piece. Rent 2*l.* a year with a garden only, if with land for a cow, 1*l.* or 2*l.* additional according to extent.

BURNBY.

Population, 126. Acreage, 1,700. Farms from 300 to 400 acres.

215. *Rev. J. Williams.*—There is no gang system. Women are not much employed except in harvest. I should prefer their not being employed at all, as field-work is most injurious to them for domestic service and for their future as wives and mothers.

Children leave school too young. The farm lads are much neglected, rarely come to church, and in consequence of the yearly change of place are not under the influence of the clergyman. The farmers do not sufficiently consider the character of the lads when they hire them. Much might be done if the landlords would use their influence in this direction.

HAYTON.

Population, 210. Acreage, 1,760.

216. *Mr. Appleton*, farmer.—Wages for labouring men 8*s.* a week and meat, or 15*s.* a week, no meat. Foreman 20 to 30 years of age, on farm, gets from 20*l.* to 30*l.* a year, board and lodging. Waggoners, 18 years and upwards, 16*l.* to 18*l.* a year, board and lodging. Plough lads, 10*l.* to 12*l.*, board and lodging. The weekly expense of keeping lads is reckoned at 8*s.* Harvest wages, 1*l.* a week and meat. Children go out tenting at 8 or 9 years of age, get 6*d.* a day and meat; they will be out five or six weeks in the year bird-tenting before harvest, and pig-tenting in fields after harvest. Most of the villagers have a cow; pay 3*l.* a year for cow-gate. Cottages with gardens are rented at 3*l.* and 4*l.* a year; one-third of an acre allotment besides the garden, 13*s.* 6*d.* a year. The people are well off.

217. *Mrs. Binnington*, wife of a farmer, and for 12 years mistress of the school.—I would place the limit below which no boy should go to work at 10 years, and I think that by that time they may be well grounded in reading, writing, and arithmetic. Children go out at 8 or 9 years of age for weeding corn and singling turnips, and are away from school for five or six weeks for that work in June and July, and for four weeks in autumn for potatoe gathering. Boys and girls go a dozen together for potatoe work from farm to farm, and are hired by the farmer; a woman usually goes with them. Six months' attendance at school during the year for children between 10 and 12 years would be a very good thing, and would not cause much trouble to the teacher in "making up lee-way." I once had a night school in summer, which was well attended by lads varying from 18 years to 30 years. They learnt quicker than children of 8 and 9 years. A library has been established. Farm lads come from every farm to get books; they ask for "Travels," and books of that description; 40 lads came in one evening. They take the books home, and pay ½*d.* a fortnight. Most of these lads were educated at Hayton School. The farmhouses are close to the village.

HAYTON SCHOOL.

In Summer.

—	No. on Books.	Average Attendance.
In 1862 - - -	41	23
In 1867 and 1868 - -	57	30

E. R. York.

Mr. Portman.

d.

In Winter.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
In 1862 - - -	41	35
In 1867 and 1868 - -	51	40

218. *Miss Knowlson*, mistress.—There would be no hardship in fixing limit for work at 10 years. I have kept some boys up to 13 years at school; the girls leave younger, being kept at home to look after the little ones. Children from 8 to 10 years learn quickly if in regular attendance. There is a list kept showing the progress of each child from year to year. We have sewing-classes for the girls in the afternoon.

219. *Mr. Thompson*, farmer, Hayton.—I farm 150 acres. A child of 9 years would get six weeks to two month's work in the year in tenting and singling turnips. I would not employ children under 10 years; such a limit would be no hardship to any one. Girls are employed in the fields, and are often the best workers; I do not think such work injures their morals. Where two-thirds of the farm is arable two pair of of horses are necessary for 100 acres; fewer will do on light wold lands. I have one labourer at 7*s.* a week and meat three times a day. I think a certificate of six month's attendance at school up to a certain age is desirable, and might be enforced at hiring.

[W. Rudston Read, Esq. built this school of Hayton, and takes great interest in the working of it. Much pains are bestowed on the instruction of the girls in sewing, shirtmaking, &c., to fit them for domestic service in preference to field work. He has established a system of prizes for regular attendance at school.

Most of the cottages belong to Mr. Read. They have as a rule two bedrooms, good ground-floor rooms and accommodation. No lodgers are allowed. The rates have much increased since Union Chargeability Act came into force. This district is one of good land, different in quality from the Wolds on the one side, and the potatoe-growing district towards Elvington and Howden.—E.B.P.]

MARKET WEIGHTON.

Population, 2,179. Acreage, 4,000. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

220. *Rev. Joseph Foxley*, vicar.—Private gangs exist here. They are employed in spring in weeding corn, and in summer in singling turnips. The distance to work is from one to three miles. Hours of work on the land from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with one hour allowed for dinner. The sexes work together, but the number of girls employed is comparatively small. The morals are bad enough. I should say half the young women lose what should be their honour before they are married. The mischief is too deep for Act of Parliament remedies. There is a general drifting away from all fixed moorings. No respect for authority, whether of parents, teachers, pastors, or masters. The church is not believed in, and other forms of religion are taken up and laid down as readily as fashions in dress. Practical infidelity is at the bottom of it all. Few, if any, of the children of the labouring class, are without some amount of education at our national schools. It is not necessary to apply the provisions of the Gangs Act to the system existing here. I do not see how attendance can be enforced unless the schools are free, and then you remove part of the parent's efforts for his child's welfare. There are only five cottages in this township beyond half a mile from the school; but a better school is wanted at Skipton, two miles distant; several of the children from there come to this school. In times when work is scarce parents with large families are often unable to send their children to school. There is great irregularity in attendance from this cause, work plentiful and work scarce both affect the attendance. The cottages are mostly unfit for their purpose through the old law of settlement; we want fewer cottages here, but better ones, and more in the neighbouring parishes. Parts of the parish are three miles from the town, and many labourers have to go to other parishes for work with great hardship to themselves. There are certainly not enough cottages with two or three bedrooms. One opposite my garden lately had but one bedroom (say 12 ft. by 16 ft.), and the family consisted of a grandmother bedridden, father and mother, adult daughter and child, sons and daughters of all ages. The cottages are chiefly owned by persons unconnected with the land. Sites are under the paralysing influence of manorial fines at death or sale. Several of a better kind have been built lately. I would suggest as a means of improving the cottage accommodation the commutation of manorial fines for known or fixed annual payments, redeemable, on a plan like that of the tithe commutation. The school registers do not make the distinctions asked for. We have a night school open for 20 weeks between October and February, for two hours on three nights a week. We have on the register 25 boys above 12 years, average attendance is 15. More funds are wanted for providing teachers. Volunteers can be had, but to produce efficient teaching you must have the same class taught by the same teacher night after night, and for this volunteers are not obtainable. The master of the boys' school has taken the night school, under my superintendence, at much inconvenience to himself; but we could not take boys under 16 years, as they would require quite different treatment from young men of 16 to 25 years of age. There are allotment fields let by Lord Londesborough and Mr. Langdale, and a field at Skipton by myself, usually in portions of one rood to each man. There is apparently a sufficient supply for the population. It would be very beneficial if the owners of isolated farms would provide a room for service and teaching where the clergyman could occasionally visit, the hired farm-servant system being a more important feature with regard to the land than even the cottage system.

221. *Osler Hall*, ganger.—I live in Market Weighton. I do not work regularly for any one. In the ketlocking time in June I take out children of both sexes from 10 years; most of them are 12 years old. I have had as many as 20 together. The farmer leaves the number to me. I do not take the work by the piece, but am paid 3*s.* a day. I pay the children and take the account to the farmer every Saturday night. My brother, *Hepton Hall*, takes weeding by the piece, gets so much an acre, according to the quantity of weed, some 7*s.* an acre, some as low as 3*s.* He would usually take 15 children, who could do two acres of bad weeding in a day at 7*s.* an acre, or 10 acres of light work. He pays children 10*d.* a day; they work for 10 hours on the land. He does not render any account to the farmer. He pays the children at his own house. Their ages will vary from 9 years to 12 years.

222. *Superintendent Long*, County Constabulary.—Hepton Hall is a thoroughly bad drunken fellow, not fit to have charge of children, he would let them do anything they liked. He swears and uses very bad language among them.

[A boy in the school said that he got for "ketlocking" 1*s.* a day from the farmers for whom he worked, but only 9*d.* a day from Hepton Hall.]

NESWICK.

Population, 66. Acreage, 980. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

223. *John Wheatley*.—There are 12 boys employed about four weeks in spring and summer in weeding corn. They go about two miles to their daily work. The hours of work on the land are nine. No girls are employed; I should say that the boys should be separated from the girls especially if they exceed 12 years of age. The health is undoubtedly injuriously affected if they are over-worked or allowed to stay after becoming wet. I am happy to think that in this

parish the education of both sexes is quite equal to what is really needed, school attendance is very fairly carried out, and as they begin as infants at 2½ years and then pass to the school the children have every advantage. The education of the adults varies very much, and I have amongst my yearly servants occasionally those who cannot read; when this occurs I arrange his or their being taught, and hitherto with good success. I should condemn public gangs altogether and where private gangs are employed I would restrict the number to 15 in any one gang; children not to be employed under 10 years of age, the sexes to be separated, an elderly labourer to have the charge and that the best man in the farmer's employ. I should say that where unmarried females are employed on a farm up to 18 years of age they would be improperly trained for domestic duties. I would not allow any girl above the age of 13 to be employed in a gang; no boy under 10 years, better still under 11 years. No child should be allowed to walk more than two miles to work; the hours should be from 8 to 12 and from 1 to 5.30, or not in any case exceed 9 hours at work. I should say that in this parish school attendance is not the least affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents; it is next to a Free School and all the labourers are fully employed and earning good wages. There is nothing calling for greater inquiry than the present cottage accommodation generally. A farm of 600 acres should have four double cottages. This parish is well provided with cottages which are in good order and chiefly belong to the squire; wherever there is a small owner he puts on the screw, but I recommend that each farm should have sufficient cottages upon it to meet its requirements, and the rent in no instance should exceed 1*s.* per week charged to the labourer whatever the tenant may have to pay. The tenant would amply receive his portion by the interest supplied in the extra labour given by the labourer. Money might be borrowed under government for the erection of cottages and charged to the tenant at 7 per cent. to be paid off in 22 years. I built some cottages on a former farm, a double cottage with four sleeping rooms 128*l.* Most of my labour is supplied from a distance of three miles. I provide beds for the men if they want them, they usually go home on Wednesday and Saturday. I think it a bad system, men should live with their families. Wages for ordinary labourer 16*s.* a week.

224. Letter from John Wheatley.

"I most strongly condemn large gangs, and further, decidedly girls beyond the age of 13 being employed in them at all, for I consider it has a most injurious effect on their after life of domestic habits, unfits them for service, for who would have a rough uncouth uncultivated girl as a servant, which habits must grow with them if employed in outdoor labour. I should say the education general in this district is fully equal to the requirements of the children and I believe that the attendance in the various schools is fairly and regularly carried out. Much may be done in the improvement of the adults who unfortunately sometimes are found unable to read or write. I myself take especial care never to allow an adult to leave my service without his being taught, and I am further glad to say how grateful they have been for it. Cottage accommodation, sufficiency of rooms, and a garden attached upon each farm will do more towards the morality and general good character of the labouring classes than all the legislative enactments that can be suggested, and I for one do most earnestly hope to see a general move towards the accomplishment of this great boon.

BAINTON.

Population, 465. Acreage, 3,280. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

225. *The Rev. G. T. Clare*, rector.—There are no private gangs, a certain number of boys occasionally work for the farmer, they go from one farm to another; they are superintended in their work by a foreman of some sort. Boys are employed in bird keeping, turnip singling and brassack* pulling. The distance to work is about two miles, and the hours from 8 a. m. to 5 or 6 p. m., with one hour allowed for meals. The women work together, girls do not go out to work, but are allowed to help their parents at home. The mixing of males and females in work is sure to produce more or less bad effect; weeding in wet weather injuriously affects the women; although the effects do not appear at the time, the health suffers eventually, at least in most cases. Excess of field work in a measure seems to unsex the females and act injuriously on their morals and on their fitness for domestic duties. There are not men enough in this parish for farm work, without the assistance of female labour, at certain seasons. A rule was made at the parish school some years ago that ten should be the earliest age for boys to go to work. I do not see any necessity for applying the provisions of the Factory Acts in this parish. Deficient cottage accommodation especially in regard to bedrooms is productive of most mischievous results, both as to health and morality, it neutralizes in a great measure the efforts of school, both to train to good and to educate in knowledge. Decency is taught in vain at school while it is utterly disregarded at home. One cottage per 200 acres is considered sufficient for the requirements of the land, we have that proportion, and they are conveniently situated for the work. The cottages generally have a kitchen, pantry, and two bedrooms; in a large house three bedrooms. They average 13 feet square. Most of them have gardens.

School.

On the Register, 17 Girls and 26 Boys.

The attendance here varies very little in winter and summer. There is also an infant school. Almost every child in the parish attends school. The main cause of insufficient education is the early age at which children are taken from school and sent out to service. We tried a night school, but with little success. A great deal I think depends on the person who conducts such school. Many of the labourers are so tired with the day's work that they have no inclination to attend school at uight, and some are ashamed to go to school. There are two allotment fields in the village at a rent of 5*s.* per portion, which is about a rood. There is also a pasture field for cows aud a right to feed cows in the lanes. The system works well and is a great help to the poor.

NORTH DALTON.

Population, 486. Acreage, 4,600.

226. *The Rev. J. B. Bryant.*—This parish is somewhat peculiar. I am the first resident clergyman since the reformation. The children are away from school, from April till after harvest; they are employed in flint-picking, brassacking, and singling turnips, &c. In the winter the oldest boy in the school was 12 years old. In the summer we have none but small ones, out of 70 on the books only 43 attended 200 times. The payment for schooling is 2*s.* a quarter, 1*s.* only for harvest quarter. Children go to field as young as 7 years. I would fix 8 years as the limit below which no child should go to work, and require a certificate of attendance to be produced before hiring with a penalty on the employer in case of non-requirement. The children would get schooling in winter. Wages for an ordinary labourer are 15*s.* a week, or 8*s.* and 9*s.* and their meat.

SLEDMERE.

227. Meeting of Farmers, 11th March.

Present 16, including the Rev. Mr. Cole, of Wetwang, and Mr. Tiffin, Agent.

Private gangs are used in the brassacking season, to the number of 20 or 30 in a gang. In Garton,

* "Brassack" is another name for "charlock."

E. R. York.
Mr. Portman.
d,

there is a ganger who takes a piece of work and provides the children, but probably at the current price of child's labour and goes from farm to farm. The ages of the children vary from 8 to 12 years, and the girls and boys go together, it not being thought necessary to separate the sexes. It was thought that it would be difficult to fix a limit of age for children's work, as at certain seasons they are all wanted; you might however put the limit for brassacking at 8 or 9 years of age, and for singling turnips at 10, in this way the children might get eight months' schooling in the year. The women go out hoeing turnips, children are as a rule pretty well educated, that is they can mostly read and write. There was no objection to the requirement of a certificate of school attendance for a certain number of weeks or days during the year. There are schools in most of the villages, but in some places they are not well supported by subscription. Night schools are not practicable in this district, as the houses are in many cases very far from the village. There are also some cases where the poverty of the parents prevents them from sending their children to school. Some farms are situated at such a great distance from the villages that it is the custom for the farmer to provide beds for his labourers, if they like to use them, but generally the labourers prefer to go home. The labourer goes to work, and returns, in his own time. The cottages have for the most a rood of garden attached to them, which was generally considered sufficient for the labourer. Statutes,—Martinmas, was considered to be the most convenient time for the hirings in the Wold district. It was considered that more mischief was done in farm-houses than at the time of the statutes. It was not thought that an increased supply of cottages on the farms would alter the system of yearly farm servants, at any rate not for the present. This district is very thinly populated and the supply of labour is fully taken up, so that bad and good are equally hired.

[The farmers attending this meeting fairly represented a large portion of the Wold district in the neighbourhood of Sledmere.]

228. *Robson Wilson*, carrier, Garton.—I have managed groups of children for many years for ketlocking. I take 16 or 18 with me, but 18 is as much as a man can manage properly. I receive 3*s.* per day for myself and pay the children 10*d.* a day. The farmer gives me the money to pay the children with. I set down the number of children and the number of days I have had them when my work is done. I get the children in the village of Garton. We sometimes go three miles, but I take them in my cart. I never take any weeding by the piece.

229. *Mr. Tiffin*, agent to Sir Tatton Sykes.—There is a want of new cottages in the district. Schools are plentiful and have always been kept up. In this district there will be a difficulty in enforcing school attendance in consequence of the distance at which many of the cottages are situated from the village. Wages average 15*s.* a week for an ordinary labourer. Women and children are occasionally employed. Turnip hoeing is usually taken by the piece, and the children go with their parents for singling. I think that gardens attached to the cottages are better for the labourer than allotments, which, perhaps, may be half a mile or more from his cottage; such a distance makes it an effort for the man to turn out after his day's work to attend to his allotment, whereas when the garden is close to the cottage he and his children can do an hour's work, after his return from the farm, without any inconvenience. I also think it desirable that the labourer's cottage should be close to the employer's house, if placed on the farm, so as to create an interest between the master and the man. The statutes are a bad system, but there is a desire for improving the labourer, and I have known some cases of lads staying on for some years with one master. There are benefit societies and clothing clubs in the district, which the poor are very willing to avail themselves of.

WETWANG.

Population, 623. Acreage, 3,900. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

230. *Rev. Mr. Cole.*—There are mixed private gangs in this parish from 12 to 30 in number; of these there are from eight to ten males between the ages of 8 and 10, and four to five females. They are employed in spring and in summer in pulling weeds and singling turnips. They do not go more than a mile to their work. The hours of work are from 7 a.m. 5·30 p.m., with one hour and a half allowed for dinner, at noon. The sexes work together, but they are too young for this system to cause much harm. They attend school regularly a great part of the year. In this parish one gang suffices for the different farms in turn, and it would be undesirable to interfere by legislative regulation as to the times or hours during which it should be employed, the district being peculiarly dependent on the weather. I would not place any restriction on the age at which children should be employed, nor on the distance to which they should go. When young persons or children are engaged on one of the outlying farms the farmer sends a cart or waggon to fetch them, and sends them home in a similar manner; in some cases they are taken by railway. The regulations of the Print Works Act might be applied in this and similar agricultural parishes without injury to the agricultural interests, provided there were schools within a reasonable distance. In this parish the houses are compact, and there is a very good attendance of children at school; the parents can afford to send their children, the school fee being only 1*d.* up to 8 years of age. Most of the cottages have a small lean-to by way of a back kitchen, and generally two rooms upstairs with communication from below by means of a ladder. The rooms are small, some without fireplace or ventilation, and there is no drainage to speak of. The accommodation is limited, where but more is provided lodgers are often taken. Many cottages have a small garden. the rent varies from 3*l.* to 6*l.* per year.

SCHOOL.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 -	50	36
Between 10 and 13 -	30	12
Girls:		
Under 10 -	49	41
Between 10 and 13 -	12	7

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	50	44
Between 10 and 13 -	30	23
Girls:		
Under 10 -	49	40
Between 10 and 13 -	12	9

We tried a night school but it failed. After leaving work in the fields the farm lads have to get their supper and fodder the horses, &c. and are too sleepy and tired from the effect of out-door work to do much in school. They go to bed soon after eight. The apprentices work till nearly eight, and it seems a general opinion among the farmers that if they excuse their lads to go to school, and break the ordinary hours, they would have great difficulty in getting the work done properly and within reasonable time.

FOX-HOLES.

Population, 319. Acreage, 2,600.

231. *Rev. R. H. Foord.*—We have a night school here pretty well attended. The children are employed

young in bassacking, but only for a short time. The farm lads do not come well to night school, and I think that there would be great difficulty in enforcing a system of certificates of school attendance to be produced before hiring. The farmers do not care sufficiently about the character of those they hire, but look more to the physical power. The children are much overworked in harvest when harvest is taken at a price. The cottages are mostly belonging to small owners, and are rather crowded. There is an iron foundry in the parish.

DRIFFIELD.

232. Meeting of Farmers—about 30.

It was agreed that nine years would be a fair limit to fix, below which no child should go to work. Private gangs are common in the neighbourhood, they are usually mixed, of a number of 15 or 16. Their usual hours of work are 10, with one hour allowed for rest. No one hires a farm lad under 12 or 13 years of age. There are plenty of schools in the districts, but the parents are very indifferent about education. Schooling can always be had for the children in the winter, or even during nine months in the year. It is the exception, if a lad of 12 cannot read or write. The question of the production of a certificate of school attendance before hiring was discussed, it was considered that it would be no hardship to require the production of a certificate of such attendance for six months during the year, between the ages of 9 and 12, inasmuch as they *do* go to school as a rule between those ages. The school payments throughout the district are generally a penny or twopence a week. It was suggested that a free education would be an inducement to the parents to send their children to school, but that if such advantages were given them a penalty should be put on the parent who neglected to send his child.

With respect to the cottages, it was considered that there is great and ample room for the improvement of them, the great need is a sufficient number, with three bedrooms. A good labourer will not come to a farm unless he can have a cottage, and some will not walk a great distance to their work, and if the cottages were placed close to the farm, the farmers would pay more attention to their labourers than they do now.

The parishes in this district were said to be well off for gardens and allotments, and it was considered that a garden of one rood attached to the cottage would be more advantageous to the family than the allotment. The present rate of wages is 15*s.* per week, a man can earn by piece-work at turnip-hoeing 3*s.* 6*d.* a day.

It was not thought that any alteration in the system of hiring was at present practicable.

233. *The Rev. R. Nares*, curate, Driffield.—The system of ganging exists here, and is winked at by the farmers, for the sake of cheapness. There are large cake works, but I do not think that any girls are employed in them. Driffield is an agricultural centre, "the metropolis of the Wolds;" some parts of the town are very bad.

Boys' School.

234. *Mr. Slater*, master.—150 on the books; about 50 over 10 years; and 100 under 10. From the middle of May to the end of July, children of ages varying from 8 to 14 are employed in the fields, brassacking; during this time they lose most of the knowledge which they have acquired previously at school. They go out to the fields in April for potatoe planting, they are also employed in potatoe picking in the autumn, thereby losing nearly half the year, and both girls and boys come back rough and demoralized. I think that the boys learn more between 10 and 12 than before 10, those children who attend for six months only, after 10 years of age, are not doing much at school.

235. *Daniel Towse*, 12 years of age.—I have been out brassacking with a lot of boys and girls together, and was paid by the farmer's man.

236. *John Hopper*.—I have been out weeding with "Nottingham Jack," he paid me 5*s.* a week, and always at his own house at Driffield. "Nottingham Jack" only works for farmers when he has the job by the piece.

237. *Robert Staveley*.—I have been out for a fortnight weeding at 10*d.* a day. I was hired by John Adams, and paid by him. John Adams, I know, is not a regular labourer for any farmer where I have worked for him.

Girls' School.

238. *Miss Cook*, mistress.—126 on books; average attendance through the year, 100; about 36 above 10 years of age; and 90 under 10. The girls used to go out brassacking a great deal, but do not go so much now.

[There is also a mission or ragged school, chiefly attended by girls, all above 6 years of age. It has only been open two months, and the average attendance is 40. This school is in the worst part of Driffield, and is intended for the benefit of the children of bad parents.]

239. *John Adams*, ganger.—Said that he had taken out 30 or 40 children at a time, that he gave the list to the farmer for whom he worked, and that he was paid so much a head for the children, and that he paid them afterwards.

240. *Mrs. Ferguson*, wife of a ganger.—My husband takes brassacking by the acre, and pays the children so much a day; he will take 40 or 50 together, and I have often been out to look after the girls while he looks after the boys, and the girls are a deal the most trouble. Father used to take out 100 boys and girls by the train; the little ones under 10 or 11 years are not much good, as they cannot do a good day's work. The hours of work are from 7 to 6, with an hour allowed for dinner. Children take their own meat. Ferguson does not work regularly for any farmer, buts gets his living at certain seasons by taking out gangs.

BOYNTON.

Population, 128. Acreage, 2,509. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

241. *Miss Mary Simpson*, the vicarage.—About 50 little boys are employed for four weeks in the summer, but hardly any girls. Of these 12 are between 8 and 10 years, and 38 between 10 and 13. Their work is brassacking. Those that do not live in the parish come from Bridlington, about three miles off. These are sent for in waggons and taken home in the same way. The hours of work are from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., with one hour for meals and ten minutes for rest or refreshment once or twice in the day. In the few cases in which girls have been employed they have worked apart from the boys. The health is not injuriously affected, nor have I heard of or seen any ill-usage in the fields. In this parish married women only ever work in the fields, and that to such a small extent that it does not amount to much of an evil. The worst effect of the young children going out to work is that the elder children are kept at home to take care of the little ones instead of going to school, and home duties are neglected. If the employment of females exist in other parishes to such a small extent as in this, it can hardly require legislation. The school attendance is scarcely at all affected by distance in summer, and not much in winter, as there is a winter infant school for those little ones that live far from the parish school. Neither is it affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents, as a penny a week is the payment for schooling; but in some degree it is by the mothers of large families going out to work, and the elder children having to take charge of the little ones. There is no industrial training for girls, but surely the gradations of domestic service after leaving school are the best industrial training. The cottages in this parish are sufficiently roomy, and there is no particular fault to be found with them. One cottage per 100 acres is considered sufficient for those employed on the land. We have that proportion, but

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most of the labourers are employed by Sir George Cholmley in his woods and stables, so the farmers have to get their labourers from a distance, which is a sore evil. The cottages have four good-sized rooms and generally a small scullery, are well drained and ventilated, and have good garden and other conveniences. N.B.—The above accommodation is amply sufficient in this part of the country, as children are removed from home, being hired into farmhouses at from 12 to 14 years of age. The rent of the cottages, including garden, is usually five pounds.

SCHOOL.

In Summer.

Boys:	
Under 10 - - -	15
Girls:	
Under 10 - - -	16
Between 10 and 13 - -	1
Average attendance of boys -	11
And girls - - -	13

In Winter.

Boys:	
Under 10 - - -	15
Between 10 and 13 - -	4
Girls:	
Under 10 - - -	16
Between 10 and 13 - -	3
Average attendance of boys -	15
Girls - - - -	15

There are no children who are neither at school nor at work throughout the year. There are about 36 males and 14 females growing up with insufficient education. Very few can read long words with ease or spell correctly. About one-fourth cannot read at all, and about one-third more can read very little. None of these belong to the parish; all leave home young; but about 50 between 13 and 18 are hired for the farmhouses every year from other places. There is an evening school for males; it is open for 28 weeks in the year, in the months of December, January, and February, and from the middle of May to the end of August on three nights a week for two hours in summer, and one hour in winter. There are none under 12 attending the school, but 26 in the summer and 10 in the winter on the register, of whom six attend in winter, and 14 in summer. In summer the evening school is at Carnaby, where there are seven farmhouses; in the winter at Boyton, where there are only three farms. In winter, owing to stable work, the time available for teaching is usually from 7 to 8 p.m., and in summer from 7 to 9 p.m. They are taught reading, writing, knowledge of the Bible, rudiments of geography and history, with a very little composition and no arithmetic. A night school can never supply the deficiencies of a day school while there is neither compulsory rule nor any inducement beyond love of learning. Love of the teacher is almost the only real inducement that tells now. Few boys naturally love learning; the most untaught have almost invariably the least love for it, consequently the greater the prevailing ignorance the greater the difficulties while there is no sort of compulsion.

242. EXTRACTS from LETTERS from MISS SIMPSON to Hon. E. Portman.

"Something of continuous teaching is the more necessary, because when a child was little he could not exercise his mind much on what he learned, and having no real grasp of it, it is the sooner lost before he is of age to know the real meaning of anything. Any knowledge, whether religious or secular, acquired in early childhood, if it is not kept up fares too inevitably in most cases like the seed that fell by the wayside. If, then, we cannot hope to add greatly to the small stock of knowledge gained before the age for working begins, let us at least aim at keeping it together till the mind is capable of retaining and applying it."

"I see that at Beverley one of the speakers said that boys who had been working in the fields all day are unfitted for the mental labours of the night school. I think that observation can hardly have been the result of experience. To anyone accustomed to teaching working lads in a night school it reads rather like nonsense. Night schools ought to succeed, and will, perhaps, be found the best means that can be devised for keeping up and supplementing the insufficient education of children in agricultural districts. I see that a well-known farmer of those parts was strenuous in his resistance to compulsion. I think there is some misapprehension on that subject. Who are those we should have to compel?—Not the parents. In the East Riding working boys are very generally quite separated from their parents, being hired into farmhouses in another parish. Parents would be the last to object to their boys who are "off" getting some schooling of a night. Is it the employer? I dare not say what proportion of these could be brought willingly to take the trouble to provide education for the lads they employ; but I hope and believe that very few would be unwilling that they should be taught if others would be at the trouble of teaching them. I believe also that there is hardly a parish in which the clergyman and schoolmaster would not provide night school teaching, if they could be assured of a demand for it. It is then only the boys themselves who need any compulsion; happily not all these are, or (as things now are) instead of having a few night schools scantily attended, we should have none at all. I think when it is rightly understood few will be found to object to some compulsory rule for ensuring the attendance of untaught boys, say under 15.

"Of course I think a rule similar to the Old Church rule (Second Rubric at the end of the Catechism in the Prayer Book) is the best, if that is insufficient something else must be provided."

A clergyman of 11 years' experience in night school teaching wrote to me, "One thing I hope "government will do, discourage boys going to the "night school at so early an age. If we do not take "care the night school may easily be made an instru-"ment for making our boys greater slaves to work "than they are now." I begged for an explanation, telling him that I had just written to you, that I wished there might be a compulsory rule for all working boys under 15 to attend a night school.

He replied, "What I mean is this: the Earl of "Shaftesbury, in a Bill that he proposed last year, "would not allow boys to be employed in gangs until "they are 8 years old. Now suppose this bill made "law, and also government grants to be made for boys "in our night schools as young as 8, I fear the result "will be that in many districts it would come to be "taken as a matter of course, that a boy should leave "the day school at 8 to work in the fields and carry "on his education in the night school. What his edu-"cation would be worth under such a system I think "we can pretty well guess. I have no wish to run "down night schools; these are as yet in their in-"fancy and they have, I believe, a greater work to "do than most men think. I have worked hard at "ours now for 11 years. But there is great danger "now of making them supplant instead of supple-"ment the day schools. Speaking from what I know, "I should say that it most probably will prove against "the children's interest for government to make grants "to our night schools for boys under 10."

Mr. Barugh, wrote, "If we are to have com-"pulsory education there would be great difficulty "with regard to the support of children in large "families. At present parents solicit employers to "take children into service when so young as to be "worthless; without higher wages, I do not see how "the labourer can support a numerous family and "send part of them to school. The competition for "farms causes a constant advance in rents; the com-"petition for employment keeps down the price of "unskilled labour; the landlord and the tenant have

"benefited by the recent improvement in agriculture, "but the labourer has benefited very little."

It would be a blessed result of legislation if it puts a check on mothers going out to work, and children kept from school, and along with that tends to increase the agricultural wages. If some such half-time system as you seem to contemplate is not applicable to agricultural districts, that can only be, I think, because agricultural wages are too low. It would doubtless be as great an advantage in agricultural as I believe it to be in manufacturing districts. As regards boys above 13, doubtless "inducement" and "aid" are far better than compulsion, and would cause the idle and refractory to punish themselves by deprivation.

BRIDLINGTON.

243. Chamber of Agriculture, 14th March.

The Rev. H. F. Barnes, incumbent of Bridlington.—Thought the difference between 9 and 10 years of age a very serious difference, and that the one year more was of incalculable importance in laying the foundation both of bodily and of mental power. If an education certificate was required of every boy before he could enter farm service, especially if such certificate represented the actual amount of attendance at school it would be the best of all guarantees that something had been done to raise the boy in a social scale and fit him for the future duties of life.

Mr. Joseph Barugh, advocated education strongly. He had had considerable practice amongst servants, and always found the educated were the best and most obliging and most attentive. Many persons undervalued education and did not send their children to school, but preferred having them employed so that they reap some profit by them. He would not have boys under 12 years of age, he considered them worthless. The cottage condition he strongly deprecated. Formerly it was a principle with both landlords and farmers to prevent their servants and labourers belonging to or having houses in villages, and they endeavoured to throw them into the towns so as to escape the poor's rate. But since the passing of the present Poor Law Act, the case was altered, and he hoped that a better accommodation would be provided for the agriculture classes.

On a division the following resolution was carried "That in the opinion of this meeting the age of 10 years is the proper time for commencing work."

Mr. William Smith dwelt at considerable length on the education of the labouring classes, the desirability of separating the sexes when employed in the field work, the immorality of children when left to themselves, and the vast importance of youth on entering permanent service to be subject to the control of master or foreman.

A discussion here took place on the desirability of altering the present system of hirings, and some opinions were expressed to the effect that it would be desirable to have the males and females hired at different periods.

Bridlington.

Population, 5,767. Acreage, 2,500.

This is a large Ecclesiastical parish.

Boys' School.

244. *Mr. Thomas Messenger*, master.—Two hundred on the books, 170 in attendance. I rarely keep boys till 14 years of age, some boys are now sent out tenting at ages varying from 9 to 13. In brassacking time 30 or 40 go out; a man comes to fetch them; they are taken in waggons and are paid 8*d.* and 9*d.* a day. They go as soon as they can do any work. After this season the boys return to school, and for three months in the winter those boys who are earning wages attend school very well. I know of 14 or 15 boys who never attend school at all. There is no great unwillingness on the part of the parents to send their children to school; but a large portion of the year is taken up by field work, such as brassacking, picking and singling turnips, and those who are employed then only come to school in the winter. The payment is 1*s.* a quarter, all found, except copy-books, and much voluntary support is given by means of private free-lists for the school. If boys attended regularly up to 10 years of age, they would be up to the fifth standard. I have been here 14 years; when I first came the number on the books was 100. The population has decreased, but the number of children on the books has nearly doubled. I am of opinion that a grant for a number of attendances smaller than that now required by the committee of council, would be a great benefit to small agricultural parishes.

Girls' School.

138 on the books. 131 present, March 17.

The girls go out brassacking and are away for three weeks at a time; when they go a long distance they are taken in carts. One girl of 13 earns 6*d.* a day, another of 13, 11*d.* a day; one of 11 years, 9*d.* a day, and one of 8 years, 8*d.* a day.

Infant School.

150 on the books. 120 in attendance.

In summer, there have been as many as 195 in school, they pay 1*s.* a quarter. They leave this school for the day school between 6 and 7 years of age.

There are no allotments in Bridlington.

245. *C. Grey, Esq.*, clerk to the Board of Guardians.—The union is well off, we have extremely few cases of pauperism, and the payment for the schooling of children of parents which are on the parish, is ordered by the Board of Guardians throughout the union, and the sum amounts to a very little per annum.

N.B.—The same system prevails at Driffield Union.

HUNMANBY.

Population, 1,387. Acreage, 6,472.

246. Meeting.—Present, the Rev. M. Taylor, Mr. Awburn, agent to Admiral Mitford, and some farmers.

Women are very little employed. Private gangs are used for brassacking in the spring; the children are got from the village. Boys and girls are employed of the ages of 8 to 12. Their average wages are 8*d.* a day. One or two women generally go to look after them, and a man will manage 20 children.

The greatest distance to work from here is three miles, when they are taken in waggons.

Wages for an ordinary labourer, 15*s.* a week. It was thought that nine years would be the fair limit to put for children's work, that the amount of time devoted to field work by the children during the year was about three weeks, and that such work was no injury to the child, and of great benefit to the parents by reason of the earnings; further, that this labour is necessary to the employer. The hours of work are usually from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Boys of 10 years of age go out bird-tenting, at which they earn 6*d.* a day, and have very long hours. It would be desirable that all children between the ages of 9 and 12 or 13, should attend school for six months during the year, it was thought that a certificate of such attendance might be enforced, but there was a difference of opinion as to putting the penalty on the parents or the employer.

The district is fairly supplied with schools, but the parents are indifferent about education.

In the Wold district the necessity for certificated masters is a serious drawback to the success of schools in small parishes. And it was thought that a capitation grant might be given to small parishes on the requisition of the clergyman and churchwardens, that

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such a school was wanted, and that the parish was unable to provide funds for a certificated master.

The farm lads are very rough in their manner, half of them cannot write, and they very seldom come to church; the girls perhaps are a little better educated. It was thought that great alteration and improvement was required in the system of hirings, and more particularly that the farmer should attach more weight to the character of the lads.

The cottages are conveniently situated with regard to the work and the village, and they are generally good and not overcrowded; two families in one cottage not being allowed. There are some good cottages with an acre or an acre and a half to each in addition to two acres of tillage and of cow-grass in a large paddock; the rent of these varies from 15*l.* to 18*l.* a year, and the occupiers of them are not generally ordinary labourers but will sometimes do a day's work at thrashing. There are thirty cottages with gardens, a small number of small freeholds, and 12 acres of allotments in the parish. More cottages are required on the farms and it would pay the tenant to pay his landlord a good per-centage for the outlay. They are much wished for and some cases were quoted where the tenants have built the cottages for themselves. There is a savings' bank in Hummanby which is working most successfully.

246. Letter from Thomas Awburn, Esq., to the Hon. E. Portman.

Hummanby,
Sir, 25th March 1868.

In reply to your letter of the 19th inst. asking for information on the questions of savings banks, clubs, or benefit societies, I beg to say on going into the matters thoroughly I find a divided opinion. Upon the whole, from the sources on which I have based my inquiries, we, the majority, fully believe that the savings banks are far more advantageous to the labouring classes than benefit societies, although the latter are the means of rendering assistance in many cases. The benefit societies are compulsory inducements, and if not carried out according to the certified rules, members are at once debarred, and all monies paid are forfeited. Savings banks bring you the provident, and independent Englishmen of the labouring class who have the courage to depend on self help. This savings bank was established on the 1st of December 1862, and up to 31st December 1863 we had 168 depositors. Up to the present time 257 depositors in all, whose names have been on the bank books, of whom about 30 do not belong to the labouring class. Since its formation several very improvident persons have come under my especial notice, who since the system of savings banks came into operation, have availed themselves of its advantages and I can assure you there have been pleasing results.

Yours truly,
T. Awburn.

KILHAM.

Population, 1,200. Acreage, 8,173. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

247. *John Staveley*, Dotterill Park Farm.—I employ a private gang of 12 boys averaging 12 years of age on my farm of 850 acres. I also employ six lads between 13 and 18, and 20 over 18 throughout the year in the general working of the farm. The gang is employed in hoeing corn and gathering quicks, &c., and in the summer in pulling ketlocks, they go about two miles to work and work on the land for eight hours with one hour allowed for dinner. I do not employ any females in the gang, I do not think that any injury is done to their health when above 10 years of age. With a few exceptions all the young are able to read and write, many of them can do simple sums; the adults as a rule are not so well educated as the children of the present day. I think children should not be employed earlier than 9 years of age, and it would be very desirable to separate the sexes in gangs. In private gangs the labourer is often entrusted with from 15 to 20, but has no private interest in their labour beyond his daily wage. The children return with him to their homes in the village at the end of the day, in fact they are rarely out of his sight. I think it would be desirable to limit the age of girls employed in field work from 9 to 12 years. Up to this period I should not consider that it would injure them for domestic service. In my opinion the Factory Acts are not at all applicable to an agricultural district. In our own parish the children are employed in field work about three weeks in summer and one month in harvest, gleaning, &c., and can attend school the rest of the year. There is no doubt that much improvement might be made in many of the cottages, and it would be conducive to health and morality if there was an additional bedroom where there are now only two. I should think two cottages per 100 acres quite sufficient. In this parish we have a superabundance of cottages in the village; but in a large parish like ours of 8,000 acres it would be an accommodation if some were erected on the outlying farms. There are farms two miles off from the village and there is land available within one mile; I think that would be a proper place for a number of cottages as it would divide the distance for men to walk to their work and the children to school.

248. *Rev. E. Fellowes.*—There are allotments for the cottagers; 33 acres, let in portions of from one quarter acre to one acre, at 3*l.* or 4*l.* a year per acre. There are also 12 acres belonging to the parish, which are let at 10*s.* an acre, in portions of one rood to each man. Many of the cottages have good gardens and do not want a share in the allotments. This is an open parish and suffered much in the old times. There is an endowed school where the children are taught free; there are also four or five dame schools, but the school is in want of support. It gets no government grant as it has not a certificated master. It is very difficult to get children to attend regularly. There are several small farms, varying from 100 to 150 acres each.

249. *Thomas Cook*, schoolmaster.—On the books, 87; average attendance in winter, 63; in summer, 42. This school is managed by a committee. Most of the first class, from 9 to 12 years of age, go out to work from the middle of February throughout the spring. The boys will attend in winter up to 13 years of age. Many of the parents are extremely indifferent about the education of their children. This winter many have been kept away from school by the dearness of provisions.

250. *Jonathan Nicholes*, 8 years old, went out brassacking at 6, was at work from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

KIRBY UNDERDALE.

Population, 338. Acreage, 5,000.

251. *Rev. Thomas Monson.*—There are no private gangs. Twenty-five children, young persons, and women are employed in the parish in bird tenting, potatoe gathering, weeding, and turnip topping. From Martinmas to Lady-day the hours are from 8 a.m. to 4 or 5 p.m.; from Lady-day to Martinmas 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., with one hour allowed for meals. There is no necessity in this parish to put any restriction on female labour. I would not allow any boy to go to work under 10 years of age. The school attendance is much affected by distance in the winter, but not by the pecuniary resources of the parents. The labourers in this parish are hired by the year for the most part, and are lodged and boarded in the farm houses. There is a sufficient number of cottages with two or three bedrooms. The accommodation of the cottages is generally good; they belong to the landowners and are rented at 3*l.* a year. The school is a mixed one, and boys and girls are entered in the same register. The

number of each sex is nearly equally divided. The attendance, however, is much better during the summer months than in the winter. At the present time there are 41 boys and girls on the register; the average attendance for the year was 25. There is no evening school. Classes of farm servants and older boys are held for three nights during the week in the winter months in the clergyman's house.

252. *Rev. W. Simons*, curate.—The occupations in this parish are small—up to 400 acres. There are no cottages on the farms, but the farm lads live in the house. There is not a sufficient supply of labour in the village for any extra work. When extra hands are wanted the farmers often have to send to York. The parish extends three miles on to the Wolds. There are no poor children in the village. There are only three labourers' cottages; most of the cottages are inhabited by farmers and tradesmen, whose children come to the school. There are three or four families in one cottage, three girls and three or four men sleeping in one room. Education is at a low ebb; not four out of ten farm lads can read. These lads will not come to church, as they say "it is not the "custom." Wages for an ordinary labourer, 13*s.* a week.

STAMFORD BRIDGE.

253. *C. A. Darley, Esq.*—There is no gang system here except in the case of the Irish from York at times of potatoe setting and picking. The children are not much employed under 10 years of age. I think that a limit of age might be fixed. The occupations are here generally small, in some cases even to a farmer working his land with one plough lad. The great want is an increased number of cottages on the farms for labourers and in the villages, labour now having often to be brought from a great distance. The farm lads are under very little control; they do not go to any place of worship. They are well fed by the master, who gets as much work as he can out of them. The system pursued in farm houses is very bad for the morality of the female servants. There is not much assistance given for the education of the poor by the Board of Guardians, except in cases of widows with large families. The average wage for a good labourer is 2*s.* 6*d.* a day. I think that the whole money per week given to the man is a better thing for the family than 8*s.* or 9*s.* a week and meat, as is sometimes the case.

The system of allowing young women and young men to work together without proper attention certainly tends to immorality and to a want of knowledge of domestic duties. I think some restriction on female employment might be beneficial. When hired by the year by small occupiers the girl is often put to work unfitted to her sex, *e.g.*, stacking corn, and in thrashing also. Boys should not be employed under 10 years of age. Boys under 12 years who are employed in spring, summer, and autumn should attend school from November to February, and by this arrangement their earnings would enable the parents to provide for more education when unassisted by charity or otherwise.

The want of proper accommodation in the cottages leads to much immorality, parents and children sleeping often in the same room, and more especially at Martinmas, when the children, grown to men and women, return home from service.

Very few cottages have three bedrooms; the upper room is often very low and badly ventilated. Rent about 4*l.* a year. A good cottage cannot be built to pay above 3 per cent., and unless repairs are done by the landlord it soon becomes dilapidated.

There are usually 60 to 70 in attendance at the school, of whom 12 boys and 6 girls are free,—paid for by an endowment.

Allotments.

From my experience an allotment not exceeding one rood is a great boon to the labourer. Nearly 30 years ago I provided the poor of this township with them. They had no garden, no pig, and used to be standing in summer evenings after work smoking and talking in groups, some tempted to the alehouse. This is now done away, and it is a very cheering sight to see them and their children in spring and summer evenings busily and happily employed cultivating their allotment. Nearly the whole of them keep a pig, which provides them from 18 to 25 st. of bacon at Christmas, and have great pride in possessing a good one. They have vegetables for their family. In order that the allotment should prove beneficial to the labourer and not interfere with his regular employment, the allotment should be as near his home as circumstances will permit. The ground should be favourable for spade culture, and the quantity not exceed one rood. This quantity of land he can manage with the aid of his family without interfering with his usual work, taking, perhaps, a day in getting in his crop of potatoes. The cultivation on my allotments is strictly confined to the spade, about half the rood potatoes and a few other vegetables, the remainder barley or rye, the straw from which provides bedding for the pig and manure for the next crop, aided by small portions of rough grass cut from the sides of ditches, &c., which the farmers readily give them for clearing away. The rent is 8*s.* per rood, payable half yearly. The landlord keeps the gates and fences in repair. If any occupant wilfully damages the same the landlord repairs and charges the cost on the offender. During my experience this has never happened. I have only had one defaulter, and very rarely have had occasion to remark on the want of proper attention to the culture of the ground. The rent is paid very regularly, and the occupants express their gratitude for the advantages conferred on them by the possession of the allotment.

Savings Bank.

I am of opinion that this might be productive of good if great facility for deposit, combined with confidence in the security, and liberty to deposit any sum however small, could be carried out. I am led to this conclusion by the good effects of a well-conducted clothing club. Some years ago one was established in this township. The members contribute weekly any sum from 1*d.* to 6*d.* or more as their circumstances will permit. At the end of the year a small bonus is added, and the result has been most satisfactory and the payments well sustained.

SCRAYINGHAM.

Population, 387. Acreage, 4,729.

254. *Thomas Walmsley.*—This parish consists of three hamlets, viz.:—Scrayingham, Howsham, Leppington. In Scrayingham all the cottages have about one rood of garden land attached to each cottage; besides the cottage garden those who wish can have one or two allotments of half a rood each for 4*s.* 6*d.* a year. Three acres here are divided into allotments. Most of the cottages have land attached to them sufficient with the aid of a cow pasture to enable the cottager to keep one cow. An extra payment is required from the cottager per year who sends his cow into the common cow-pasture. This common-pasture is a privilege allowed by the squire, who permits a portion of his land to be used for the purpose. One of our farmers occupies from 50 to 60 acres, the rest of them from 150 to 300. Leppington has two acres of land in allotments of half a rood each, at a rental of 7*s.* each. Every cottage there has its garden and about one half rood, as well as an allotment. The rent of the cottage and garden is about 2*l.* a year. The farmers here occupy from two to 400 acres each. Howsham has no land in allotments but each cottage has its garden of about one-half a rood. The farms vary from 200 to 400 acres. The whole of our farmers procure their male and female servants at the

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yearly statute hirings. The demand for the services of our younger children for farm work has lately much increased. There are some five or six children above the age of 10 who come to school when not engaged in farm work. Some 15 or 16 from the age of 6 to 10 years who attend school, but of these the elder ones are often at farm work. Girls are not usually engaged on farm work excepting during harvest. The paucity of children in our village obliges the farmers to take their own children early to work. Most of the farmers and all the poorer parishioners send their children to our school. I think it is not advisable that women should work in the fields amongst the men unless the father, or brother, or husband, or some near relative be working with them. The rector's wife gives some industrial training to girls at the rectory for a few months. We have occasionally a night school in winter when we can induce the farm lads to come.

[I met a bookseller or hawking man at Stamford Bridge station who had been at his trade for eight years in that neighbourhood; he said that the people could not read and write better than when he began. The class of books that he was most able to sell was not the best for the morality of the people.—E. B. P.]

ESCRICK.

Population, 856. Acreage, 4,300. Cultivation, partly arable and partly grass.

255. *John Coleman, Esq.*—There is no private gang. Extra work such as potatoe setting, harvesting, and sorting is done by the Irish from York. These Irishmen and women frequently walk five miles each way to their work; sometimes a farmer provides a room or allows them the use of a barn to sleep in. The hours of work on the land may be from 8 to 5 with an hour for dinner. Sometimes the sexes work together but often apart. The gang of Irishwomen always has one man to overlook them. In this parish we have about 30 to 35 women, and from 20 to 30 boys and girls employed in agriculture. I think field labour undesirable for young women. The independent kind of life renders them unfit for the restraints of domestic service. Mothers with young children are better at home. 10 hours work is quite as much as any children and young persons should do. The half-day system would not answer, alternate days would be preferable. The school attendance is not affected by distance or by the pecuniary resources of the parents. An industrial school for eight pupils, preparing them for general service, is kept up by Lady Wenlock. The girls are also taught sewing and cutting out in the national school. [This school is most admirably managed and has produced excellent results.—E. B. P.] There can be no doubt that herding males and females in one room in the cottage tends to destroy the protective influence of modesty; no predisposing cause of vice is more active than this. Every cottage intended for a family should have three bedrooms, with a separate approach from the landing. One cottage per 100 acres is considered sufficient for the requirements of the land—we have a larger proportion than that. Most of the cottages are situated in the village and generally not more than one mile from the work; they are not crowded, as the rules of the estate never allow lodgers without leave. We have a considerable variety of cottages; widows' cottages consisting only of one room; but ordinarily they have down stairs a good living room and wash-house, sometimes two down rooms, and ordinarily two bedrooms and sometimes three. They have gardens or allotments, and the rent is from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. The best mode of providing an increase of cottage accommodation would be by requiring a fair payment for the landlord's outlay from the farmer who requires the labour and derives the benefit from it. The allotments are one rood to each labourer, at the average rent of the land. Some cottages also have a cow-gate and keep a pig. The ordinary wages of a labourer 14*s.* a week; women, 1*s.* 3*d.* a day. The farmers' sons go very much to the same school as the labourers'. There are many small farms in the district; 300 acres is considered a large one. A farmer holding 200 acres would have two hired lads in his house and would only employ one labourer. There is an infant school where children are taken in as young as 18 months; they go on to the day school at 5 or 6 years old.

SCHOOL.

In Summer.

On Register.

Boys:	
Under 10 - - -	27
Between 10 and 13 - -	20
Girls:	
Under 10 - - -	29
Between 10 and 13 - -	31

Average Attendance.

Boys:	
Under 10 - - -	25
Between 10 and 13 - -	20
Girls:	
Under 10 - - -	25
Between 10 and 13 - -	21

The attendance in winter is much the same as in summer.

256. N.B. Subjoined are the returns from the farmers on Lord Wenlock's estates:—

Name.	Parish.	Number employed.		Age of youngest.	Wages.	Employment.
		Boys.	Women.			
				Years.		
Th. Simpson -	Skipwith, 50 acres	2	1	10	1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a day.	Potatoe planting and picking.
Geo. Brown	Escrick, 248 acres -	—	3	14 and 15	1*s.* 3*d.* a day -	Harvest.
Geo. Smith -	Escrick Grange, 233 acres.	—	—	13	Boys, 6*d.* and food.	Do.
Francis Brown -	Escrick, 150 acres	4	2	15	Boys, 6*l.* to 20*l.* a year; women, 1*s.* 3*d.* a day.	All the year.
Rich. Stark - -	Do. 247 acres	3	3	9 to 13	Boys, 3*s.* a week and meat; women, 1*s.* 3*d.* to 2*s.* a day.	Hay and harvest.
John Harrop -	Do. 246 acres	—	—	14	1*s.* a day.	
Anthony Taylor -	Do. 220 acres -	2 6	2–6 (girls.)	9	6*d.* to 1*s.* 3*d.* a day; women, 1*s.* to 1*s.* 3*d.* a day.	Potatoe planting and raising.
Ch. Chatterton -	Do. 200 acres	5 and 5 girls.	10	10	Boys and girls, 8*d.* a day; women, 1*s.* 3*d.*	Harvest and autumn.

E. R. York.

Mr. Portman.

d.

Name.	Parish.	Number employed. Boys.	Number employed. Women.	Age of youngest.	Wages.	Employment.
				Years.		
Geo. Bell - -	Escrick, 150 acres -	2	10	10	1*s.* a day	Potatoe harvest.
T. and W. Etherington	Acaster Malbis, 70 acres.	Two or three		11 to 13	Children, 1*s.*; women, 1*s.* 3*d.* a day.	Potatoe planting and picking.
John Raimes - -	Do. 210 acres -	6	10	8	1*s.* and 1*s.* 3*d.* a day.	Potatoe, &c.
Rich. Dawson	Do. 296 acres -	—	3	12 to 15	1*s.* a day.	
Th. Richardson	Do. 99 acres	2	3	10	1*s.* a day	Potatoe times.
Joseph Mawson	Do. 309 acres	2	—	10 to 12	8*d.* to 1*s.* a day; women, 1*s.*	Autumn.
Wm. Cundall -	Do. 174 acres -	2	2	10	1*s.* to 1*s.* 3*d.* a day.	Potatoe times.
Robt. Cowper -	Do. 70 acres	1	1	9 to 12	1*s.* 3*d.* a day; half pay under 10 years.	Do.
John Cundall -	Do. 120 acres -	2	2	9 to 12	Same as above -	Do.
John Holmes	Do. 180 acres -	3	2	12	1*s.* and 1*s.* 3*d.* a day.	Do.
Wm. Wray -	Hutton Wansley, 300 acres.	1	3	10	1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a day.	Most in harvest.
Thos. Coates	Do. 470 acres -	4	4	12	9*d.* and 1*s.* a day	Spring and harvest.
Thos. Leadley	Angram, 154 acres -	—	2	—	1*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a day.	
R. Wetherall - -	Do. 190 acres	—	2	12	1*s.* a day	Particular seasons.
Robt. Lofthouse -	Bishopthorpe, 170 acres.	—	3	14	1*s.* a day	Harvest.
J. Dalton	Hutton, 170 acres	—	—	14	1*s.* to 2*s.* a day	Do.
John Kirby	Wheldrake, 149 acres	—	6–12	14	1*s.* 3*d.* to 2*s.* -	Potatoe times.
Rd. Robson	Deighton, 150 acres -	3	3	11	Boys, 6*d.* and meat; women, 1*s.* 3*d.*	Harvest.
Rd. Richardson	Do. 85 acres -	—	—	15	1*s.* 3*d.* a day	Do.
G. Ryder -	Stillingfleet, 115 acres	—	—	11	1*s.* 3*d.* a day	Potatoe and turnip seasons.
Lawrence Simpson	Do. 250 acres	4	—	14		
Robert Graves	Deighton, 260 acres -	4	2 (girls.)	14	Yearly.	
Geo. Long	Wheldrake, 140 acres	His own children		9	-	Potatoe seasons.
Th. Herbert -	Do. 104 acres	—	—	13	1*s.* to 1*s.* 2*d.* a day.	Potatoe times.
Wm. Wood	Do. 212 acres	2	2	12	Boys, 6*d.* to 9*d.*; women, 1*s.* 3*d.*	Harvest and hay.
James Brown	Do. 213 acres	—	—	12	- -	Harvest.
Geo. Robinson	Do. 208 acres	2	2–15	13	1*s.* to 2*s.*	Do.
J. Atkinson	Do. 84 acres	2	5	12	1*s.* 3*d.* a day	Potatoe seasons.
F. Pottage -	Do. 97 acres	—	2–12	—	1*s.* 3*d.* a day	
Mk. Rennison	Riccall, 84 acres	2 to 12, boys and girls		9	6*d.* to 1*s.*	Do.
H. Carr -	Elvington, 160 acres	—	—	14	1*s.* 3*d.* a day	Do.
Th. Gamble	Kelfield, 200 acres	—	2	11	1*s.* a day -	Do.
W. Acomb -	Kepley, 120 acres	7 (children.)	10	10	Children, 10*d.*, 1*s.*; women, 1*s.* 2*d.*, 1*s.* 6*d.*	Spring and autumn.
Ben. Lacy -	Wheldrake, 153 acres	1	—	15	1*s.*, 1*s.* 2*d.*	Potatoes.
W. Carr	Elvington, 70 acres -	—	—	12	1*s.* 3*d.* a day	Potatoes and turnips.
H. Etherington -	Wheldrake, 150 acres	—	—	Don't know	-	Potatoes.
P. Harrison -	Do. do.	His own children		13	-	Do.
P. Harrison, jun. -	Do. do.	—	2	13	1*s.* 3*d.*, 1*s.* 6*d.* -	Do.
Fs. Carr - -	Elvington, 138 acres	—	—	12	1*s.* 3*d.* -	Particular seasons.
Art. Lottey -	Kexby, 120 acres	—	—	10	1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.*	Potatoes.
Mary Ann Robinson -	Do. 130 acres	—	—	12	1*s.*, 1*s.* 6*d.*	Do.
Js. Blanchard	Do. 258 acres	—	—	12	9*d.*, 1*s.* 3*d.*	Nearly all the year.
Anth. Lottey	Do., 107 acres	5 (children.)	5	10	1*s.* 3*d.* -	Spring and autumn.
Th. Bulmer -	Riccall, 98 acres	10 (children.)	2–12	9	Children, 6*d.*, 1*s.*; women, 1*s.*, 1*s.* 6*d.*	At certain seasons.
J. Stead - -	Do. 130 acres	2–10 (children.)	4–12	10	1*s.* -	Potatoe.
Isc. Swimbank	Do. 220 acres	4–12 (children.)	4–20	9	1*s.*	Potatoe, &c.
W. Swimbank	Do. 133 acres	—	3–10	—	1*s.*	Do.
Mary Middleton -	Do. 207 acres	—	—	12	8*d.* to 1*s.* 3*d.*	Particular seasons.
Rich. Moat -	Kexby, 149 acres	—	—	12	1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.*	
Th. Romans	Riccall, 40 acres	—	10	—	1*s.*, 1*s.* 6*d.*	
Sam. Thompson	Skipwith, 297 acres -	—	20	—	Boys, yearly; 1*s.*, 1*s.* 3*d.* women.	Potatoes.
W. Silversides	Riccall, 86 acres	10 (children.)	2	9	Children, 6*d.*, 1*s.*; women, 1*s.*	Do.
Robt. Leaf -	Stillingfleet, 137 acres	3 (children.)	3	11	1*s.* 6*d.* -	Do.
J. Silversides - -	Riccall, 146 acres	10 (children.)	2	9	Children, 6*d.*, 1*s.*; women, 1*s.*	Do.
J. Banks - -	Kexby, 123 acres	6–10	—	10	1*s.* - -	Various seasons.

Of these (63 in all) 53 consider children's and women's labour of importance to farming operations, three consider them unnecessary; 23 prefer educated, six uneducated labourers; 21 say there is no difference between educated and uneducated; and one says he could dispense with the children, but not with the women.—E. B. P.

E. R. York.

Mr. Portman.

d.

ELVINGTON.

Soil, sand and stiff clay, and some moorland adjoining.

257. *Rev. A. Clarke.*—Children are very little employed here in field labour, the girls hardly at all; few, if any, go out under 10 years of age; perhaps a few for bird tenting; the potatoe picking is done by Irish gangs from York, a distance of seven miles. Sometimes they sleep in the barns. I think a limit of 10 years for children's work would not affect this parish. I think it very desirable to secure a more regular attendance at school. We have allotments, a mile from the village, of land at a low rate; the system is working well, and there is a great demand for them.

In this parish very few of the young women become agricultural servants; it is decidedly better for them to go into respectable domestic service. The talk in field work is apt to be coarse, and the girls become indisposed for the restraint of domestic service.

There is little or no real poverty. In the case of large families of young children there may be some difficulty as to school payments. Most of the children are within easy reach of the school, about 10 bring their dinner with them, a fair test.

Without being a large landowner I have had a good deal to do with the cottages in this parish. The total number is about 62; over more than 40 of these I have jurisdiction. I do not think there is one very bad cottage in the parish. A few have three bedrooms; a good many have either two good sized bedrooms or one bedroom and an available landing room (but not partitioned off). Some are decidedly badly off for sleeping accommodation.

Almost every cottage has a garden. Most are in my hands, a few go with the farms and two are attached to a brickyard.

Rents vary from 3*l.* 3*s.* to 5*l.* 9*s.* per annum, including local rates. Payments are monthly.

As regards allotments, I may say that when I became rector of Elvington I found part of the glebe broken up into allotments. The land so used is at a good distance from the centre of the village, which is a compact one, but though it is a mile or even more from the centre of the village there is no difficulty in letting the land; it is for the most part divided into roods and half roods (dividing the roods is an innovation of my own adopting). The roods let at 5*s.* per annum. The value of land in that part of the parish is only about 20*s.* or 21*s.* per acre per annum.

I understand that one rood of arable land is enough for a man in regular work; if he has much more he may over tire himself on it at night, and so unfit himself for his master's work next day (thus he may give the farmer a handle against the plan). Of course if he breaks time or hires labour he loses so much of the gain he might otherwise secure. We may allow that a smaller patch of "workable" land, for this allotment land ought certainly to be well worked and well manured, is better than a larger area cultivated in a slovenly fashion, and the manure from one pig, which might serve well for a rood, thereby sprinkled over half an acre or more.

Perhaps the testimony of a very trustworthy and I think judicious foreman in my employ may be of some value. He is not a very old man, say 50 years. He tells me that he has had a horse and has had four acres of laud, and has found it out to be no better but rather worse than working at 2*s.* 6*d.* a day regularly for a master.

Supposing a man could obtain a couple of acres of grass land and so keep a cow, this would I believe be a desirable boon for an industrious working man.

DUNNINGTON.

258. *Rev. E. J. Randolph.*—I think there would be a difficulty in carrying out any law for the restriction of age for children's work. The penalty, if any, should be put upon the employer, and not on the parents. Girls are not employed here in field work. There is chicory grown at Dunnington; gangs of Irish from York are employed in its cultivation—but in these gangs there are not many children. There are no large occupations in the parish, but many small freeholders; there are allotments on land belonging to the church. It is very desirable that increased cottage accommodation should be provided in order to obviate, by an increased supply of labour near the farms, the necessity for the statutes and hiring system. There are too many lads living in the farmhouses under no control of the clergyman or the farmer. I think it very desirable to do away with the hiring fairs by means of register offices, by an increased number of cottages on the farms, and by providing a substitute of amusement in lieu of the week's holiday at hiring time. At present there is no attachment between the master and the servant, as for the most part the servants change places every year.

HOWDENSHIRE.

259. *T. Clarke, Esq.*, of Knedlington says:—More schools are wanted in the district. He would have no objection to some kind of compulsory rate for education. Cultivation in this neighbourhood is very varied — potatoes, flax, and gooseberries in large numbers are grown in addition to the ordinary crops.

BARMBY MARSH.

Population, 437. Acreage, 2,000. Cultivation, grain and potatoes, chiefly latter.

260. *Rev. G. W. Robinson.*—There are in the parish about 66 children, young persons and women employed in agriculture; some of them are under 8 years of age, and vary from that up to 18. The number of males is 25, females 41, of which 22 are married. They are employed in potatoe planting, gathering and preparing for market, and in topping turnips. The hours of work are from 8 to 6, with one hour allowed for dinner. I consider field labour highly prejudicial to the morals of the women, and also to their capabilities for home work; the infants and very young children are neglected in consequence, and I think a married woman with a young family would be far better employed in minding her domestic duties. I would certainly restrict female labour in the fields, excepting at harvest time, which in this district includes potatoe harvest. I think 10 years should be the minimum age at which boys should go to work. The regular attendance at school for six months appears to me the most preferable mode of enforcing school attendance as being best calculated to "fire" the parents and their children to gain the most profit from education. Our school is free to all children of the inhabitants who choose to be taught. There is sufficient house accommodation in the parish; the cottages have mostly two bedrooms; they are built of brick with slate roofs, tiled floors. Size of rooms 12 ft. by 9 ft. The ventilation and drainage is good. They are held under different employers and landlords at an average rent of 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. They mostly have gardens. The wages for men are 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, and for women 1*s.* a day; a boy of 8 years 6*d.* a day; of 13 years, 1*s.* a day. They are out at work in spring and autumn. The number on the books of the school is about 60, and the average attendance 45 in summer and 57 in winter, the larger proportion being under 10 years of age. There is also a sacking factory in this parish. A night school has been attempted here in the winter, but did not succeed.

Women in this district are very largely employed in field work, probably first on account of the cheapness of their labour; and, secondly, as being capable of doing harder work than the children. Line pulling is hard work, and beyond the capabilities of children. One of the results of this employment of women is that the elder girls are kept away from school to mind the small children. The Irish gangs come out of Howden for potatoe work, and it is said that one man

takes a piece of work and provides the hands; but they are not children as a rule. Immorality does not prevail among the Irish gangs.

BUBWITH PARISH, INCLUDING THE TOWNSHIPS.

Population, 1,452. Acreage, 10,299.

BUBWITH.

Population, 554. Acreage, 1,465.

This parish includes the townships of Spaldington, Willetoft, Gribthorpe, Breighton, Harlthorpe, and Foggathorpe. There is a school in Bubwith and one in Spaldington. There is also a school in Horton parish, a distance of a mile and a half.

In Bubwith there is no church Sunday school. There are two dissenting Sunday schools and two dame schools to teach reading, writing, and sewing for girls.

261. *Mr. Christie*, schoolmaster.—On the books, 39 boys and girls. Average attendance, 35. The school payments are 4*d.* and 6*d.* a week. I can only make 25*l.* a year, out of which I have to pay 4*l.* for rent of my house. I get no assistance from the esquire or clergyman, and I cannot make the school pay. The children are employed at an early age; one boy of 8 and another of 9 years were away all last summer. Some are employed with their parents in line dressing. Those boys who are out in the summer come to school in winter, but the attendance is very small and irregular. Most of the parents can read. The children are generally employed in potatoe picking, weeding, &c. Many women also are employed in potatoeing.

HOWDEN.

Population, 2,504. Acreage, 2,607.

262. *Rev. W. Hutchinson.*—The children go to work very young; there is great mortality among the young and the women. I should like to see a limit of age fixed for children's labour, but I do not think that the labouring classes themselves would approve of it. Women go out very much to work, those who have small children leave them in the charge of some woman, and much mischief is done by the use of Godfrey's cordial which is given to the children to keep them quiet.

263. *Mr. Green*, clerk to union.—There is not much pauperism in the union; widows mostly are on the lists. The children are sent out to work as soon as they can earn anything. The Howden district is full of potatoes and of flax culture. Women are very much employed, and the children are left in the charge of a woman.

264. *Mr. Hutchinson*, ironmonger, secretary to the savings bank.—The bank is very flourishing and is largely patronized by the poor of the neighbourhood as well as those of the town and very much by agricultural labourers; we pay three per cent. to depositors. There has been a night school all the winter attended by 50 scholars and much appreciated; this school was supported by all religious denominations. Parents do not value education for their children; they say, "they "got on very well without it themselves," and will not take the trouble to send their children to school. Children go as soon as they are able to field work.

HOWDEN UNION.

265. LETTER from H. TIREMAN, Medical Officer, to the Hon. E. PORTMAN.

"GENTLEMEN, Howden, May 18, 1868.

"IN reply to the inquiries addressed to me by the Royal Commission respecting the employment of children, or young persons, and women, in agriculture, in the district of Howden, I beg to report as follows:—

"1st. That the effect of such field labour or employment is not injurious to the health and constitutions of the women themselves.

"2nd. That the said labour or employment has not any tendency to increase the mortality returns of infants, except in those instances where very young children are put out to day nursing, as is sometimes the case, particularly the children of young unmarried females, and that even such instances are not of frequent occurrence.

"3rd. That the state of the cottages, generally speaking, is satisfactory, and that overcrowding only occasionally prevails, and that amongst labourers with large families, great improvements having been effected in cottage dwellings, during the last 20 years. "I have, &c.

"HENRY TIREMAN."

266. MEETING at HOWDEN, April 4th.

Present about 30, including the principal occupiers of the district of Howdenshire.

The system of yearly farm servants is the same here as in other parts of Yorkshire. It is considered that two pair of horses, equal to two lads, is the quota for 100 acres of arable land.

Children are employed at an early age for bird tenting but not much in potatoe seasons. When they go out for weeding or for potatoeing they usually go with their mothers, and many would take two small ones who count as one for payment.

The farmers will not employ children under 10 years of age.

The decreased attendance at school at this time of the year is to be accounted for by the women going to work in the field and withdrawing bigger girls from school to take care of the little ones at home.

Men's wages 15*s.* a week, women 1*s.* a day. There was no objection to 10 years being fixed as the limit below which no child should go to work, nor to the requirement of six months' schooling for two years following, that is, up to 12 years of age, provided the time might be taken at any period of the year. The fixing of a limit would inflict no injury on the farmer, but it was thought that some parents might suffer by the loss of the earnings. The proposal of the production of a certificate of such school attendance for six months during the two years previous to hiring, with a penalty on the employer, was not approved, and it was suggested there would be great difficulties in enforcing such a system, "one farmer would employ "them if another would not."

The opportunities for learning in the greater part of the district are ample, though in some places schools are scarce and at a distance from the homes of the labourers. Parents are somewhat careless about sending the children to school after they are old enough to earn any money. Farm lads would not read at nights. A suggestion that the farmers might take some trouble to provide instruction for the lads in their houses in the evenings by means of books or by establishing a custom of reading aloud during the long evenings, was ridiculed.

The occupations are small, very few cottages are attached to the farms, but the district is thickly populated and there is not much need of cottages on the farms as the labourers are near their work.

Most of the cottages have gardens excepting in the towns or large village.

The rent averages 3*l.* a year for cottage without land, 5*l.* with a rood of land.

BLACKTOFT.

Population, 4,001. Acreage, 2,187.

267. *Rev. E. Ward.*—This is a long straggling parish; about 30 children, young persons, and women are employed in this parish in agriculture, but none under 10 years. They are employed in weeding and hoeing corn, bird tenting in spring and summer, and in pulling turnips and picking potatoes in the winter. The usual hours of work on the land are from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. with an hour allowed for dinner. It would be much better if field work for females was done away with, especially in the case of young girls. The plan which suggests itself to me as the best is to enforce school attendance for a certain number of

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weeks during the year, leaving to the parents the power of choosing those weeks. The school payment here is so low as to bring it within the reach of all. The farm lads are not well looked after and do not come to church. I think that the state of education is better than it was a few years ago. Most people who come to be married are able to sign their names.

LAXTON.

Population, 327. Acreage, 1,230.

268. *W. Lawler*, schoolmaster.—This is a mixed school. On the register in winter, 107; average attendance for the year ending February 1868, 55. The boys go out to work from 7 years and upwards in the month of March. Girls leave school to attend to the children at home while the mothers are away in the fields. In May and June the school fills again. The children are employed in line-pulling in May, and corn harvest, then in potatoeing and pulling turnips till November; altogether nearly six months in the year. Mothers will take their children to work to earn 1*s.* a day, though I believe that the farmers do not care to have the small ones. The women all go to the fields. I would place the limit for children's work at 10 years. Boys who go bird-tenting do not attend Sunday school. The morals of the district are bad, and the language used by the women in the field is also very bad. The wages for bird-tenting are 6*d.* a day, and the hours from 6.30 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. I have some children here at school from Yokefleet, a distance of two miles.

YOKEFLEET.

Population, 190. Acreage, 1,458.

269. *G. Ayre.*—I am often employed to look after the people who pull line. I get so much a day from the farmer; when the work is done I get it measured, and pay the people according to what they have pulled. I do not collect the labourers; those who come are generally Irish of all ages, but the little ones are not much good at this work.

270. *Mrs. Collinson*, dame school.—I get 4*d.* a day for children, and more for babies. Girls go out to field work at 7 or 8 years of age. I think it a very bad thing for them, as they get into bad habits. I teach the children to read and to sew, but I cannot write myself. Parents do not send their children so much to my school now, as the other schools are cheaper.

271. *Mr. Pepper*, farmer.—I think it very desirable that some steps should be taken for improving the education of the people, but I should not like to have a tax put on for that purpose. I think there should be some inducement to parents to send their children to school, and facilities should be given. Many parents are very indifferent about it. Wages for men 15*s.* a week, 1*s.* a day for women; they have constant work through the winter. Most of the cottages have a rood of land attached to them, and are rented from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* a year. Night schools as a rule in rural districts do not succeed for long; the farm lads are unable to attend in consequence of the duties they have to perform at the farms in the evenings. I think that it would be a good plan to have an itinerant schoolmaster to visit dame schools and farmhouses where remotely situated from the villages.

272. *Mr. Empson's* cottages.—Two down rooms, two bedrooms, and dairy, pigstye, and privy, one rood of land attached, 5*l.* a year. (In one of these cottages I found a girl of 13 years of age who was working in the fields who could neither read nor write.)

YORKSHIRE.—WEST RIDING.

W. R. York.
Mr. Portman.

SELBY.

SCHOOL.

273. *Mr. Oxley*, master.—On the books 120 boys, 133 girls. Average for the quarter, January to March, 105 boys, 104 girls. For the summer quarter 100 each. In the months of July and September the attendance is the smallest. The children go out to the fields in the potato seasons as young as 9 years of age. There does not appear to be any gang system here. There are large flax mills in Selby. The line pulling and potato cropping are principally done by gangs of Irish, and by women who live in the town.

274. *William Rawling*, schoolmaster.—The children go out young to the fields for potato setting and picking. The "roperies" take the boys away young. Most of the girls go to the flax mills. Children of both sexes leave school altogether at 13 and 14 years of age.

275. *Jane Morley*, 13 years of age.—I have been out one year potato picking. I went a mile and a half to work for a farmer; about 20 boys and some women went together, one boy as young as 10 years. We worked from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 1*s.* 6*d.* a day. Boys and women were looked after by the foreman and paid sometimes by him and sometimes by the master.

276. *George Lowther, Esq.*—Children are employed in weeding corn and flax, and in turnip hoeing. Irish do most of the potato picking and turnip pulling and the harvest work. School accommodation in Selby is very good; in the surrounding villages also there is generally a day school and always a Sunday school. I think that a certificate of school attendance for a certain number of months during the year should be required and would be beneficial. The farms vary in size from 50 to 350acres. The farmers have lads living in their housesand frequently they dine with them. I think that the immorality of the statutes and the evils of the hiring systems are overstated. The morality in the district is pretty good. The number of bastard children is small, and great pains are taken by the ministers of all denominations. The cottages want improvement in the district. The farmers would be willing to have more on their land and pay the landlord a fair per-centage for the necessary outlay. There are 13 acres of allotments turned into gardens in portions of one rood each, rented at 1*l.* 10*d.* a rood free of rates. Lord Londesborough has also let 11 acres to the Odd Fellows, at 30*l.* a year, which are divided into allotments; there are several other plots belonging to the town. The wages for an ordinary labourer are 13*s.* a week all money.

We have in the town a system of benefit societies called "free gifts." There is no fund for sickness but money is collected for members in each case on the doctor's certificate. The payment is threepence each member. There is a burial fund out of which 10*l.* is given on the death of the husband and 6*l.* of the wife. The meetings of the "free gifts" are never held at public houses, but in a school room. There is no expense of management. The allowance during sickness is 10*s.* a week. There is also a society called the "Mariners' Society" which was established at the time of the French war.

There are about 200 females and 100 males in Selby, employed in agriculture. The greater part of these women and young persons of both sexes are Irish, settled in the town. The field work, taken in connexion with rapid child-bearing, produces premature old age among the married women. The effect of this employment is to render the women comparatively unfitted for domestic service.

. I would not place any restriction on the employment of females; boys should not be employed before 13 years of age; in which case the existing facilities for education would give this class ample opportunities for a fair amount of school attendance.

The children of the farmers and of the better class of farm labourers often walk two to three miles to school. Their attendance is not affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents, on account of the great number of schools now accessible to the children of the poor on easy terms; it is more affected by the ignorance of the parents and by their non-appreciation of the importance of education.

Cottage accommodation in this district has been very defective, but is, I think, improving. Where the family lives in comfort and decency its members have more self respect and the moral tone is higher. The cottages are sometimes four miles from the farm where the labourer works. They are built of brick and tiled, with a living room 12 or 13 feet by 12 feet, a small back kitchen, and two bedrooms above—four rooms in all to a family of probably seven persons—usually with a garden and outhouses.

The annual rent from 4*l.* to 5*l.*, payable quarterly or half-yearly by the settled labourers, and weekly by the migratory.

As regards the education, in the school *sense*, of the agricultural labouring class, I would remark that in this town and district it can hardly be regarded as insufficient. It is very rare now for a young couple at their marriage to be unable to sign the register.

Night schools are not regarded with much favour in this district; at the same time they are not wholly discarded, but their operation is very limited.

Wesleyan School.

277. Infants 100 on books. They attend from 3 years and upwards, and remain in the school till 6 or 7 years of age. Bigger girls come down twice in the week for needle-work in the afternoon. Payment 2*d.* or 3*d.* a week.

Mixed School.

Number on the books 141. Average for quarter ending February 110. The majority are town children; the town boys remain till 13 or 14 years. The country boys are less regular in their attendance.

278. *William Smith*, 13 years of age.—I was out potato "scratching" in the autumn, and earned 1*s.* 8*d.* a day at one place and 1*s.* 11*d.* at another by "the take." I worked with the women.

279. *John Stead*, 10 years of age.—I have been out potato scratching and weeding turnips for 3 years, in July and the autumn, I was away perhaps two months from the school; I worked with the women and got 1*s.* 3*d.* a day. The boys worked in a row with a man to look after them; we were hired and paid by the farmer. Some little girls worked with us; we were taken in a cart, and we went two miles to work.

280. *Ann Elizabeth Stead*, 13 years old.—I have been sent out two years weeding turnips and potatoe scratching, I was paid 1*s.* 6*d.* a day by the farmer, always had kind treatment and did not work in wet weather. I took victuals in the same bag as my brother. Boys and girls work together.

281. Selby Chamber of Agriculture.

Meeting, April 6th.

It was stated that the wages in the district were 2*s.* 6*d.* a day. It was agreed that the limit of age for boys work might be fixed at 10 years, for girls at 12. Women are very much employed in this district and children with them at the potato seasons. It was agreed that prior to the age of 10 education should be compulsory and that between the ages of 10 and 13 6 months out of the 12 should be spent at school, and that no employer of labour should be allowed to engage a child at the age named without a certificate that such child had been to school the requisite period. Parents would not be seriously injured by the loss of earnings under 10 years of age. Though compulsory education was unanimously approved of by the meeting, Mr. S. Hutchinson observed that it would be preferable if the education of the children of the agricultural labourer could be secured by attraction rather than by compulsion. The average rent of cottages without gardens is from 3*l.* to 4*l.* Allotments of a rood or half a rood are much appreciated by the cottagers and are sufficiently large for him to manage properly. There is a great scarcity of cottages on the farms and on an average labourers would have to walk about a mile to a farm for their work. As a rule the cottages in the district do not possess sufficient accommodation. The meeting was favourable to the erection of cottages on the farms as tending to lessen the necessity for hiring servants at the statutes. The system of hiring servants into the farmhouses was considered beneficial for the young men themselves, as they were taken care of, being placed under a certain amount of restriction and were protected from the influence of evil example. It was suggested by Mr. Hutchinson that it would be most desirable to put a check on married women going to field work with a young infant at home, that is they should not go till the child is a certain age to be fixed by law. Infant mortality is much increased by this practice.

HUMBLEDON.

Population, 550. Acreage, 2,245.

282. *John Rawlins*, schoolmaster.—On the books, boys 61; average attendance, winter, 50; summer, 20. The children go out weeding and pulling peas at 10 years of age. Women and children go together to the number of 30 or 40. They are looked after and paid by the man who owns the pea crop. The children return to school in the winter; and we can hardly secure six months school attendance for them after they are 10 years of age. If the children would attend regularly up to 10 years, they would be well grounded in reading, writing, and the four first rules of arithmetic. The wages for potato cropping are 1*s.* a day; for pulling peas, 1*d.* per peck, for both women and children.

The payment to the school is 7*d.* a week, for reading, writing, and arithmetic; small children pay 3*d.* a week. We have an endowment of 9*l.* for six free scholars. The rest of the money is made up by subscription, and by the pence. There is no Government grant. We tried a night school, but it did not succeed. Cottage rent 4*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* per annum; some have gardens, but there are no allotments.

MONKFRYSTONE.

Population about 1,100.

283. *Mr. Hargraves.*—Of the population, 227 are children, and of these 103 go to the National school; 74 do not go to school, but run about the streets or do occasional work. Besides this, there are 53 young persons of both sexes from 13 to 18 years of age, growing up imperfectly educated; 20 males and 33 females. There are many of the parents who are very imperfectly educated, and four whole familes where neither father or mother can read or write at all; they take no interest or pleasure in their children's school work and neglect their homes in every respect. George Hill, formerly a labourer, is now one of the largest employers in this village or neighbourhood in pea time and potato gathering, having 60 to 80 boys, girls, and women at work at once in one field, having also a number of women and girls sorting potatoes nearly all the winter through. At the close of the potato harvest, this man can and does afford to make annually what is called a "potato feast" held at a publichouse for all who have pulled peas or gathered potatoes for for him. All this is defrayed at his own cost. After tea, drinking and dancing, and singing are indulged in till an early hour the next day. Mothers and children are too frequently intoxicated on this occasion, and many of the children absent themselves from school

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the next day in consequence of the effects of this revel.

A village news-room, held at the school or anywhere, except at inns, well supplied with daily papers and periodicals, to create a taste for reading and for general information, and to draw young men from the publichouse is greatly needed, but I despair of ever establishing one single-handed. The school attendance is principally affected by the pea-pulling which last year began on the 1st of July. Pea growing has been for many years, and is still greatly on the increase, and as the peas are all ready or nearly so at one time, there is a complete drain on the schools. The pulling generally takes place on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, for the purpose of supplying the markets of Leeds, Manchester, Bradford, and others.

The children are disengaged on Tuesday and Friday, and might be at school on those days, but they very seldom or ever attend on those days, if absent on the Monday. Mothers and young persons can earn 3*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* a day. Though all earn from 6*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* and 2*s.* a day, yet they grudge to pay 2*d.* for two days' schooling; these two days in the week would afford us an opportunity for counteracting the evil received on the other three days when at work. Children commence pea-pulling at 6 years of age.

On the school register, 138 boys, 117 girls. The summer average has been 50. The winter average 150, and over, for the past 10 years. Only 73 boys and girls over 6 years of age attended 100 days up to 1st April 1868. The only thing in my opinion to secure the attendance of the children here is a compulsory act to which people would meekly bow, nothing else would suffice. I would recommend a compulsory attendance from 6 to 10 or 12 years with compulsory attendance after 10, to 13 or 14, at a night school, that the evening school should be taught by a properly qualified pupil-teacher or assistant master, and that the grant should be given for such teacher uncertificated.

The work of pea pulling and potato planting where much stooping is required is very injurious to married women. Many children are prematurely born, some being dead at birth, or dying soon after. This is brought on by severe bodily exertion. The cottages are crowded generally, and mostly by the family and lodgers. No cottage has more than two bedrooms, and none have three. They are mostly built of stone. The size of the room is about 14 ft. by 14. One room downstairs, one room and a piece upstairs. They are not well supplied with water, and very few have gardens. Rent 3*l.* to 5*l.* a year.

I condemn the system of statute-hiring. All well-disposed masters and mistresses are against them. All the farmers hire at statute fairs their servants, both men and women. I tried a free register office for servants; it succeeded very well for a time, but I was obliged to discontinue it. Every schoolmaster might undertake an office at his house, which would tend much to crush the system of statute gathering.

I have some children from Birkin and some from South Milford in the school. The number of girls in the school has lately increased in consequence of the fear of the working of the Gangs Act, and of the inquiry now going on. Boys are more in demand than girls for farm work.

284. *James Hester* (9 years old).—I was at potato planting last year. I have also been out pea pulling; I can pull 12 pecks of peas a day, equal to 1*s.* I get 9*d.* a day for potato planting. We go 19 or 20 together. A man will buy a field of potatoes and hire lads to pick them.

[A girl told me that she could pull seven pecks of peas a day at 1*d.* a peck; they go out at 7 in the morning to 6 in the evening, breakfast before they go and stop an hour for dinner.—E. B. P.]

285. *B. Hemsworth, Esq.*—The school is almost entirely supported by me. I have held the benefit society money for some time past; the deposits have increased considerably. We pay 10*s.* a week in sickness; in case of death 10*l.* for a man, 7*l.* for a woman. I should like to see a hospital for contagious disorders attached to each union, to which the sick should be sent to save the parish from the spreading of disease. I think an education rate would do away with voluntary aid.

PECKFIELD, NEAR SOUTH MILFORD.

286. *W. Paver, Esq.*—Pea cultivation takes children out as early as 8 years of age; there is also a large cultivation of potatoes at which they are much employed. We have the same system of farm lads living in the houses as in other parts of Yorkshire; the proportion is two lads to 100 acres. This district is under Gilbert's Act, and is not affected by the Union Chargeability Bill. The restriction of age would in the case of pea pulling produce hardship to the parents of children who earn as much as a woman in a day; sometimes they will work 100 in a field. There are gangs from Kippax and Brotherton for potato picking. A man buys the crops and brings a lot of women, girls, and children to pick them. The three systems with regard to the potato crops are:—

(1.) The farmer does all the work.

(2.) The farmer sells the crop, ploughs it up and lets the buyer bring the gang to pick the potatoes.

(3.) The buyer does all except the horse work, he will even sometimes plant the crop, in that case the land is let to the buyer of the crop who puts in the potatoes, does the manuring, in fact is sub-lessee.

Women and children have individual engagements. A 200-acre farm is a large one, anything over that is exceptional. There is a want of more cottages on the farms.

In Sherburn there are 80 males and 90 females employed in agriculture. Of the males 20 are between 8 and 10 years, 25 between 10 and 13 years, and 35 between 13 and 18 years of age. Of the females, 10 are between 8 and 10 years, 15 between 10 and 13 years, 30 between 13 and 18 years; over 18 years, 15 married and 20 unmarried.

In South Milford 20 males and 44 females. Of the males, nine are between 10 and 12 years and 11 between 13 and 18 years of age. Of the females, two between 8 and 10 years, five between 10 and 13 years, 11 between 13 and 18 years; over 18 years, 22 married and four unmarried.

The employments are, in spring, sowing beans and planting potatoes; in summer, weeding and tending corn, and gathering peas; in autumn, in gathering peas and potatoes; in winter, in sorting potatoes to a small extent.

The greatest distance to work is 2½ miles. Hours of work on the land are nine, with one hour allowed for meals.

Physically this work is not injurious to the females, but those who go in large companies are generally rougher and less respectable than those employed less regularly.

From some villages in the neighbourhood women are taken in large numbers for potato getting and sorting, and for willow-peeling. This system is bad for their morals and unfits them for domestic service. In these villages it would be very desirable if this work could be performed otherwise than by women. The probable substitute would be gangs of Irish living in barns and crowded into low lodging-houses, as is now much the case.

I would not restrict female labour for sowing beans, weeding corn, &c., which girls can do without injury, and which it would be difficult to get done in some cases without their help.

I do not think distance to work is a serious question as far as this district is concerned. The hours of labour in agricultural work are not such as to require restriction. There is such a demand for labour as to enable the labouring class to make such terms for themselves as to avoid being over-worked.

A certain number of hours during six months of the year would be the best mode of enforcing school attendance. Half-days or alternate days would be very inconvenient to the farmer, there are not suf-

ficient available children to have two relays, besides, greater progress would be made by the children if continuously at school.

The schools are conveniently situated, and wages are quite high enough to enable the labourers to send their children if they are so disposed.

The better the cottage accommodation the better the morals, and the higher the tone of self respect among the cottagers. In good cottages the children are better brought up than in bad ones. The villages are near the centre of the township, but some of the labourers go from two to three miles to work. Many are employed in lime quarries and brick-making, and on the railways.

The cottages are built of brick or stone with slate or tile roofs. Those more recently built have generally good-sized windows. The size of the rooms varies very much; in the better cottages they are 12 or 14 feet square and eight feet high, in others much smaller.

There are generally one room on ground floor with wash-place and pantry, and two bedrooms above. Water from limestone rock is good and plentiful. Most cottages have gardens, pigsties, and privies. There are many small freeholders in both places to whom the cottages belong. Rent varies from 5*l.* a year downwards. Both parishes are under "the "Gilbert Act." The great difficulty in providing good cottages is the cost being so great as to cause them to pay a low rate of interest, unless the rent is higher than an agricultural labourer ought to pay.

SHERBURN SCHOOL.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10	57	32
Between 10 and 13 -	33	13
Girls:		
Under 10 -	35	25
Between 10 and 13 -	10	5

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	57	45
Between 10 and 13 -	33	25
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	35	30
Between 10 and 13	10	8

SOUTH MILFORD SCHOOL.

In Summer.

—	On Regiater.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 -	32	13
Between 10 and 13 -	15	5
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	14	4
Between 10 and 13	6	1

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	47	24
Between 10 and 13 -	29	24
Girls:		
Under 10 -	20	9
Between 10 and 13 -	9	8

There is no night school.

BIRKEN.

Population, 176. - Acreage, 2,064.

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287. *John Mollett*, farmer.—The cultivation is two-thirds arable, and one third pasture. We have about 30 children, young persons and women employed occasionally in the parish, none under 10 years of age; they are employed in planting potatoes, weeding corn and in gathering potatoes.

The hours of work on the land are eight, with one hour for meals; I do not think that the work injuriously affects their health. The morals of the women are as good as those who are not employed in out-door labour, and I consider that it does not interfere with their proper training for domestic duties. I would not place any restriction on the employment of boys or women. The only practicable mode for enforcing school attendance would be a certain number of days during the six winter months; one-third of the children are partly prevented by the distance from attending school.

The cottages are good, healthy, and low-rented, but we require double the number we have. Every cottage has a garden varying from 10 perches to one acre with suitable outhouses for convenience. The rents 2*l.* 10*s.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* The principal landowner has not a single cottage in the village. If each landlord would erect from one to two cottages per hundred acres on each farm there would be a sufficient supply.

There is no day school in the village; but we have a Sunday school and a night school, kept by the clergyman's daughters. Some of the children go to day school at Beal, others to Monkfrystone two miles off. Parents are very careless about sending their children to school. I think that 10 years might be fairly struck as the limit for work.

288. *Miss Green.*—The night school is open all the year round, average, four nights in the week and on Sunday from 7 till 8.30. There are about 20 scholars above 12 years of age who are all farm servants with the exception of three. They come to school at different hours during the time that the school is open, according to the hours which are fixed by the farmers for foddering the cattle and stabling and doing the horses. They will drop in and stay for an hour or so, according to the work they are required to do. They are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic.

HADDLESEY, WEST, and CHAPEL.

Population rather more than 400. Acreage, 2,290.

289. In these townships there are rather more than 40 children, young persons, and women, employed on the farms. Of the 20 boys:

Under 10 - - -	4
Between 10 and 13 - -	12
„ 13 and 18 -	4

Several of these boys go to school three or four months in the year. Of the 20 women 8 are between 13 and 18 years; 12 are married women over 18 years, and 4 are unmarried. Many of the women are constantly at work, they are employed in sorting and planting potatoes, in hoeing corn and turnips, pulling peas and in gathering and sorting potatoes. In the winter a few are employed in cutting turnips. The hours of work on the land for women and girls are from 8 to 6, with an hour at noon for rest. For the boys from 6 to 6, with rest for breakfast, and at noon; their health is not often injured unless they get their clothes or feet wet. The effect upon their morals is generally extremely bad and girls who have got once used to field work can seldom be induced afterwards to stay in domestic service. It is doubtful whether the mothers of families really gain anything pecuniarily by going out to work, so much is wasted at home for the want of proper cooking, of attention to the children, their clothes, &c. I would not allow boys to work under 10 years of age. I think that the half-day system and alternate day system seem quite impracticable in agricultural districts. Possibly attendance at school during six months of the year might be enforced here. A certificate of adequate reading

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and writing might be required before a boy was allowed to go to work. The school attendance is not much affected by the distance, except in winter with regard to the girls, and even then perhaps it is more the dirt and darkness which keeps them away than the distance. There are plenty of cottages in the townships for the labourers who are required; there is not a sufficient number of them with three bedrooms. The cottages altogether are very fair, most having two bedrooms and gardens; most of them belong to small holders, but no unfair advantage is taken of this to interfere as to the shops at which they deal. Average rent 4*l.* a year.

SCHOOL.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	12	8
Between 10 and 13	5	2
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	16	8
Between 10 and 13 -	10	6

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	18	10
Between 10 and 13 -	8	4
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	10	7
Between 10 and 13 -	10	6

There are in summer two boys and 10 girls neither at work nor at school, and in winter eight boys and 15 girls.

In all these figures an approximate estimate only could be given. There is no night school in these townships. I do not think a night school adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school, it may prevent children forgetting what they already know, and the intelligent lad may improve himself considerably, but dull boys who cannot read will seldom learn to do so while in a night school. The difficulties of maintaining a night school are the interference and opposition of the masters and landowners for whom the lads work, the awkwardness and variety of times at which they fodder the horses; to this must be added, in some cases, apathy and carelessness on the parts of the lads themselves.

290. *Mr. Parkin,* schoolmaster.—The school has 45 on books in summer, the attendance about 25; in winter much larger. I keep children at school up to 13 years of age, they are not much employed, except for bird tenting, singling turnips, and weeding at certain seasons of the year. There is no poverty in the parish, there being always an abundance of work by the river side, if the agricultural employment fails. The parents are rather inclined to make their children earn something as soon as they are able.

291. *Mr. Samuel Laverack,* farmer, Chapel Haddlesey.—I am now paying 16*s.* and 17*s.* a week for an ordinary labourer, and people (with the exception of drunken folk) are very well off. Most of the cottages have gardens. The children are not employed directly by the farmers, but they go out as young as 9 for turnip singling and weeding in company with their parents, who take the work by the piece whenever it can be so done, and require the help of the children.

Turnip hoeing would be taken at 7*s.* 6*d.* to 9*s.* an acre, and a man will earn 3*s.* a day at it. Some few men can hoe three roods a day.

BRAYTON.

292. *Mr. Smith,* farmer.—Farms 350 acres. There is a Sunday school in the parish, and a dame school in the day, for girls mostly; the bigger boys go to school at Selby. Children are not much employed, except with their parents at turnip and potato times. People are well off.

SWINFLEET.

293. *Rev. J. Heaney.*—From Goole to Trentfall wheat and potatoes are grown in large quantities. The district is called Marshland. Children are away from school from April till nearly harvest. The school on the 9th of April was nearly empty. The education in my district is at a very low ebb, and the morals are bad. The farmers, being themselves very badly educated, take no trouble about their labourers or farm servants, and do not send them to church.

There are no large proprietors, and consequently no influence is brought to bear upon them, and the character of the labourer is not inquired into. Any system of certificates of school attendance, character, or the like would be evaded if it was possible to evade it. Strict compulsion is the only chance of success with this class of man. The occupations in Marshland are not large, but the occupiers are mostly rich men, as potato farming requires a great deal of capital per acre. The land is very good, and is principally what is called warp land. I have known as many as 300 women go out from Swinfleet in the morning to work. The children go out young, but with their parents. There is no gang system.

GOOLE.

294. *Edward Deyes,* schoolmaster.—Number on the register, boys, 155. Attendance, in winter, 94; in summer, 82. Children go out as young as 8 years for hoeing corn, picking potatoes, and pulling line, and are out for seven or eight weeks. The seasons of the year at which their labour is mostly required are the harvest times (wheat and potatoes). They lose a great deal of the knowledge which they had previously acquired while out in the fields, and very few remain at school after 12 years of age. From 10 to 12 years of age they might perfectly well attend school in winter. We tried a night school, but it was given up on account of the irregular attendance. There are 200 children running about the town who do not come to school at all. It would be necessary to have some compulsory school attendance besides fixing an age at which no child shall go to work.

A woman and a boy will get 2*s.* a day between them at potato work.

The hours are generally from 8 to 6, and the distance varies up to two and three miles.

RAWCLIFFE.

Population, 1,645; acreage, 4,000; cultivation chiefly arable.

295. *C. N. Lake, Esq.*—There are 150 children, young persons, and women employed in this parish in potato planting and weeding, in harvesting and sorting potatoes. Some go as far as two miles to their work. The hours of work are from 9 to 5, with an hour allowed for dinner. Field employment is injurious to the morals of the females, and prevents them from entering domestic service.

I would not allow boys to go to work before 12 years of age, and I would provide for their school attendances by alternate whole days at school and whole days at work. The school attendance is much affected by the distance, but not by the pecuniary resources of the parents.

There should be two cottages per 100 acres for the requirements of the land; we have that proportion, and the cottages are of themselves good in construction, with generally two low rooms and two or three chambers. Rent, 3*l.* 15*s.* a year.

SCHOOL.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 -	17	14
Between 10 and 13 -	36	20
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	38	28
Between 10 and 13	14	10
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	22	18
Between 10 and 13 -	43	23
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	32	27
Between 10 and 13 -	15	15

There is no evening school in the parish.

296. *Rev. R. Turner.*—The principal crops in this district are wheat, potatoes, flax, and beans. The land is for the most part warp land. The women are much employed, but children I think not before 10 or 11 years of age. The hours of work on the land are from 10 to 12 hours. There is also in the place a flax mill.

I think the physical condition of the labourer should first be improved, and that there would be then less difficulty in getting the children to school. When a man is a little better off, he sends them regularly to school; but the farmers are at certain times anxious to get all the hands they can, and the parents cannot afford to lose the earnings. Field labour demoralizes the girls and makes them unfit and disinclined for domestic service. A boy who has got a little learning up to 11 or 13 years of age soon loses it. Night schools do not answer on account of the distance and fatigue after a day's work. This township is part of Snaith, which formerly extended to the Trent.

In considering the question of education by the State, it would be well to consider, first, how far it is advisable to put the State in *loco parentis*, and do away with parental authority; and, secondly, in what way funds are to be provided for the supply of a sufficient number of schools and free education of the people, the feeling against increased rates on the land being at present very great.

DONCASTER UNION.

RETURNS to CIRCULAR of QUESTIONS issued to GUARDIANS.

ROSSINGTON.

Population, 400. Acreage, 3,051.

297. *James Brown, Esq.*—Children, young persons, and women are employed in agriculture in this parish at 8 or 9 years of age. I do not consider such employment injurious to their health or morals; but I think no child should be permitted to work on the land till he is 12 years old. All children should attend school pretty regularly from the beginning of November till the latter part of March, till they are 13 years old. In April, May, and June they can be usefully employed in field labour; in July they may again attend school until harvest.

I think it would be desirable to require the production of a certificate of a certain amount of school attendance before hiring. It is not desirable to apply the half day or alternate day system to agriculture.

Education is generally good. The cottages are good, but the number is not quite sufficient for the requirements of the land; they have gardens.

The present system of hirings is most objectionable.

CONISBOROUGH.

Population, 1,655. Acreage, 4,558.

298. *Basville Milward.*—Children, young persons, and women are employed here, but not injuriously to their health or morals. They go to work at 8 to 10 years. No restriction is in my opinion necessary; parents do not allow their children to be overworked nor do they let them work in the fields at too tender an age. I would require seven or eight months' school attendance in the year from children earning wages. The half day or alternate day systems are not desirable. I would not require a certificate of school attendance before hiring. The state of education is good. I believe the cottages are sufficient for the wants of the land; they are generally good and in most cases have gardens, which are a great advantage to the labourer.

WADWORTH.

Population, 656. - Acreage, 3,133.

299. *G. Marshall.* — Children are to a certain extent employed here in agriculture at 10 years of age and upwards. I do not think such employment in any way injurious to them, and I would not place any restrictions on it. They might attend school half the year, but I would not require the production of a certificate of such attendance before hiring.

The cottages are pretty good, are sufficient in number, and have gardens, which I consider a great advantage to the labourer.

BRAITHWELL.

Population, 422. Acreage, 1,948.

300. *William Law.*—Children are employed here but seldom under 10 years of age. I cannot state any age desirable as a limit for such work. We have one day school attended by 47 in winter, 35 in summer; and two Sunday schools where the attendance is about 83. Half-day or alternate day system could not be worked.

Cottages are sufficient in number but some are too small. About 20 of them are without gardens. I consider a garden advantageous to the labourer.

FRICKLEY.

Population, 312. Acreage, 1,589.

301. *William Aldam, Esq.*—So far as I know, the employment of very young children is too occasional to be injurious, and if combined with some educational test may be advantageous. A longer attendance at school should be required from young children than from older ones whose labour is more effective and in more demand. I would suggest for children,

		Weeks of 5 days each.
Below 10 - - -	175 days	= 35
Above 10 and between 11 years,	150 days	= 30
Between 11 and 12 years,	125 days	= 25

The principal of education embodied in the Factory Acts might be conveniently carried out in agriculture by requiring each child, as the condition of his being allowed to be employed, to have a certificate of the requisite school attendance in the previous year, such certificate being necessary up to 13 years of age, so as to secure school attendance up to 12 years. I should consider the half day or alternate day systems inconvenient if not impracticable.

In the two parishes with which I am most connected, viz., Clayton in Frickley, and Warmsworth, there are good schools; the same is the case in other townships where I have property. Parents are not always careful to send their children to school, and I think the stimulus of a certificate would be useful.

More cottages are required in many places though perhaps not to a great extent. The rent in purely agricultural villages is so small comparatively to the cost of building that there is no inducement to build them.

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I have always considered gardens an advantage, they enable a labourer to utilise much of his spare time, conduce to steady habits, and add to his comfort. It is not desirable that the allotment be so large as to make the labourer a small cultivator. I believe three-quarters of a rood is about what should be given.

BARMBY DUN.

Population, 544. - Acreage, 2,386.

302. *Arthur J. Smith.*—Very few women and children are employed in this parish, about 6 of each, and no young persons: they go out to work between 10 and 12 years of age. Children are of no use on a farm before 10 years of age, and then only to tent crows; from 12 to 14 years they are useful for general purposes.

Women and children are not hired, but are employed from time to time as occasion requires, and frequently only at long intervals, so that children have plenty of opportunity to go to school.

Certificates are not necessary, but I have no objection to them. Females from 15 to 21 years of age are much better in service than working in the fields.

The parents of children in this parish do not avail themselves of the opportunity of sending their children to school as much as they might. The children of working parents go to school better than others. The half days or alternate day system it not desirable.

The cottages are sufficiently numerous but rather small and not in good condition; most of them have garden allotments. I consider these an advantage to the labourer, but they should not be larger than 20 or 30 perches each.

I disapprove of register offices for farm servants. The statutes are not so bad as represented; but I should much approve of a system of certificate of good conduct from the last employer.

OWSTON.

Population, 269. - Acreage, 1,815.

303. *George Townend.*—There are six or eight children of 10 years old employed in this parish. I do not think such employment injurious to their health, and would not place any restriction on it, except in the case of girls under 14 years. Children earning wages should have six months' schooling in the year. It would be desirable to have a written testimonial from last employer required from lads at hiring time.

SPROTBURGH.

Population, 339. Acreage, 2,732.

304. *Thomas Wood.*—About half a dozen children of 10 years of age are employed here. They ought not to work before that age. I would require 100 days' schooling in the year up to 12 years of age. Half days or alternate days could not work. More cottages are wanted, most have gardens but no allotments. "Statutes" are thoroughly bad and demoralising for girls.

BARMBROUGH.

Population, 462. - Acreage, 2,125.

305. *Joseph Lockwood,* overseer.—In the summer season the employment is healthy and not injurious to the morals. Perhaps not more than 20 children are employed in the parish and seldom any before 11 years of age. It is not desirable to place any restriction on such labour. It would perhaps be beneficial to parents and children if the latter could all be educated (up to Standard II. at least) before being hired. Children earning wages should attend school at least half the year. Half days or alternate days would be very inconvenient to employers, and often a loss both to them and to the employed. The cottages are good and sufficient in number. There are some gardens and a few allotments. If the garden or allotment be not too large for the requirements of the workman's family they are advantageous, if too large, they are not well attended to and take up too much time.

ALMHOLME.

306. *R. C. Workman.*—About eight children of about 10 years of age are employed here. I would not allow any to work under 10 years. Children earning wages should attend school for six months during the year. The cottages are good and have gardens or allotments.

ASKERN.

Population, 379. - Acreage, 849.

307. *William Townend.*—Some children go out very young. I would not allow any to go under 10 years of age. They should attend school for six months in the year, and produce a certificate of such attendance before hiring. There is a good National school here, having yearly good reports from the Government Inspector. The cottages are good and sufficient in number; some have gardens, which are a great advantage to the labourer. It would be better if statute fairs were abolished, though it would be a work of time, so many people being opposed to a change.

308. *F. B. Frank* (*ex officio* guardian).—Children, &c., are employed in agriculture, but I do not consider such employment injurious either to health or morals. I would forbid such employment under 10 years of age. Regular attendance at school during the winter months, or for six months in the year, would be preferable to half days or alternate days at school and work. The present system of statute hiring is most objectionable and conducive to great immorality; in my opinion it ought to be abolished by law.

HICKLETON.

Population, 127. - Acreage, 1,060.

309. *Robert Brooks.*—No children or women are employed here. The Sunday school attendance is sufficient for those earning wages. Half days or alternate days at school and work are not desirable. The cottages are very good but there is not a sufficient number.

BURGHWALLIS.

Population, 226. - Acreage, 1,607.

310. *Rev. Francis W. Peel.*—Young children are employed but not in great numbers. They go out tenting at 7 or 8 years of age. I do not think field-work injurious to the health or worse for the morals than any other employment. Ten years of age is quite soon enough for "work," but I do not include "tenting" under the term "work." Children earning wages should attend school for six months during the year, and if it could be enforced, the requiring the production of a certificate of such attendance before hiring is desirable. I think the half-day system would be best, but perhaps most difficult to carry out. The upper end of the parish is well off for education, at the lower end being far from a school it is indifferent.

The cottages are middling; few have two sleeping rooms, but there are sufficient for the agricultural work of the parish. Most have small gardens, which are an advantage to the cottagers.

The system of hiring female servants at the statutes is degrading and demoralizing, and is only worthy of a country in the lowest state of barbarism. It might easily and very advantageously be changed for the system of hiring at register offices, if it were not for the pig-headedness of people who are averse to changing a bad system for a good one, and for the immorality of the females, who know that if the system were adopted they would have to conduct themselves with propriety so as to insure a character.

BALBY WITH HEXTHORPE.

Population, 1,058. - Acreage, 1,613.

311. *P. M. Middlemess.*—Women and children are occasionally employed in agriculture. Such employ-

ment is not considered injurious in any way. Children should not work before 10 years of age. Half days or alternate days at school and work are not desirable. Those children who are earning wages should attend school for six months in the year, and the production of a certificate of such attendance is desirable at hiring. There are plenty of cottages and they are in good condition, with both gardens and allotments. The present system of statute hirings is decidedly bad.

CADEBY.

Population, 165. - Acreage, 1,234.

312. *C. T. Ward.*—Children of average age of 10 years are employed in agriculture, and I do not consider such employment injurious, either to health or morals. As a rule it is not necessary to place any restriction. Half days or alternate days at school and work are impossible. Six months' school attendance during the year might be required, but it would not be desirable to require the production at hiring of a certificate of such attendance. The cottages are tolerably good and in sufficient number; most of them have gardens. Servants should be led to place a higher value on their character.

CAMPSALL.

Population, 349. - Acreage, 1,775.

313. *Ch. Chapman.*—Children of about 11 years of age are employed in this parish, but I do not think such employment injurious to their health or morals. There is not a sufficient number of cottages for the requirements of the land; most of them have gardens.

314. *W. Walker, Esq.* (*ex-officio* guardian).—Children and women are all more or less employed in the fields, but not, I think, to such an extent as to be injurious to either their health or their morals. They are employed in bird-tenting at a very early age, probably at 8 years, and in any other light work, such as "dibbling wheat." Assuming that they do commence at too early an age in some few instances the evil is not, in my opinion, sufficient (so far as this neighbourhood goes) to call for the placing of any restriction thereon. The half-day or alternate day systems are not desirable, for in some seasons of the year there is ample employment in the fields for many consecutive days, at other seasons none at all, and I do not think it desirable to take children away from work in the fields for more than half their time in the year. I should be disposed to require that all children should attend school for about half of each year, *i.e.*, for about 180 days (Sundays included) of five or six hours each, or for 360 half days of three hours each, or say, perhaps, 150 and 300 respectively from the age of 6 to 12. It would be difficult to work a rule requiring the production of a certificate of such attendance before hiring, at all events great care would be required in working it. It must not be retrospective beyond a year or two, it would not do to prevent a lad of 15 years from being hired because he had not attended school properly at 8 years; but it might be well to enact that a person should not be hired in any year till he or she had made up the deficiency (if any) in the number of days' attendance in the year immediately preceding. The state of education is better than the average of agricultural villages, but there is ample room for improvement. In Wadworth there is a good National school. At Tickhill both a National and infant school, both good, but not so well attended as they ought to be. The cottages are as good as in most other villages, and much better than in the south of England, but here again there is ample room for improvement both in numbers and in quality. Many of them have gardens, which, if not too large, seem to be clearly an advantage to the labourer, but they should on no account be larger than half a rood to each cottage. The statute fairs are an undeniable evil, but it is most difficult to find any remedy. My more immediate knowledge is of the parishes of Wadworth, Tickhill, and Stainton.

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315. *W. B. Wrightson, Esq.*, Chairman of Board.—The number of children employed is not very great, and there is no injury to their health or morals; they are probably not employed before 10 years of age, and it is only a little dibbling that is done by them at a very early age. It does not appear to me desirable to place any limit or restriction as to age. I should think the half-day or alternate day system desirable in many cases, but I have great doubt whether any such system should be enforced by authority. As much school attendance as can fairly be had without preventing the earning of wages is desirable. I would not advise the requiring of any certificate before hiring. I do not see the necessity of any restriction on female labour, though the companionship of elder and respectable women ought to be looked for by the relations of young persons. The education of the children is well attended to. The cottages are in very many cases inferior to what is to be wished both in goodness and in the number of rooms. They are also much further from the farms than is desirable, but an improvement is gradually going on in this respect as well as in the accommodation afforded in the cottages. Gardens also are increasing, and are a great advantage when not too far from the dwelling. Public opinion has introduced of late a great improvement in the system of hiring, and it appears capable of further improvement.

THURNSCOE, near ROTHERHAM.

Population, 196. - Acreage, 1,672.

316. *Rev. T. W. Simpson.*—In this small parish children are employed occasionally to watch the corn crops, to tend cattle, &c.; women in weeding and picking turnips, &c. No child should be sent out to work on the land before 14 years of age. No young girls go to field work. The children who attend National schools obtain instruction but very little education. Almost all religious truth is taught at the dame's and the Sunday school. Cottages are good and sufficient in number. Farmers prefer hiring lads as servants to employing resident able-bodied labourers. Most of the cottages have gardens, which are of immense use in mining districts when cultivated by hand. Statutes are simple abominations. An age being fixed for the hiring of boys and girls every farmer should require a written character, either from previous master or the incumbent of the parish, with possibly a certificate of attendance at some competent school.

SKELLOW.

Population, 185. Acreage, 932.

317. *Rev. G. R. Davies Cooke*, vicar of Owston.—The children begin to work at certain easy tasks at a very early age, *e.g.* "willow peeling," when 4 or 5 years old, but they are not hard worked at it. I do not think a restriction of age necessary. As a rule the work is not excessive. I think that every child under 10 years should be required to have attended 200 times in the year, and I believe that every girl and boy under 12 years might easily attend that number of times without inconvenience to the parent, but I would only make it compulsory under 10 years. About one in nine of the population are at school. Half days or alternate days at school not desirable. Cottages are perhaps sufficient in number, but a better class is wanted, too many having only one bedroom. There are many gardens and allotments, and when not exceeding a rood they are of great advantage to the labourer. Those with four or five acres for the keep of a cow are of no benefit.

The best mode of obtaining a change in the hiring system would be to raise the tone of the small-farmer class by education. They are now often more ignorant than their labourers, and inclined to oppose education as well as any other scheme for the improvement of the labourer.

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MEXBRO.

Population, 2,461 - Acreage, 1,292.

318. *Henry Bolsover.*—This parish has large potteries and glassworks, where women and children are employed in large numbers, and but few are employed in agricultural labour. Children should not go to work under 10 years of age. I think it very desirable that the children of agricultural labourers should receive as much education as possible. I advocate the half-day system, and that half-day in the morning; 150 or 200 attendances should be the number during the year, and I think a certificate of such attendance desirable. No females of any age, but more particularly young girls, should go to field work. The labour field is, I am convinced, not a bad school for immorality. The state of education is fair. The church school has an average attendance of 174 (mixed). There are several other schools in the place. Cottages occupied by the labourers are not in as good a state as they should be; in some cases gardens are attached.

LOVERSALL.

Population, 175 - Acreage, 2,171.

319. *Rev. Robert Banks.*—Children to the number of 15 or 20 are employed in the fields in this parish. They begin to tent crows at 7 or 8 years of age. School attendance during the year amounting to half-time would be sufficient if night schools received more distinct Government aid and sanction, the attendance at one established in the parish being made compulsory on all children under 12 years of age working during the day, and not able to produce a certificate of proficiency in reading, writing, and arithmetic. The cottages are fair, but not sufficient in number; most have gardens, which are of great advantage if of such a size that a man can keep them in order in his overtime. The statutes, though fast falling into disrepute, should be officially discouraged, and register offices for this class of servants encouraged as much as possible; and a character of some sort should be considered requisite.

KIRK BRAMWITH.

Population, 216 Acreage, 2,110.

320. *George Hatfield.*—Children are employed at about 8 years of age, but not in any numbers except in harvest. I do not think such employment injurious to their health or morals. It is not desirable to place any limit as to the age for work. As a rule the parents will take care that their children are not overworked. At the periods when children's labour is required the supply is not sufficient to admit of the half day or alternate day at school and work. I would require 200 attendances at school during the year, and the production of a certificate before hiring unless the school attendance came within the knowledge of the employer. The state of education among the girls is better than among the boys, as the former are less employed in the fields. Cottages are moderate in accommodation but sufficient in number. Most of them have gardens, which should not be too large. There seems no probability of suppressing the statutes without the hearty co-operation of the employers of labour.

Parish.	
321. Carrhouse -	No women or children employed.
322. Elvington -	Children employed at 10 years. No school.
323. Long Sandall -	Employed at 10 to 12 years singling turnips.
324. Fenwick -	Employed at 9 years.
325. Marr - -	„ at 8 or 9 years. About 30 occasionally.
326. Norton -	Employed at 8 to 10 years.

[Returns were sent in from 10 other parishes in the union unsigned, and consequently useless.—E. B. P.]

327. Industrial School, Doncaster.

Under the superintendence of Mr. Vaughan.

The object of this school is to receive motherless and other friendless or distressed girls to prepare them for domestic service. They are boarded and clothed, instructed in the Holy Scriptures, and taught reading, writing, arithmetic, knitting, needlework, baking, washing, ironing, kitchen work, and house-cleaning, under the care of a matron and a schoolmistress.

Twenty girls are now in the school, 13 of whom, having no means of paying, are admitted free of charge; these are Doncaster girls only. For those not belonging to the town a payment is required of 3*s.* a week, with an entrance fee of 2*l.* towards their outfit. The annual cost is calculated at not less than 330*l.*

Girls belonging to Doncaster are allowed to go out for a job in the town, the places being carefully selected. Part of their earnings are given to the girls, the rest goes towards the support of the school.

The house is airy and has plenty of rooms.

328. Letter from the Rev. Scott Surtees, of Sprotburgh, to Hon. E. Portman.

Sprotburgh Rectory, Doncaster,
May 15, 1868.

Sir,

In answering the queries you were kind enough to send me, I shall take the liberty of doing so in general terms.

First, as to the employment of women and girls in field work. The girls, almost without exception, go to domestic service. The women who work in the fields are mostly widows, and some few of the labourers' wives. You might mark them out by the general untidiness of the home, the less well-to-do appearance of the children, and the discomfort of the cottages. The "wicking" * and potato-setting and ingathering is mostly done by Irish women and girls who come from Doncaster.

All our most intelligent boys and the sons of the more intelligent and better off labourer are, speaking generally, put to a trade or brought up to other occupations. They do not bring up their sons to field-work. They have an honest pride in not taking parish relief even in cases where I know it is needed. I have seldom had a labourer die without leaving a certain sum of money, say from 50*l.* to 150*l.* I could give numerous instances; in fact it is the rule, not the exception. Recently a labouring man died who had brought up and started in life a family, and yet left 350*l.*; he began life as a farm-servant. Another I knew who had been brought up in the Union, and also had never been anything but an agricultural labourer, who died at 35 years leaving 170*l.* They do not marry until both parties have been out at service and got a little money together. The labourers come and go, and change masters and parishes frequently. I think this a great advantage, also in respect of marriages. In Norfolk I had a large parish, and running my eye over the register book for 100 years I found that hardly ever a marriage took place with a person from another parish; here in Yorkshire it is just the contrary. There the bride was generally in the family way; here, where they do not work in the fields, it is different. In Norfolk, if sick they went at once to the parish and sent for the parish doctor; here they never think of such a thing, and their hardest struggle in life is paying the doctor's bill. There is an old man in this parish, an agricultural labourer, who has during his life paid for himself and family 120*l.* in doctor's bills. The main grievance of the agricultural labourer in this part of the world is that he has to walk often so far to his work, as many villages have not sufficient cottage accommodation in proportion to their acreage, and if he has to walk three miles to his work, still he has to be on the spot at 6 a.m. with the others. The land improvement societies have done much to facilitate the erection of

* "Wicking" is picking twitch or couch.

cottages, but the term of years over which the repayment is spread is much too limited.

With regard to the education of boys, there is no disinclination of parents, quite the reverse, to have their children taught, nor do the farmers set themselves against it; we must study the case before we attempt to prescribe remedies. In the education report for 1861 on agricultural districts in Yorkshire, the Rev. G. Hedley, arrives at the following conclusion, p. 145, Vol. II.:—"Children usually commence to "attend school about 5 years of age, they begin to "leave about 9, and few are found above 13. The "average period of school life is about 6 years." Mr. Watkins, who has been H.M. Inspector of schools in Yorkshire, for a quarter of a century, states in his evidence, Vol. II. p. 149, "that the average age at "which they leave school is 10½ years; of children at "school 39 per cent. are under 7 years of age; 74 per "cent. under 10; and only 26 per cent. over 10 years "of age." Now bearing these facts in mind, how large a proportion of the child's school life is made up of the years from 3 to 5 or 4 to 6. This important point is lost sight of by Committee of Council and educationists. If there is no dame's or infant school within reach, he loses 2 or 3 years of his short school life. If he goes to the National school and they teach him the alphabet, &c., it is only a secondary part of the school work, and is done carelessly and grudgingly by some child master. You must make up your mind that what you do must be done before 12 years of age or not done at all, and you may depend upon it that the effort should be made in the earlier years of childhood. It is the fashion to lay considerable stress upon adult and evening schools for educating farm lads. I wish to express in the strongest terms my disbelief of such bosh and bunkum; they who write such nonsense write about what they do not understand and have not tried. It may answer for a time, when the novelty wears off it will have to be given up. I never knew an evening school in a purely agricultural district hold its own for a term of years, I never knew an employer of labour who believed in it. Boys of all classes and all ranks dislike school and learning of any sort, of course there are some exceptions.

They become practically their own masters when they begin to earn their own livelihood. They have had a long day's work, often are wet, oftener tired, and it is an exertion they are not inclined to make, to go to an adult or evening school. The farming lads in farm houses have to fodder the horses, at 8 p.m., get their supper and go to-bed. There is no allowance made for human nature or rather "hobbledehoy" nature by the advocates of evening schools as the one remedy for the evils of neglected education in earlier years. Take our own rank of life, a boy is taken away from school for some cause or other at 15 or 16, he is sent to a private tutor—who that has much experience of life does not know that he then does nothing—there is at that age generally a disinclination and a determination not to learn. What are half the sermons in the great and good Arnold's second volume taken up with but addresses to endeavour to persuade boys to learn. How frequent are such instances as "The cultivation of your understanding is irksome to "you. Irksome as the studies of the school are to "many." "But here on the contrary idleness is with "many rather a glory, and industry considered a "reproach."

Then again, he goes to college, his future advancement and prospects in life depend upon his reading, he has the dread of being plucked before him and yet he will not learn, and the attendance of lectures or "lessons" has to be enforced upon the majority by punishments. Why expect the agricultural labouring youths to be of a different mould? He has not the incitement the other has before him.

Let there be an educational census to see that a school is provided within reasonable reach, encourage by every means in your power infant and dame's schools, up to 12 years of age require the boy to be at school a certain number of days per year, and by that time he should be able to read, write, and cast accounts, more than that you will not accomplish if you aim at it. Well for us if this is done and done thoroughly.

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Now as to the comfort and well-being of agricultural labourer, where a landlord is non-resident, the state of things is generally unsatisfactory, where he is resident little enough is done to improve their condition. The old English country gentleman, spite of model villages, weighed in this balance is found terribly wanting. Seldom are there enough cottages for the acreage of the farm; existing cottages are often in wretched repair; some have only one, few three bedrooms. Nuisances which they cannot help are not looked to and removed. If there is one trait to be admired in the English labourer, it is a love for flowers and a garden. He has not always a garden, often a very small one up in a corner by the road-side, under trees, a bit of waste ground anywhere. If there are allotments, it is not the most convenient and best land in the parish, *oftentimes the worst*, and far off from the mass of the cottages which takes away half its value. I am not speaking of individual cases, but of the general state of affairs which I have noted in various parts of England where I have been located. A cottager does value a cow pasture. I wonder how many cow pastures a census of England would show. Now I will speak of a case I know. A clergyman had a field of 30 acres near a river, rich good pasture. It was fenced off into two parts, each acre was staked out. Alternate years, one-half was mown, one-half pastured. Each labourer hoped to get a cow pasture, and saved up money to buy a cow. The rent was paid twice a year, and regularly. The indirect advantage to the parish of 15 cow-owners retailing milk, was no mean gain. Another case of successful allotment of ground is this: near the centre of a large agricultural parish a field of 11 acres was hired. It was first-rate land. It was divided into 44 divisions, up the centre was marked out a road 10 feet wide. The divisions were planted with a beech hedge. This first-rate land was let for little more than a farmer would have given, 14*s.* the quarter acre included rates. taxes, and tithes; 10*s.* was paid after harvest, 4*s.* after Easter. There was hardly ever a defaulter, The value it was of to the occupier was extraordinary, and the accounts I heard of the money made out of it almost fabulous. A great part of the cultivation was done by the women and children. On summer evenings and Sundays the whole population almost within reach would be found walking there and comparing the different crops, &c. Why will not landlords try these simple means of attaching the labourer to his home, and why will the farmer begrudge him a few acres of land?

My residences have been in many counties, my experience extends over many years; I give you the results.

Yours faithfully,
SCOTT F. SURTEES.

JOHN WELLS, ESQ.

329. Booth Ferry House, township of Armin.—I employ regularly on my farm throughout the year three to five males and 30 to 34 females, but in the potato season I employ for a month double this number; these are strangers who come from the manufacturing districts seeking work. I employ no males under 10 years of age. Of the females, three are between 10 and 13, and 30 between 13 and 18. In winter they are employed in picking and sorting old potatoes, in planting the new crop, weeding wheat, storing potatoes, weeding line and spring crops. In summer, in hoeing turnips and weeding potatoes up to hay time. In autumn, after harvest, in taking up potatoes. In winter, in picking over potatoes and sorting them for market. On my Booth Ferry farm the average distance to work would be one mile, on the pasture farm two miles. They leave home at 8 in the morning and get back at 6 p.m.

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with an hour allowed for meals. The sexes work together; the overlooker who is employed keeps the boys right and I should think the girls cannot be better cared for, as they work with their own mothers.

I urge attention to school from 5 to 10 years at all seasons, and in the winter season up to 13 years. I advocate all boys and girls being sent out to service at 13; boys to agriculture and girls to domestic service, except when the parents possess the means of sending them as apprentices to tradesmen.

I have had no experience whatever of public gangs, and I think the expression "private gang" conveys a meaning that does not exist; the women and children employed only come when they think proper, never more than five days in the week, and only when the weather is fine, excepting when the potatoe cropping season is on, at that period they have sometimes rough weather to experience, but they earn high wages. A woman and girl, 10 years of age, get 2*s.* 6*d.* a day. My opinion is, that the private gangs as they exist in this country ought not to have any legislative interference, except that under no circumstances would I allow a child under 10 years of age to be employed in field pursuits; and I would put the penalty on the employer. I find that if girls are allowed to work in the fields at 13 years of age, they become demoralized; but I consider that this does not arise from field employment, but from not having any proper supervision after work hours.

I should think it exceedingly hard for a poor man with six children varying in age from 5 to 13, if he were debarred from the assistance he would receive by the wages of those above 10 years employed at certain seasons in the fields, the work also prepares the children for their future part in life. I will never as an employer have a child under 12 years of age; but knowing the privations a labourer with a large family must suffer, if those above 10 were debarred from labour I submit. The half-day or alternate day system would not answer no farmers would so employ the children; they would rather be without them, and the parents as before stated would suffer.

I would have the children attend school regularly under all circumstances, from 6 to 10 years of age, and from October to March, till 13, and as much oftener as they could be spared; but that would fit them well for the ordinary duties of life.

School attendance is very much affected by the distance; and here arises another great difficulty, farmsteads are now generally erected in the centre of the lands, distant perhaps two miles from the villages, two or three cottages are erected for the convenience of the labourer, but all complain of the drawback to their children's schooling, and would rather live in the village than walk to their work. The school attendance is not affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents; the farmers give 20*l.* a year, and the proprietor 30*l.*, a school-house and master's-house. The school payment is 2*d.* a week for one child, but in the case of a family, only 1*d.*; though they enter them, they will allow them to idle about without making them attend punctually; there are sewing classes at the school under the mistress, and examined by the ladies of the village.

No cottage, with a family to provide for, should have less than three bedrooms and a kitchen. All teaching is vain, if parents and children are huddled together in one sleeping apartment. The want of self-respect is engendered at an early age, and frequently never eradicated. I have an average of two and a half cottages for each 100 acres on my farm, but I should say the average of the parish is below that. I believe all employed in the township with three or four exceptions, have cottages in the village and on the outlying farms. No lodgers are allowed where a family exists. The cottages are of various construction. Some have two, some three, and others four rooms each, but the size is apportioned to the families. One low room 12 feet by 14 feet, and the same above; a smaller one behind, 10 feet by 12 feet; or 10 feet by 14 feet; a smaller room above in the newer cottages. The older ones have been repaired and added to. The drainage is fair, every cottage has a good garden, generally attached, varying from 15 to 20 perches. I do not advocate more than 20 perches, it is an amusement to the labourer to cultivate that in his leisure hours; if you make them larger he breaks a day's work, and this leads to unpleasantness with the employer. The landlord owns all the cottages and the rent is 1*s.* a week with a few exceptions, but never more than 1*s.* 6*d.*; the cottages have been greatly improved since 1835. I do not think that the necessity for three bedrooms in a cottage is so clear as alleged, the third room is often unused and becomes dirty and untidy. It is impossible, in my opinion, to make cottages remunerative *per se* for the agricultural labourer. The owners of estates should see that proper cottage accommodation is provided to each farmer, including the rent in the price of the land, and the tenants should not be allowed to exact more than 1*s.* a week from each cottager as rent; in too many instances I have seen the farmer actually making a profit out of the labourer's cottage. Agreements should be drawn up by which the labourer would be prevented from taking advantage of his cheap residence against his employer, and the employer from gaining pecuniary advantages from the labourer. No lodger should be allowed.

There is one school supported by the ratepayers, the average attendance in summer, 19 boys and 13 girls; in winter, 20 boys and 18 girls. We have no night school in the parish. Agricultural labourers are too tired with their days work, they fall asleep immediately they leave the fresh air.

I should say from experience one-half of the boys hired into the farm houses can neither read nor write; in my service they have the opportunity of instruction three nights a week; some readily embrace it, but others will not attend. I never engage a farm servant unless they will sign a contract at the time of hiring; I had great difficulty at first in getting this done. I also hire them to attend divine service once on Sunday. I once got the farmers to agree not to take lads without a character, but they did not stick to it. I see very great difficulty in getting farmers to carry out any scheme of education dependent on certificates of school attendance unless they are compelled by law.

There is great difficulty in getting domestic servants. The girls are so fond of the liberty attendant on field work that they object to the restraints of service. The farmers' sons want education quite as much as the labourers. I believe the system of farm lads living on the premises is essential to the operations of the farm, especially as to the care of horses; one lad looks after four horses.

THORNE.

Population, 3,381; Acreage, 12,400; Cultivation, chiefly arable.

330. *Rev. George Jannings.* — The private gang system exists here; the children are employed in hoeing wheat and dibbling beans, planting and sorting potatoes, and in the autumn in gathering potatoes. In some cases they go three miles to their work. The hours of work on the land are from 9 till 5 with an hour allowed for meals, and the sexes generally work together which must, I think, have an injurious tendency on the young females. They attend the parochial school during some parts of the year when there is less to do in the fields. I scarcely think it would be desirable or practicable to subject private gangs to legislative regulations. There can be no doubt that females who are in the habit of working in the fields acquire a disinclination for domestic service together with a certain carelessness of manner. I would not place any restriction on the employment of females in field work.

I find that parents generally are anxious to give their children as good an education as possible, and

they make a point of sending them to school during slack time, that is, in the winter and just before harvest. The school attendance is not affected here by the pecuniary resources of the parents, as the school has large endowments.

The parish is three miles each way from the parsonage. I would put a limit on childrens' work at 10 years, and require three months school attendance during the year till 12 years old. Many go to permanent service before 13.

The wages are 2*s.* 6*d.* and 3*s.* a day for a man. The majority of the occupations are from 150 to 400 acres; there are, however, some very small holders, as there is a growing desire among labourers and small tradesmen to possess bits of land. There are a great many allotments for the cottagers which are eagerly sought after, and are let in portions of a rood or half an acre. The waterside population here are very bad and inaccessible to the clergyman, as they spend much of their time on board the barges and shut up their cottages. I have lately established a girls' school here; the payments are 3*d.*, 4*d.*, and 6*d.* a week. and I do not find many complaints by the parents of inability to pay.

STAINFORTH.

Population, 751; Acreage, 2,920; Cultivation, about three-fourths arable.

331. *John Bladworth, Esq.*—There are 12 young persons and women employed in field work, four boys between 10 and 13, and one between 13 and 18. Seven widows or married women over 18. Their work in the spring is dibbling beans and picking couch grass. In summer, in hoeing and singling turnips, and in autumn in potato gathering, They live near the farms on which they work. The maximum distance would not exceed one mile. The hours of work on the land are eight, with one hour and a half allowed for meals, and there is no injury to their health. There are no girls above 15 years of age who go to field work; but I am of opinion that in cases where this prevails their morals do not suffer by it. I would not place any restriction on female employment; the work they perform is easy and healthy, but the bulk of the women are widows, who would be deprived of a great aid to their means if prevented from working.

No boys should be employed under 10 years of age. Half days or alternate days for school would not work at all, the farmer must have them altogether or not at all; the winter months might be devoted to education. The school attendance is affected in some cases by the pecuniary resources of the parent, and a man with a large family cannot spare the elder ones for school as he requires their services for the support of the family.

The accommodation in the cottages is good and there are a sufficient number of them. There should be two cottages per 100 acres. The rooms are 10 to 12 feet square, the ventilation is good, and on an average there would be two low and two bedrooms, with pantry and out-buildings, and most of them have a garden attached; they are owned by landowners or small freeholders.

The surrounding district is well off for schools with endowments; in Fishlake parish there is a well endowed school with free education, but the population is the most ignorant in the district.

Most of the farms are from 300 to 400 acres; mine is 700. It is very difficult to get women or children to work. The wages for a man are 3*s.* 6*d.* a day, for women and boys 1*s.* ordinarily, 1*s.* 3*d.* in potato time. There are no large landowners. The poor people have cows; they pay 1*l.* for a summer run in the lanes, and they have also a small field of from three to five acres which is rented by themselves. The farm servants as a rule live in the farmer's house.

The district from Stainforth to Doncaster is sand; north of the river Don is clay. The district called the Levels was reclaimed in Charles the Second's time.

[Mr. Bladworth lately offered to send his shepherd's child to school free, (the boy at the time earning 5*s.* a week in light work, feeding the turnip cutter,) the shepherd declined, saying bread was better than learning; when told that the law would soon compel him to send his children under a certain age to school, he said he hoped it would not be for two years. This shepherd was earning 16*s.* a week and had a large family.]

Appendix to Report on the Labour of Women and Young Children in Agriculture.

This township, with a population of 751, has one-third the number engaged in maritime pursuits, while of the other two-thirds the labouring male population are so fully employed that their wives and children will not as a rule go out to work.

A man's wage is 2*s.* 6*d.* per day, but in hay time and harvest this is considerably exceeded, as also at thorough draining and other contract work they earn a larger sum.

Thus the women that go out to field work are principally widows who have little or no other means of subsistence, and the children belong mostly to men with large young families.

We have neither public nor private gangs, but in the neighbouring villages I have observed occasionally, say half a dozen women at work with some old man to superintend them and keep them at work, and as their tongues are more likely to be in motion than their hands this is a necessary and a proper precaution. His presence will neither cause them to overtax their strength nor be detrimental to their morals. I should myself prefer seeing more women and children at work in the fields, both for their own and the farmer's interest. They are never called upon to do work unfitted to their strength and the fresh open air is conducive to their health. It consists mainly in hand picking couch grass, weeding corn, singling and hoeing turnips, bird tenting, &c., and a wife who can add 6*s.* to her husband's store at the end of the week, or if they have a boy 11 years of age bringing in 5*s.* more, would surely not only be a handsome addition, but might with a little providence form the nucleus of a store which might in after days keep "the wolf from "their doors" and themselves from the workhouse. But it is, I regret to say, a rare case, in which a man, no matter how small his family, ever thinks of laying by a penny. As regards morals I have never been able to draw a comparison unfavourable to those who work in the fields; neither does it in any way encourage illegitimacy. I cannot point to a single instance in this village in which a girl who has stayed at home has committed herself, though there are many who have done so while in service. In farmhouses in which servants of both sexes are nightly brought into immediate contact, and perhaps with an insufficient attention to the position of their dormitories, seduction is of frequent occurrence.

The labour of women and children is the most economical the farmer can employ, for in work which requires suppleness of finger, or activity rather than strength, they will do as much as a man.

With respect to the education of children, the plan suggested in your circular of alternate days at work and school would never do, as the farmers in most cases could not obtain relays of children to fill up the time; and a day off and a day on would not be tolerated and could not be practically carried out.

Children might be prohibited from working under the age of 11 years; or they might be restricted from work for five months in the year, say from September to the end of February.

The working classes, generally speaking, do not properly appreciate education, and the man with large family cannot afford, even if he felt inclined, to send his children to school. And unless some provision was made to meet the latter case, and a compulsory attendance at school for a given time on all classes of the poor, any prohibitory labour enactment with a view to education would be inoperative, and fail to secure the object aimed at.

Jno. Bladworth, J.P.

Stainforth, near Doncaster.

W. R. York.

Mr. Portman.

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WARMSWORTH.

Population, 361. Acreage, 1,074. Cultivation chiefly arable.

332. *Rev. C. E. Thomas*, rector.—There are no private gangs in this parish, and those otherwise employed here are about 60.

Boys:	
Under 8	4
Between 8 and 10	6
Between 10 and 13	6
And between 13 and 18	8=24
Females:	
Under 8	2
Between 10 and 13	6
Between 13 and 18	1
Over 18	12 married and one unmarried=22

Their work in spring is bird tenting, picking twitche, dibbling beans, and hoeing corn. In summer in weeding and singling turnips. In autumn, in potato picking. In winter, in cutting and pulling turnips and tenting. None go more than 2½ miles to their work. The usual hours of work on land are from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., with 1½ hours allowed for meals. In the quarries in summer they work from 4 a.m. to 4 p.m. There is no injury to the health, unless perhaps in the case of very young children and in wet weather. They are employed very young in the quarries. I have known them suffer but not at other work. Quarry work is in my opinion too laborious for boys under 14 years of age, and unfit for females altogether. Where women go out regularly to field work it has the effect of making them dirty and slovenly in their homes, careless of the comforts of their husbands and families, and coarse in their manners, their children go about neglected in appearance, and their husbands for want of home comforts are drunken. On the other hand where they are occasionally so employed, as for harvest, stone picking, and such like, it makes them industrious, tends to healthiness, and rubs off that finery and pride which is apt to grow among our cottagers and to make them think they are not to soil their hands with work. I would restrict females under 12 or 13 from going to work, and certainly during the winter months females should not work, as many go out poorly clad and worse shod and so get into bad health.

Turnip cutting and pulling in winter is a cruel employment for women. Moderate summer work, where there are not very young children left at home, is of use both to the women and also to the bringing up of the children in industry and domestic habit. I would not allow boys to go to work at all before 8 years of age, and not regularly before 13. I do not think that any person of any age ought to go four miles backwards and forwards to work daily; it must in the end tell upon the workmen as well as upon the employer very disadvantageously. No child under 13 should work more than eight hours a day. I would recommend that an endeavour be made to enforce attendance at school during the six winter months, *i.e.*, from October to March. Distance, except in deep snow or in very bad weather, does not affect the school attendance. We have no industrial training school, but we encourage it in various ways.

I consider good cottage accommodation most essential both to health, comfort, and morality. I have known the finest and naturally healthiest children waste away through so many sleeping in too confined a space, also decently brought-up families turn out ill and bear bastard children owing to the crowded state of their home apartments, which must destroy all sense of decency. Three cottages for 200 acres are considered sufficient for the land. We have not above one to 100 acres. There are not enough cottages with two or three bedrooms, but improvements are being made. The cottages are limestone houses with tile roofs. One down-stairs room and one or two up-stairs rooms about 14 or 15 feet by 15 feet, about 7 feet 6 inches in height, bad ventilation, and tolerable drainage, bad accommodation for families by not having separate rooms for parents and children. Most of the cottages have gardens, privies, and pig-styes; they are in the hands of landowners, and are rented from 3*l.* to 4*l.* a year. A kitchen often forms the sleeping apartment for one of the family. I am of opinion that in these parts, where work is plentiful and labour well paid, cottages could be constructed, good and comfortable dwellings, with every necessary, at a cost which would repay the landed proprietor, taking into consideration how much he and his tenants are losing by labourers coming from a distance even of two miles to their work, and if the houses were comfortable the labourers would gladly pay 5*l.* or 6*l.* a year.

School.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10	20	12
Between 10 and 13	4	2
Girls:		
Under 10	15	10
Between 10 and 13	8	2

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10	25	15
Between 10 and 13	6	4
Girls:		
Under 10	18	12
Between 10 and 13	10	5

There are seven boys and six girls neither at school nor at work in summer and winter. Those who do not send their children regularly to school are persons of very insufficient education themselves, many of whom can neither read nor write. We had a night school from October to January open for 13 weeks for an hour and a half for three nights a week. This year we had only seven scholars above 12 years of age; other years we have had from 10 to 20. It is impossible that a night school should supply the deficiencies of the day school unless kept up regularly all the year round, and in summer it would never be attended. The difficulties of maintaining one are the want of scholars of that class which are able to attend, the distance of some who do not like to come so far in the dark, wet and dark nights, bad roads, &c. This year the attendance was so bad we closed the school, and supplied the few who were willing to come with books to read at home.

As to the system of hiring at statutes (as is the custom here), we long to see it changed, as it is a most demoralizing system; but, so far as my own parish is affected by it, we experience very little of the evil results.

For 20 years I have made it my business to discourage, as far as possible, parents taking their children to be hired at statutes. I have a list of those males and females who want places, and at different tradespeople's shops in Doncaster where we deal, I have left lists of boys and girls wanting such and such situations, in this way it has become known that I interest myself in getting servants places, and I am applied to by many farmers and tradespeople for servants; and I believe if this were done in each parish we should have an end of hiring at statutes. The farmers like it, and I have been successful in most cases in finding good servants, and comfortable places for them (which has given mutual satisfaction), and they have in many instances returned to me at the year's end to ask me to find them another. Even if this were carefully carried out with respect to the young women, the

great evil of statutes would be removed. For the young men, when left to themselves behave tolerably steadily, but it is the young girls of 14 or 15 years of age who have not been out before, who, if they have attended school, have left it 2 or 3 years and have been employed either at home or elsewhere as girls of all work, these having lost all sense of control go to the statutes and in the most shameful and brazen way lead the young men into all sorts of misbehaviour. There is, I am thankful to see, a growing wish on the part of the parents and the farmers to see this kind of thing abolished, and we shall abolish it in time if we act together and are content to lead and not to drive; for the Yorkshiremen of all people of the world are the last that will bear driving. There are some farmers here who have an opinion that if there were more cottages on the farms, it would tend to diminish the number of youths hired at statutes as in that case they would work on the farms with their parents.

I have tried very many different kinds of schools since I have been here. A school under an uncertificated mistress to begin with; then under a certificated mistress and pupil-teacher; then under a certificated master and sempstress, and now under a certificated master and uncertificated mistress. I find it now answer thoroughly, the people begin to value education and to send their children to us in preference to sending them to Doncaster schools. We find an evening sewing class for girls in summer work well, one reads in turn, whilst the others sew; two girls and two boys take the cleaning of the schoool every day and more thoroughly on one evening in the week, and this is done under the inspection of the master, which makes them handy and cleanly.

We encourage every kind of domestic and agricultural work, as tending to make the children useful and intelligent, so long as it is not carried to excess to interfere with their studies.

Flower and root shows for the cottagers with prizes for the best kept garden and house front, and prizes for sewing, all conduce to make them take a pride in the neatness and respectability, and comfort of their homes as well as making them more industrious, sober, and contented.

BARNBROUGH.

Population, 562. Acreage 2,000. Cultivation, mixed.

333. *George Wordsworth*, assistant registrar.—There are 45 males and 10 females employed here in private gangs; they are employed in gathering stones, and weeding and turnip cutting.

The men work 12 hours and the women 10 hours; they do not go far to their work, and two hours a day are allowed for their meals.

One man usually goes with two or three women. The state of education among the young is very indifferent.

Females going out to work for farmers when young are generally not wishful to remain in their situations when they have obtained one. In my opinion females would be better at home and the young ones at service.

Boys should not be employed under 12 years old. Regular attendance at school for boys under 12 years of age during the winter would be the best plan.

We have about 100 houses for 560 inhabitants giving five or six to each house, the cottages generally are small, one low room and pantry and one bedroom; the tenants are obliged to deal with the landlord. In our parish there are several freeholders. I do not know the exact number at school but it is about 50 boys and girls. There is a night school open twice a week, for two hours a night during three months of the year attended by about 10 scholars; they are taught reading and writing.

Boys who go out to work young get their minds engaged with other objects and are careless about their education.

Wages for an ordinary labourer 12*s.* and 13*s.* a week. Women 1*s.* a day. Boys 6*d.* and 8*d.* a day.

I had a school for six years, taught several children for nothing, and they were the worst attendants. Compulsion is necessary to make parents send their children to school, a limit of age for work alone would not be sufficient. I think that half time might be worked in agricultural districts. Mexbro is in my district where there are large works.

There are fewer children born dead in agricultural than in manufacturing districts.

The young married women earn 6*s.* a week while they leave their children with someone to take care of, and pay 2*s.* a week for them. The neighbouring village of Melton is very short of cottage accommodation. This having been an open parish for many years supplies labour for the adjoining parishes.

HEMSWORTH.

Population about 1,000.

334. *The Rev. A. Wrightson.*—The farmers here keep very few lads in their houses, the system has been much given up, they get labourers instead from the village. The women and children are only occasionally employed, children very seldom, and only at odd times such as potatoe planting, bird-tenting, singling turnips, and dibbling wheat. The women go "looking" (weeding) corn with a thistle-spud. The children attend school in winter.

I would not advise any legislation as the age for work; there is no gang system, men and women do not go together to the fields.

Men's wages are 15*s.* a week and allowances. Coals are led for them, and milk is given. The women get 1*s.* a day for machine work; and tenpence a day for ordinary work. The earnings in harvest are very large and there is no poverty in the parish. We have a clothing club. The money is always ready for the payments. There is an endowed grammar school, a parish school and National school.

The farms are small with a fair proportion of grass. The cottages are sufficient in number and well situated for the work of the farm.

TADCASTER.

335. *Alexander Shaw*, schoolmaster.—I have been here 12 months; the number on the books is 120, average attendance for 1867, 68. The women and children go out in great numbers in April and May for willow-peeling, which is very easy work, and children go as young as 7 years of age. They are also employed in potato planting and gathering. The wages for an ordinary labourer are 14*s.* and 15*s.* a week. Many of the parents are indifferent to education, many children are running about the streets who never come to school. In one case, I offered to teach a child who had been paying and had left the school free, but with no effect. There are also in Tadcaster an Irish Roman Catholic school, a church girls' school and a grammar school.

HEALAUGH.

Population, 262. - Acreage, 2,981.

336. *Rev. E. H. Brooksbank.*—There are no private gangs here. There are 22 males and females employed in agricultural labour.

Of the males:—

Between 8 and 10 - - -	2
„ 10 „ 13 - - -	4
„ 13 „ 18 - - -	1

Of the females:—

Under 10 - - - -	1
Between 10 and 13 - - -	4

Over 18 years, nine married and one unmarried.

They are employed in tenting seed-corn, and weeding; in summer and autumn in the hay and corn harvest; in the winter they are not employed at all. The hours of work on land are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with an hour allowed for meals; this employment is beneficial to their health. I would not allow boys to work under 9 years of age; but I see no necessity for

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placing a restriction on female employment. I would restrict work in the winter to the following hours:—From half an hour after sunrise to half an hour before sunset; in summer, to 10 hours a day.

We have about one cottage per 100 acres. The cottages are generally very good, each with a garden and privy, coal shed, and pigstye, and not high rented. [These cottages have been repaired and re-built by Mr. Brooksbank, and are now very tidy and comfortable, and mostly with two or three bedrooms; besides the garden, they have a few acres of grass-land for a cow.] One labourer with a large cottage, garden, and cow pasture, pays 16*l.* a year.

The occupations are mostly small, and there is a good deal of grass land.

The women earn 10*d.* and 1*s.* a day. Wages for an ordinary labourer 14*s.* and 15*s.* a week. The farm servants living in the houses are generally two or three lads per farm, or two lads and a man and two girls. I have some doubt as to the evil of women's field-work, except on the point of neglecting their home duties. I do not think any compulsory system would answer.

[The cottages on Mr. Montague's property in the neighbourhood are very bad.]

A large portion of this district is under Gilbert's Act.

ABERFORD.

Population - - 1,500.

337. *T. Johnson Fox, Esq.*—I have managed the estates of Lord Ashdown and Mrs. Gascoigne for many years. I think that an age should be fixed for children's labour, and that some system of compulsory school attendance would be very beneficial. Children's labour between 10 and 13 years of age is necessary for farm operations at certain seasons; the women also are much employed.

Wages for a man 14*s.* and 15*s.* a week; but there are instances of 12*s.* for old men.

The hours of work are shorter than they used to be, and some kinds of work, such as flail-thrashing and mowing are almost given up.

There is no real poverty among the labourers, but great apathy and indifference as to education. Forty years ago hardly a man could sign his name; it is now rare to find one that cannot do so.

The farms in this neighbourhood have been much enlarged of late, and many cottages have been built on them. An additional number of cottages on the farms are much wished for by the farmers, and are doubtless advantageous to him and to the labourer; but the distance from school and church is a drawback for the children. The farm lads hired by the year are now usually boarded in the house of the hind instead of in the farmhouse as formerly.

ABERFORD SCHOOL.

338. *Arthur Capper* (9 years old).—I have been out for three years weeding and bird-tenting. We went eight together, but no girls; we were looked after by the master, and the money was paid to my parents. I am usually out four weeks at a stretch.

339. *William Spinks* (10 years old).—I have been out for three years bird-tenting and pea-picking. At bird-tenting I get 6*d.* a day; at pea-picking 1*d.* a basket, and I can earn 1*s.* a day.

340. *Abbot.*—I earn 1*s.* a day at pea-picking; hours from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m., with one stop in the day. More than 22 children will go together. The hours of pea-picking are sometimes from 3 a.m. till 11 a.m. I have walked 2½ miles to work, and was once taken in a cart with a lot of others. I go to plant potatoes in October and November, and earn 1*s.* a day.

341. *James Todd.* master.—The attendance in the spring and autumn is very irregular; in winter it is better. The children leave school very young; if they could be kept in regular attendance up to 10 years of age they would be well grounded in reading, writing, and the first four rules of arithmetic.

The weeding of corn is principally done by women and older boys.

342. *Mrs. Robinson,* mistress.—Very few girls under 10 years of age go out either for pea-picking or potato-planting; the weeding is usually done by women with a spud. The children are employed with their parents in singling turnips; one of the elder girls stays at home when the mother goes to the field. I am a Norfolk woman and well acquainted with the gang system; there is no such system existing here.

ASTON.

Population, about 1,700. Acreage, 2,915. Cultivation, chiefly arable.

343. The *Rev. A. R. Campbell,* rector.—Women and children are not employed in agriculture in this parish or neighbourhood, except occasionally; the young persons so employed are servants in the farm-houses. They are employed in bird-minding, turnip-singling, and gathering couch-grass. The hours of work for women are from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., or till dusk, with an hour allowed for dinner. I do not think that their health is injuriously affected, but I believe the effect is injurious on the morals of the women from additional occasions of temptation, and from the tendency to produce a certain wildness of character, and with regard to their proper training for domestic duties there is a want of practice in household duties. I do not think that any restriction on female labour is required in this neighbourhood, but boys should not be allowed to work under 10 years of age. My opinion is that school attendance at considerable intervals is worthless, that, to be of any use, it must be for a certain number of hours in each week; I am inclined to give the preference, where practicable, to alternate whole days at school and whole days at work, and I hope to see the principle of compulsory attendance extended to agricultural children under proper restrictions. The labouring classes here are very well off. Poverty, from whatever cause, affects the regularity of school attendance. Any poverty here is the result of improvidence and bad habits.

Adequate accommodation in the cottages, if possible three sleeping-rooms, is most necessary to the comfort, self-respect, and morality of the people. The cottages are, generally speaking, old and bad, the accommodation inadequate, the water supply bad, and the drainage imperfect. They are owned chiefly by landowners and by coal companies. The cottages of the latter are better in point of size and convenience, but are over-crowded. Rent varies from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, but the latter sum is now very rare. The cottage accommodation is increasing. We have on the register of the school 20 boys and 22 girls in winter and summer. The bulk of the labouring class here is non-agricultural, but mining. Very few of the agricultural class are neither at school nor at work; but in the parish there are 97 children between 4 and 13 years of age of the labouring class in all kinds of labour who are in this state. There is a night school in Aston, and one in Aughton from the middle or end of October till March, open on three nights a week for two hours each night. There are 45 on the register and 27 in average attendance. They are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic. The difficulties of maintaining an efficient school are the unwillingness of the lads to attend, and the difficulty of separating adults and boys for want of competent teachers.

ULLEY.

344. *Mr. Moss,* farmer, and the *Rev. W. S. Evans.*—This parish is chiefly agricultural, but there is coal within three miles.

[Mr. Moss farms 411 acres of his own, and superintends 600 of his brother's at Whiston.]

The children go out for about a month singling turnips with their parents at 8 years, and earn 8*d.* a day. It would be desirable to fix the limit for children's work at 10 years of age. The lowest wages

for an agricultural labourer paid by Mr. Moss are 16*s.* a week. The regular wages in the district are 15*s.* a week, but very few work for that.

The parents are very indifferent about education, being themselves for the most part very ignorant. The attendance at school even in the winter is very irregular, owing to the employment of the boys in cattle-feeding. The weekly payment to the school for children is 2*d.* The mothers go to the fields for work and leave their children in charge of a girl, and the houses are consequently untidy, domestic duties are neglected, and the husband goes to the public house. We think half time would be very beneficial for educational purposes. Mr. Moss paid for the schooling of five families by the quarter, and could not get the children to attend regularly. Mr. Evans thought a certificate of acquirement up to a given standard would be beneficial, and might be required before hiring. Lads cannot go into the pits under 13 years of age, and on the farms they are not of much use before 12 years of age.

The cottages are sufficient in number, but need improvements in quality; some have allotments, some small gardens; those belonging to small freeholders let at 2*s.* 6*d.* and 3*s.* a week, are very poor and bad. There is a night school. The farmhouses being either in or close to the village, the attendance should be good, but the lads are indifferent about it, though some come up to the age of 18.

Cottages.

(1.) One low room and two bedrooms 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. A pitman, wife, and three children; garden not large enough to grow food; expenses for flour and vegetables this year have been very great, they have had no meat for weeks. Cottage very tidily kept. Rent 2*s.* 6*d.* a week.

(2.) One low room and one up-stairs room, 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, very untidy, belonging to a pitman. These are adjoining cottages.

(3.) One low room, two bedrooms and no garden at all, occupied by an agricultural labourer with a large family, at a rent of 1*s.* a week, to be raised to 1*s.* 6*d.* The agricultural labourer is better off than the pitman in consequence of his work and pay being more regular throughout the year. The agricultural labourer here with harvest and turnip hoeing by the piece, and his regular wages, will earn on an average 1*l.* a week. The women work by the piece at turnip topping and tailing, which work is taken at 8*s.* and 10*s.* an acre; they can earn about 1*s.* 6*d.* a day. The girls do not go out to field work at all.

HAREWOOD.

345. Consists of the townships of Harewood, population, 830; East Keswick, 470; Weardley, 170, and part of Wike, 126. Total population, 1,596.

At Harewood there is a mixed school.

At Weardley a dame school, but no National school; at East Keswick, a mixed school under a mistress, and at Wike, a small endowed school, not under Government.

Harewood School.

346. *Mr. Brooke*, master.—The eldest boy in the first-class is 14 years of age, and the eldest girl is also 14. There are some of 10. The boys are mostly sons of tradesmen, some are sons of farmers, but of men who employ labour. The children of those who hold a work 40 or 50 acres of their own, are now out at work. There is a night school in the parish, but farm lads will not attend. Children are admitted to the day school at 5 years of age.

Industrial School.

This school is an adjunct to the ordinary school. There is a washing room and kitchen, and a room for sewing in the afternoon, which is used as a class-room at other times. This school is for seven girls, of whom six wash, and one cooks one day and a half in each week. These girls are over 10 years of age, and go once in five weeks, or according to the number in the school, to the industrial school, usually on Tuesday for a day at washing and cooking. The girls are not lodged here as at Escrick or Doncaster.

347. *C. R. Moorsom*, Esq., agent to Lord Harewood.—The cottages are substantial and clean, but many are not very convenient in the upper-floors, having sleeping roofs and ventilation. There is generally one sitting-room, bedroom, and pantry below, and two bedrooms above, and the average rent is 1*s.* a week. Cottages are frequently, when let with the farms, sublet by the tenants to persons not being their own labourers, and at a rent higher than what other labourers are paying. In this district the villages are for the most part so near the farms that there is no urgent demand for more cottages on the farms. Labour is not abundant owing to the proximity to manufacturing towns, which draw off the young men at a rate of wages higher than is paid for agricultural work.

There are allotment pieces of half a rood for almost every cottage in the village. There is a class of small occupiers living on the edge of the Moors, their land is well cultivated, and if this class of farmers ceased to exist, it would not be easy to get a tenant for such places. They usually do the work of their farm with their own hands and those of their children.

348. *Meeting of farmers and others*, Harewood.—Present, the Rev. Miles Atkinson, Rev. C. Wyberg, of Weeton, C. R. Moorsom, J. Parker, farm bailiff, and farmers representing the townships and parishes of Harewood, East Keswick, Wike, Weeton, Dunkeswick, Arthington, Wigton, Weardley and Eccup in the parish of Adel.

It is a very rare thing for women and children to be employed in field work in this district. The women will not go out to work even to charring. No boys under 14 go to the field; the question therefore of fixing a limit of age for such work does not affect this district. The attendance at school throughout the district is not good, there is a sufficient number of schools, but some of them are very poor and have bad masters; there is great need of further Government aid for these poor schools. The parents are very indifferent about the education and schooling of the children. An instance was quoted where a farmer at Weeton had paid for a boy's schooling for a year, during which he only attended three times. They will attend better when the parents have to pay for the schooling. Most of the people, the young and the middle aged, can read and write. The ordinary rate of wages 14*s.* a week; much of the labour is supplied by the Irish, many of whom live on the spot. Harvest pay is 1*l.* a week and meat, for good workmen. Cottage rent 1*s.* a week on an average. Some farmers have lads in their houses, some not, but all go to statutes. The system of statutes was universally condemned, but no suggestion was made as to the possibility of altering it.

There is a savings bank in Harewood where the agricultural labourers from the neighbourhood freely deposit their money. The occupations are from 100 to 250 acres, yearly tenancy, and cottages are let with the farms. There are some small holders who employ no labourers but work the farms by themselves and their children; they are the worst educated class and are in many cases worse off than a good labourer. If their children were forced to go to school and they had consequently to hire labour they would probably be ruined. An instance was however quoted of one of these who has five boys who have been all taught to read and write at school and worked on the land besides. The children of these small holders go out to service but do not go into the factories. The usual pay for foremen on a farm varies from 20*l.* to 24*l.* a year and their board.

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Mr. Portman.

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WETHERBY.

349. *Mr. Stephenson*, bailiff to Mr. Cundy, lives at Wighill.—Children are not employed under 13 except person for bird-tenting. Boys of 14 or 15 go out weeding; women also go to that work in the spring but not in any number, they are generally married or widows. The children at Wighill go regularly to school; Mrs. York has a school there for the young and they go thence to Walton school. The education in this district is in a good state. Half-time would not answer in agricultural districts; a regular attendance at school during winter months might be enforced. There is more grass than arable in this district. A strong boy would be employed in thistle mowing in the pastures in July and August. A night-school was tried but it did not succeed. The wages are 14*s.* and 15*s.* a week. Most of the farmers have lads in their houses. Mine are always shut in at 9 p.m. I would willingly do without them if I could get labour conveniently from the village. The cottages are rented at 2*l.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* a year with a garden or allotment; but the allotment system is gradually dying out, it has not been found to answer so well as a garden attached to the cottage. Some cottages are let with the farms; all farms are held on yearly tenancy.

350. *Mr. Forrest*, late schoolmaster at Wetherby.—Boys leave school from 10 to 12 years of age; the attendance in school was very irregular in consequence of running errands, &c. on market days. The attendance at Spofforth was more regular. I used there to keep lads up to 16 years of age, but now they do not stay so long. Up to 10 years of age boys could be well grounded in reading writing and arithmetic, if the attendance is regular. I do not think that half time or alternate days would answer in an agricultural district on account of the distance to work. If the grant was given for 150 attendances in the year, and government aid to small schools with uncertificated masters, it would materially assist education. The payment at Wetherby school for the labouring classes varies from 1*d.* to 4*d.* a week. There is also a Wesleyan day school in the town well supported and three Sunday schools. The women and children work very little in the fields and a great deal of the labour is done by Irish.

KIRK DEIGHTON.

This includes also the Township of North Deighton.

351. *Dr. Geldart.*—The attendance at school is regular; we have 60 scholars on the books. There is a charity for education; but the school was built by me, and I pay the schoolmaster partly myself and partly by money out of the charity funds.—The occupations on an average are 120 acres but there are one or two of 300 acres; the smaller farmers employ labourers and keep lads in their houses. The women go out weeding and turnip hoeing. The cottages here are pretty good. We are under the "Gilbert Act" which I consider most beneficial, as the poor are kept at a much cheaper rate than under the new poor law.

BICKERTON.

In the parish of Bilton in Wetherby Union.

[The land here principally belongs to Mr. Montague and the dwellings of the poor are very indifferent; but some slight improvement is being made.]

352. *Mr. Newman.*—I farm 400 acres and employ very few women or children, one boy under 9 years is in my employ. There are 30 children attending the Sunday school. The parents are very indifferent about education even when their children can go for nothing. I think some compulsion is necessary. There is a good deal of flax grown here which requires weeding; this work is principally done by the Irish. At certain seasons we are very short of hands for weeding purposes. If the cottages were put in a better state, children would attend school more regularly. Many of our children go to Walton school.

WALTON SCHOOL.

353. *Henry Burgum* (master).—Number on the books up to April 1868, 63; average attendance, 32 boys and 14 girls = 46. Of these, 25 boys and 13 girls are under 13 years of age; 17 boys and 8 girls are between 10 and 13 years of age. The day school at present has some farmers' sons attending. The falling off of attendance begins in June and lasts over harvest. The children of the labouring class leave as soon as they can earn anything. At 9 years of age or under the small ones go cow-tenting, some go "looking," and potato planting. The women also go to work very much in the fields.

Wages for an ordinary labourer 13*s.* a week. For a woman 1*s.* a day ordinary work, and more for machine work. Small children earn 8*d.* a day; bigger ones 1*s.* a day. The children who work in the fields might well have 30 weeks' schooling in the year. The irregular attendance causes the children to go back in their studies and to forget what they have learnt.

There is to a certain extent a pressure put on the labourer by the farmer, that is to say, as a condition of regular payment and employment throughout the year the labourer is expected to let the farmer have the benefit of the work of his wife and children when occasion requires.

The night school here has been most successful this year. I have had 24 in attendance, out of which number 16 were farm servants. The school is open three nights a week, free of payment, from October to March, for two hours a night. The principle on which we have endeavoured to conduct this school is to make it as little like a school as possible, that is, when the lads first attended they were allowed to do such work as they wished; and after a time we found that they fell into a routine of instruction. They are also allowed to play drafts and chess. The farmers have expressed themselves as being very thankful for the benefit done to the lads.

The distance from the farmhouses to the school is very slight. The school has been open for four years, and I do the work myself. The average of those attending is 16 years. We have 12 of 18 years of age, and one of 26 years. The occupations in Walton average 200 acres. There is one farm of 500 acres. This school receives great care and attention from Mrs. York, of Wighill.

LONG MARSTON.

School.

354. There are several Bilton boys at the school. The small children go out singling turnips at 8 or 9 years of age, both boys and girls. Sometimes they are paid by the farmer, and sometimes they go with their parents, who take the work by the piece. At Bilton the children also are employed, and there is a small school there for about 10 scholars. In Rufforth there is no school open now, but boys do not go out much to field work there under 10 years of age. Girls are very seldom employed before 10 or 11 years of age. The wages in harvest for children are 1*s.* a day, without meat but with two drinkings.

Charles Dickinson, of Angram.—I went out at 9 years of age singling turnips and driving carts in harvest, and potatoing. I got 6*d.* a day and meat. The hours of work at singling is from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. I live close to my work. I have been half a day to farm work, and have come to school afterwards in the afternoon. I was not too tired to attend to my lessons. I came two miles to school. I think that the farmers would be glad to employ boys in the afternoon for work at certain seasons in the year sooner than not have them at all.

355. *Cottages, property of Mr. Montague.*

(1.) One room, rent 2*s.* a year. Upper chamber not in repair. Inhabited by a widow.

(2.) Two rooms on ground floor. Chamber not fit for use. The roof in bad order. Pigstye falling down. No privy or garden.

(3.) Kitchen and bedrooms on the ground floor, chamber not used, a good garden, rent 1*l.* a year.

These cottages were all very clean and tidy. They are let at a low rent, and the landlord refuses to do any repairs. The repairs and whitewashing amount frequently to 2*l.* a year or more, thereby raising the rent above the real value of the cottage. No steps are being taken to build fresh cottages here when the old ones tumble down.

356. *Mr. Coates*, farmer.—300 acres is a large farm, the average size of the farms is from 100 to 300 acres; the cultivation here is nearly as possible half grass and half tillage. Children under 10 years of age do not work, a few between 10 and 12 go out singling turnips, but among these there are very rarely any girls. Women are difficult to get for ordinary work; they go out much for teasle cutting which they take by the piece and at which they can earn 5*s.* a day. Women and children do not go out at all in the winter. I have never heard of any case of a bargain being made by a farmer for the work of the wife or the child of a labourer. I prefer getting labourers from the village for the farm work, to having a number of lads in the house. I should much like to see characters more frequently required at hirings; then I do not think it would be necessary to have a certificate of school attendance for a certain number of months during the year produced at hiring.

I think that an increased number of cottages would do away with the necessity for having so many lads in the farmhouses if they were placed conveniently for the work of the farms.

The cottages are not good, but are kept wonderfully clean.

357. *Rev. A. St. John Mildmay*, rector.

Population, 580. - Acreage, 4,310.

There are, exclusive of farm servants, 40 males and 30 females employed in agriculture; of the males about 25 are between 10 and 13, and 15 between 13 and 18 years. Of the females, very few are ever employed under 13 years except for "looking" [weeding], about eight between 13 and 18 years, and above 18 years 20 married and 10 unmarried, but only for hay and harvest as a rule. The distance to work is from one to two miles, and the hours are for men from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., for women from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., with an hour allowed for dinner.

I think that the mothers of little children necessarily fail in their domestic duties when in constant employment in the fields. Children should not be employed at all under nine years of age, for the purposes of education not under 10 years, and then only occasionally. Half day at school and half day at work would be the best mode of enforcing school attendance, the school half should always be in the morning, but the farmers object to this system.

I believe the prevailing custom of parents and older children of both sexes sleeping in the same room to be one of the chief causes of immorality. In farms especially little attention is paid to the separation of the lads' sleeping-room from that occupied by the women. I allude to the latter point from facts that have come under my notice.

One cottage per 100 acres is sufficient (including farm servants) for the requirements of the land, we have about one to 250 acres. The cottages are in some cases overcrowded, but the cleanliness of the people seems to counteract the physical evils of such cottages. They have mostly ground floor rooms both for sitting and bedrooms; one sitting room, one bed room, and a lean-to with beds in it. Gardens are good.

Hutton and Angram, the two townships of Marston, have cottages for the most part comfortable and not crowded. Mr. Montague is the landlord in Marston, Lord Wenlock in the other townships. This parish is under the Gilbert Act.

The plan of setting apart a building with dormitories for young men, under the superintendence of a master and matron where practicable, would remedy one of the evils in cottages. I believe it has been tried with great success on Mr. Sotheron Estcourt's estate.

SCHOOL.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	35	20
Between 10 and 13 -	32	9
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	22	16
Between 10 and 13 -	11	9

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	35	Much the same as in summer.
Between 10 and 13 -	32	
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	22	
Between 10 and 13 -	11	

There has been an unusually large number of absentees this summer. There is no night school.

In a scattered parish, the distances men have to go after a hard day's work, and the early hour of returning required by the masters, prevents the working of a night school, and when the long days begin the school is closed; there is also difficulty in getting teachers.

YORKSHIRE.—NORTH RIDING.

358. MEETING of NORTH RIDING CHAMBER of AGRICULTURE.

Malton, 15th Feb. 1868.

EDUCATION OF THE LABOURING CLASSES.

In reference to this important subject the paper contained the following resolutions for discussion:—

The education of the agricultural labourer, upon which question the Scarborough, Pickering, and other chambers have expressed no opinion, but have deferred the full consideration of the subject to the Malton meeting; but, as to which, these resolutions have been proposed:—

THE RIPON RESOLUTION.

That this meeting recognises the necessity of providing efficient means of education, where such do not already exist; that where voluntary efforts are inadequate, and recourse to public funds is necessary, this meeting is strongly of opinion that a rate, based on the present poor-law assessment, would be partial and unjust in its operation, because an enormous amount of the wealth of this country is not liable to be rated, and would therefore bear no proportion of the expense of any scheme of education, founded on the present system of rating; that this meeting con-

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siders compulsory interference with the parents in the management of their children undesirable and unnecessary, at least in agricultural districts, and that any coercion would be deemed by them as repugnant to that liberty of thought and freedom of action which all Englishmen so much appreciate; that in the carrying out of any scheme which may be adopted, it is expedient that a local board of supervision be established to co-operate with any Government official who may be appointed in the management of the schools situated in the respective localities of such boards.

THE THIRSK RESOLUTION.

This chamber, recognizing the great importance of the question of education, desires to express its opinion against any undue haste in the decision of the question; but records also its opinion that any additional facilities required for the education of the labouring classes should be provided by an increased amount of State aid, and the application of local funds, together with such local rates as may be necessary; those local rates being in smaller proportion to the aid granted by the State. And this chamber concurs in approving of the principle of the establishment of educational districts co-extensive with poor-law unions, with local boards of management composed of poor-law guardians, the present managers of schools, and other fit and proper persons, and of the enforcing of attendance by making educational certificates a condition of hiring and employment.

Mr. J. Smith, of Riseborough, did not think they should accomplish all that was necessary in the way of education unless they provided not only for the education of the labouring classes, but also for that of the children of small farmers, tradesmen, and mechanics throughout the country. As to the age up to which children should go to school, he might state that the practice throughout the county of York was to employ children at very light labour indeed, and only very occasionally. There were here no such "gangs" as were usual in the county of Cambridge, in the south, and in the midland counties. If Government passed an act that no children should be employed at any labour until the age of 10 or 11, it would interfere very much at one season of the year with harvesting operations.

Mr. Smith said, that as to the half-time system, it would not work, as the farmer must have the lad the whole day or not at all. The resolution he had to move was—

(1.) That commodious and healthy school-rooms, with efficient teachers, should be provided where necessary.

(2.) That Government grants be made for the erection of school rooms, and for the payment of teachers.

(3.) That a Board of Education be formed in every poor-law union, composed of all the guardians, with an additional elected member from every 5,000 of population in every poor-law parish.

(4.) That grants in aid still be made to all denominational schools, and all establishments for training teachers which now receive them, or hereafter make application for them.

(5.) That it is not necessary that teachers employed by the Board of Education should possess a certificate of ability from any training establishment, it being sufficient that the board consider him suitable and efficient.

(6.) That grants in aid be made only to those schools and to the amount recommended by the board.

(7.) That as of necessity such schools as are under the management of this Board cannot be sectarian in their character, therefore grants must only be made on condition that the Holy Scriptures be read and taught thereat.

(8.) To induce attendance at those schools, the charge for education must be as low as possible, the board having power to exempt from payment altogether those whom they consider unable to pay; and rewards for attendance may be given, as the board may direct.

(9.) That all children of paupers be educated free of charge, and the parents be compelled to send them, upon pain of forfeiting their weekly allowance.

Captain Copperthwaite, expressed himself in favour of compulsory education, especially with regard to pauper children.

North Riding Chamber of Agriculture,
Malton, Feb. 29, 1868.

It was resolved that "no child ought to be sent out "to work under the age of 10 years, harvest time "excepted, and that from that age to 12 years he "should have attendance at school during the winter "months."

359. *Superintendent Harper*, E. R. Constabulary.—I find that 50 boys and 12 girls go up the Driffield line to Wharram and Birdale, every morning from about the 3rd of June to the middle of August, for weeding and hoeing. The rest of the year none leave Malton by rail, nor have I heard of any by road.

FLAXTON.

360. *James Palmer, Esq.*, surgeon.—Children of 8 or 9 years of age go out to work singling turnips in spring, and are absent from school three or four months in the year, including the harvest. I do not think that the health of the children is at all damaged by field work, neither do they go any great distance to work, perhaps two miles. The wages for labourers is usually 8*s.* and 9*s.* a week, and meat. They get 1*l.* in time of harvest, and there is a great deal of "take" work. Women earn 1*s.* and 1*s.* 3*d.* a day. They for the most part do work which is done in other places by children. They are always out at potato seasons, and are employed in spreading manure and such like. The largest farms here are 200 acres. The 50-acre farmers send their children to school pretty well, though they are rather worse off than the labourers.

The state of education is fairly good; most can read and write; hardly any females in the district, perhaps not one per cent., are destitute entirely of education. The best educated farm lads go off to the towns or to the railways, even after they have become foremen on the farms. A lad on a small farm will get to be foreman at 18 or 20 years of age, and then get 20*l.* a year and his board. The education among the farmers in this district is very low, and worse in proportion than among the labouring class. Farmers' children go to the village school for a time, and then perhaps for a few months to a boarding school. Compulsory education would not add five per cent. to the educated numbers, and would be most unpopular. I see no objection to placing 10 years of age as the limit for children's work, and such limit would not inflict any injury on the majority through the loss of earnings. Night schools have been tried, but have not succeeded. The farmers do not take any trouble about the education of the servants in their houses.

In the cottages the bedrooms are badly constructed and ill-ventilated; many are overcrowded, big boys and girls sleeping together in the same room, and consequently a great number of illegitimate children are born in the district.

[Mr. Palmer speaks of Flaxton, Bossall, Strensall, Claxton, and Foston.]

361. *Rev J. Griffith* says that Government aid to small schools in the rural district is very much needed. There is also a great want of proper bedroom accommodation in the cottages.

SCHOOL.

362. *J. Mitchell*, master.—There are 40 children on the books; a very thin attendance in spring and summer; the children are away three or four weeks in the spring potato-setting, weeding, and leading drill-horses. As a rule they do not go out before 10 years of age, and their ordinary pay is 6*d.* a day and meat. Men's wages are 2*s.* 6*d.* a day.

Cottage rent from 4*l.* to 5*l.* with a garden, and there are allotments of half a rood each, which are, I believe, let at 10*s.* a year. The girls do not go much to field work, but are taken away from school to nurse or look after the children when their mothers are in the fields. Row of six cottages, four rooms in each on the ground floor; garden under half a rood; rent 3*l.* 10*s.* a year each.

STERNSALL.

363. *Rev. J. Hodgkinson.*—There are many small farmers in this parish holding from 12 to 50 acres, and very few holding more than 50. These only occasionally employ labour, and if children were forbidden to work under a certain age it would, I think, press hard on these men. There are many copyholders in the village; these small properties have "fronts," and each front has a right of run for cattle on the common. The ordinary wages are 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, but more can be earned by draining either by the day or by piece. There is a tannery in the village, which employs many people. The women go out to work a good deal, and Irish also come from York in gangs at certain seasons of the year.

The school is supported by endowments, by the school pence, and by a donation from Mr. Leonard Thompson. There are 63 on the books; the oldest boy in school is 13 years of age. The attendance in spring and autumn is very small. Many farmers' children come to the school. The boys go out setting potatoes, and the girls also, but not for hire, only to assist their parents. I do not think that half day at school and half day at work would succeed in rural districts.

The cottages here are much improved. There used to be muck-heaps opposite the doors, which have been removed, and the village altogether is much tidier. There are a few "poor" cottages for widows of one room only, but very tidy and comfortable, and with a small piece of garden attached. There is a piece of land belonging to the poor, which is now increased in value to 60*l.* a year.

364. Anchor-Plain Allotment,

in the parish of Sutton, the property of Admiral Duncombe. The size of this piece of land is 48 acres 1 rood and 8 perches, and the annual rent is 48*l.* 6*s.* It is divided at present into 19 portions, of which six are 4 acres each, two of 3 acres, seven of 2 acres, two of 1 acre, and one of 2 roods.

SHERIFF HUTTON,

a large village; most of the land and cottages belong to Mr. Meywell Ingram. There are a few freehold cottages and some built on land cribbed from the waste; these last are now being allowed to go out of repair. There is also an allotment field divided into 33 portions, 32 having half a rood each, and one having a quarter of a rood; 32 pay 6*s.* and one pays 3*s.* a year, the total amount of rent per annum being 9*l.* 15*s.*

School.

25th May 1868.

365. *Joshua Illingworth*, master.—Number on the books 89. There are to-day absent over 30 boys, mostly labourers' sons, who are and have been employed in the fields for some weeks. The attendance from October to April is generally good, and six months regular attendance between 10 and 13 years years of age would be sufficient to get the Government grant. I think that parents are often forced by poverty or by the want of the earnings to keep the children away from school, but the parents of those children who are admitted free by endowment are the most careless about sending them to school. The parents themselves are very ignorant, and the small children get no encouragement at home to keep up that which they learn at school. We had a night school but it failed. The farmers will not allow their lads to come. At first we had big lads of 20 years and upwards, but when they found how difficult it was to regain the knowledge which they had lost since they left school, they gave it up.

366. *Joseph Lundy* (10 years of age).—I have been out two years bird tenting, singling turnips, and potato setting; we went six together, with one girl, and were looked after by the farmer and paid by him. I have been away for seven or eight weeks together. Wages for tenting, 6*d.* a day; for weeding, 1*s.* a day.

[This boy could read and write well and do the four first rules of arithmetic, and had attended the necessary number of times for the grant of last year.]

In the girl's school sewing is taught four afternoons in the week; girls go out to service at the farmhouses as young as 9 years of age, and are often absent from school for nursing. Some few go weeding, and, with their parents, potato setting and picking. They earn 1*s.* a day at weeding. The oldest girl in the school is 14 years of age.

367. *Mary Saville*, 10 years of age. I have been out with men and boys singling turnips; at dinner time we all get together; the master goes home to his dinner and we were left without anyone to look after us.

368. *Rev. O. Flowers.*—Population of the parish 1,223.—There are no private gangs in this parish. About 200 persons are employed in agricultural labour; of these there are 12 males between 8 and 10, and 26 between 10 and 13, and 15 between 13 and 18; of 88 females, six between 8 and 10 years; 18 between 10 and 13 years; 36 between 13 and 18 years; over 18, 40 married; 12 unmarried=112. They are employed in tenting corn, in planting potatoes, in weeding corn, hoeing and singling turnips, and gathering potatoes. None live on the farms, but some near. Some go two and three and even four miles to work. The hours of work on the land are 10, but those who live at a distance are out 11 or 12 hours. One hour is allowed for dinner, which they take with them, and they do not get their evening meal until they return from work. I do not think their health is injuriously affected. All employments where women and children are engaged together act very injuriously upon the morals of the younger ones from the filthy and disgusting language and conversation which they are constantly in the habit of hearing, and these remarks apply not only to young females, but also to the lads working with them. During the time that provisions are dear, it is necessary that females should be employed in field labour in order to obtain sufficient money to maintain the family. I do not therefore recommend any restriction on them, but I would not allow boys to be employed under 12 years of age.

If any mode of enforcing school attendance were attempted, I should recommend alternate whole days at school and whole days at work. I do not know that the attendance is affected by the pecuniary resources) of the parents, although one or two families make no effort to have their children educated, but this does not arise from want of means. There are about 26 children in the parish, who ought, but who do not attend school. We constantly employ a girl out of the school at the Vicarage with the view to prepare her for domestic service; this plan has met with success. The cottages are all in the village, and the farmhouses are from a distance of one to four miles. They usually have two or three bedrooms, but there are some large large families that have not sufficient accommodation. Many of the cottages are in a dilapidated state, and several have been allowed to become so bad as to become untenantable; this, together with the fact of the smaller holdings being absorbed by the larger farms, has brought about a considerable decrease in the population during the last few years. Most of the cottages belong to the landowners, and great improvement has been effected in the drainage of the village. There is a sufficient supply of water. Most of the cottages have a garden and outhouse attached to them. The rooms are generally about 12 feet square. Private individuals who have built cottages in this village have hitherto found them pay.

N. R. York.

Mr. Portman.

d.

ALNE.

Township, population, 453 - Acreage, 2,100
Parish „ 1,589 - „ 10,000

369. *Rev. W. Braithwaite.*—There are no private gangs. Potato picking and turnip hoeing are taken by the piece and all the family go out; the women are much employed. There are about 100 males between the ages of 13 and 18, and 45 married women over 18 years of age now employed in the parish. Boys under 13 years and unmarried women are very rarely employed in farm labour, except as domestic servants. The hours of work are from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., with one hour allowed for dinner. The state of morality among the women is low, but necessarily so in consequence of the field work. I do not see any necessity for restriction, except for educational purposes. I would not let any child go to work before 12 or 13.

There are six townships in the parish, comprising about 10,000 acres; it is purely an agricultural district with a few farms of 400 acres, and many small men who employ their own children.

I think that enforced school attendance for a certain number of days or hours during so many months in the year is the system most applicable to an agricultural district. Small farmers' children should come under the same provisions as the labourers' children, as they really do work for hire, inasmuch as they save their parents from hiring labour. School attendance is considerably affected by distance, but very slightly by the pecuniary resources of the parents.

The cottages are for the most part fair; but there are a number belonging to the parish wholly unfit for habitation—perhaps one cottage per 150 acres would be sufficient. A cottage ordinarily contains a kitchen about 10 feet square, a back kitchen, and two bedrooms; they are too often crowded, and generally owned by small proprietors. Rent about 4*l.* a year.

The number of children on the books of the school 260; in average attendance in summer 220, and in winter on the register 280, average attendance, 250. We are fairly well off for schools, and there is a desire for education growing up among the parents. The statute hirings are most injurious to the morals of the labouring classes. At Thirsk the hiring is at May day; at York at Martinmas; and on market days for three weeks at Easingwold.

370. *Mr. Weddell,* farmer.—The wages here are 2*s.* a day and meat for casual labourers; an ordinary labourer earns 3*s.* a day and no meat. Women earn 1*s.* a day; turnip-hoeing is taken by the piece at 8*s.* or 9*s.* an acre. A man and his wife can hoe half an acre a day or more. Wages are more than doubled within the last 10 or 20 years.

EASINGWOLD.

Population, 2,147. Acreage, 6,923.

371. *Rev. H. Ainslie.*—At certain seasons of the year the schools are quite emptied through all hands being required for field operations, such as weeding, potato-planting, &c. This is a large parish, full of bad characters, who have collected from the other villages.

We have an endowed school under a master, and a girls' and infants' school kept by myself. Children go out to work at all ages; the women do all the cleaning in the fields. There are 300 Irish living in the town, who are fully employed. There is great employment for children and women in the nursery gardens here.

372. *Mr. Bensley,* under master, Free School.—The children go out to work at 8 or 9 years of age. They return to school during a portion of the year, but the average absence is 10 or 12 weeks throughout the year. They will leave the free school at any time they please, but not the Wesleyan school, where they pay so much a week for their schooling. The children at the free school are mostly of an agricultural class; the parents are very indifferent about their education. If a prohibition was placed on children's work up to 10 years of age I do not think that there would be any perceptible loss of earnings to the parents. From 10 to 12 or 13 it would be quite possible to get continuous and regular attendance from the beginning of October to the end of February in every year, or at any rate 150 attendances might be fairly required.

[This town is in a most dilapidated state, the school is apparently almost useless under the present master, and the influential persons in the town are averse to any inquiry into or legislative interference with the present state of things.]

Castle-Howard Reformatory.

373. *Rev. J. Fish,* superintendent.—Boys go out from here in lots under an officer to work for the farmers at weeding time and in such other employment as they may be able to give them. They are also allowed to go out to farm service on a ticket of leave. The earnings are kept for them, and a portion is given them while out at service, and if a lad has a good certificate he will get all his earnings when he leaves school. They are much sought after for field work by the farmers in the district.

APPLETON-LE-STREET

Contains the townships of Amotherby, Swinton, Broughton, amd the hamlet of East Thorpe.

374. Swinton.

Infant school, 44 on the books from 2 years old up to 7; 2 girls as old as 11 in the school. The payments are 1½*d.* per week for one, and 1*d.* a week when there are two children out of one family. This is rather a poor parish. There are quarries and lime-kilns, in which a man earns 3*s.* a day. The women also are a good deal employed in the lime-kilns, and are paid so much by the kiln; they will get 9*d.* for a large kiln, which takes 5½ hours to fill. The wages for agricultural labourers are 9*s.* a week and meat, or 2*s.* 6*d.* per day. Girls are very rarely employed, but some children of both sexes of 9 years and upwards are sent out brassacking. The occupations are not under 100 acres, and several are from 300 to 400.

375. Amotherby Boys' School.

On the books, 30; average attendance on the 28th May, 22. This is the thinnest time of the year. There were three boys of 13 years of age in the school, and several out in the fields employed in brassacking and singling turnips; their wages are 8*d.* a day. The children are absent from school whenever they can get a job, though the parents are not badly off, yet they are anxious to get all the earnings they can.

There are gardens attached to the cottages, and allotments of a rood each for almost every one in the parish. The allotments are let at 10*s.* a rood.

Girls' School.

376. *Miss Ellis,* mistress.—There are about 90 on the books. Children from all parts of the parish of Swinton, and some from other townships, come to this school. I have two children who come 3¾ miles, but that is the greatest distance. I take in boys till they are 7 years of age. Girls do not go to field work so much as they used to do. The school payment is 1½*d.* a week for free scholars, and the payments range up to 6*d.* a week. The children begin at 3 years of age; those of the poor people leave generally at 12 or 13 to go to service. There is no complaint of poverty as an excuse for not sending the children to school.

[This is an excellent school. The cottages also in this village, belonging to Mr. Thelluson, have lately been re-built, and the village much improved.]

BURNISTON.

Population, 350. Acreage, 1,504. Cultivation mixed.

CLOUGHTON.

Population, 450. Acreage, 2,130. Cultivation mixed.

377. *Tindall Sleightholm*, schoolmaster.—I have been here 31 years. Private gangs are not known here. No females are employed in these two parishes in agricultural labour except at hay time, harvest, and potato picking in the autumn, and these are generally the wives of agricultural labourers living not a mile from their work. The hours of work are 6 to 6 with an hour allowed for meals.

Children do not go to work under 10 years of age. This is a free school, well supported by voluntary subscriptions, so that the children of the labourers are educated free and seldom leave school under 10 years, more frequently remain till 12 years. There are 75 children attending this school, and the attendance is very regular. There are dames' schools in both parishes where the children go till 6 years of age. A night school is not wanted. The adjoining parishes have excellent schools, and all the young persons have been attendants at a day school.

The cottages under the duchy of Lancaster are bad and dearer than others which are let at 3*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* a year. Most have garden, some of an acre in size; I think one rood is enough for a cottager.

Wages for agricultural labouring men are 9*s.* and 10*s.* a week and meat; for a quarryman, 16*s.* and 18*s.* a week.

WHITWELL.

Population, 200. - Acreage, above 2,000.

WELLBOURN.

Population, 600. - Acreage, 1,500.

BULMER.

Population, 345. - Acreage, 1,430.

378. These parishes were represented by Rev. F. D. Legard, Mr. Denison, and Mr. Ellerby, farmers.

The children are very little employed; a few go bird tenting, and sometimes with their parents for singling turnips. The young women do not go to work in the fields, the older ones do sometimes. There would be no objection to putting the limit for work at 10 years of age. Half time or alternate days are not practicable in agricultural districts, but between the ages of 10 and 13 six months of the year might be freely given to schooling; it would be difficult to enforce the requirement of a certificate of such school attendance before hiring, but it was thought more desirable to provide that no child should be permanently hired under 13 years of age.

Wages for a man 15*s.* and 16*s.* a week, for a woman 1*s.* a day, and for children bird tenting, 6*d.* a day.

The cottages are scarce and much wanted on the farms; men have to come two miles and more to their work. It was thought more desirable to have cottages not immediately on the premises but still on the farm, the tenants being willing to pay a fair per-centage for the outlay. Mr. Ellerby pays 5*l.* a year for a cottage on his farm. One cottage per 100 acres is enough where the land is partly grass and partly arable. It was suggested that Government might prepare cottage plans to be adopted by such persons as are desirous of building cottages under the terms of the Lands Improvement Act, and that some alteration might be made in the borrowing terms provided under that Act.

The farmers object to night schools for farm lads, as causing much inconvenience to the farmer's arrangements in his house and farmstead. In Bulmer, however, there is a good night school throughout the winter for lads, but in this case eight out of ten of the farmers live in the village, so that the distance to and from the school is so slight as not to interfere with the hours for work at night. It was suggested that in the case of children who are neither at work nor at school, an extension of the provisions of the Industrial Schools' Act might operate most beneficially in securing some amount of school attendance and education for those neglected children.

There are allotment fields in Wellbourn and Bulmer in portions of half a rood and one rood, at a rent of 10*s.* a rood. It was thought that half a rood was sufficient for labouring men.

The Reformatory boys are much employed here on the farms for weeding; they come 12 or 14 together, with one of the officers to overlook them.

379. Extract from Letter from Rev. F. D. Legard to Hon. E. Portman.

Whitwell, 15th July.

* * * * I think we should all stand compulsory education up to nine years old; the difficulty of some parents who would not pay might be met by an extension of the Industrial Schools Act, of those who could not, by some arrangement with parish overseers. Till 9 there should be no work, after that till 12 years there should be full attendance for the year, less some temporary employment to last no more than six weeks or two months (of course harvest always excepted); then from 12 to 15 years I would make all village schools open in the evening for two hours (giving the master some additional pay), and give a certificate to all who attended regularly for four winter months, this to be of a paid capitation value. * * *

HOVINGHAM.

380. *W. C. Worsley, Esq.*—Cultivation is mixed. There are no private gangs. About 30 children between the ages of 10 and 13, and 20 or 30 women are employed in summer and autumn gathering stones, weeding, singling turnips, and in harvest work. The hours of work upon the land are from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. with an hour allowed for dinner. I do not think that such work injuriously affects their health. A woman servant in a farmhouse works hard, but is well cared for as to food; she, however, often runs risks in respect of character, more so, I think, than in field work. I would not place any restriction on female labour, but no boys should be employed under 10 years of age. No restriction is necessary upon the hours of work.

In winter and spring the children should be sent to school—under an Act such as the Factory Acts—regularly, and for full time in summer and autumn. Some latitude should be allowed to parents as to sending the children to school. I do not think the school attendance is affected much, if at all, by the pecuniary resources of the parents.

The cottages are capable of improvement, which is going on by degrees. The servants' accommodation in the farmhouses is often badly arranged; the sexes are not sufficiently separated. This remark does not apply specially to this place. On the whole the cottages are good and sufficient; the old and bad ones are being replaced. The parish belongs mainly to one landlord. There is no under drainage, but the privies are in connexion with ash-pits or heaps which are from time to time removed on to the land. Cottage rent is moderate.

With respect to the Lands Improvements Acts I think more would be done in building cottages if greater latitude were given as to the style of work. You cannot build cottages to pay, save incidentally; they are as necessary to the farm as barns, or drains, or stables.

N. R. York.

Mr. Portman.

d.

SCHOOL.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 -	34	18
Between 10 and 13 -	16	10
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	28	18
Between 10 and 13 -	12	8

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 -	38	24
Between 10 and 13 -	20	14
Girls:		
Under 10 -	31	20
Between 10 and 13 -	16	12

There is a night school for young men, open from November to March for 1¼ hours on three nights a week. The number of scholars last winter was 13. Reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught, and if there was a sufficient attendance in number I think it would supply the deficiencies of the day school. There is a difficulty in getting the young men to come.

381. LETTER from Mr. WORSLEY to Mr. PORTMAN.

DEAR SIR, June 11, 1868.

I HAVE filled up the circular of inquiries you sent me as well as I can.

I have drawn attention to an evil which does not exist here so much perhaps as on the Wolds, and in places where there are large farmhouses in which numbers of hands live as yearly servants. I allude to the sleeping accommodation and the separation of the sexes being faulty. I can hardly say that I know of my own knowledge the truth of this evil, but I know it by others, and I have no doubt of the fact; I believe, however, that it is not so great as it used to be.

We have no gang system here, the village populations which are resident here do the work, and there is no difficulty as to distance or accommodation.

Women old and young, when able, like to work in the fields, especially at hay and corn harvest. I believe it to be good for them in all respects.

As to school, I think the parents are as a rule supine about the education of their children, and it is the duty of the State to see that it is not neglected. In winter and spring there is no excuse for non-attendance at school; though compulsory attendance would be unpopular at first.

Yours truly,
W. C. WORSLEY.

THORNTON.

MIXED SCHOOL.

382. — *Taylor*, master.—103 on the books; average in February, 77. Lowest average in the first week after harvest, 12.

Boys go singling turnips, potato planting, and picking, and are away for nearly six months in the year. There was only one boy in the school of 10 years of age. The boys' wages are 1*s.* a day for potatoing, 6*d.* a day and meat for singling turnips, 1*s.* a day for tenting. Men's wages 2*s.* 6*d.* a day; women's 1*s.* a day. Payment for schooling 2*d.* a week. 65 children were presented to the inspector this year with the full number of attendances. We rarely take children younger than six years of age as there is an infant school in the village. There is also a grammar school and a private school, consequently there are very few children who do not go to some school. There is no night school. Many parents are extremely careless about education, but I think compulsion will be opposed.

The population of Thornton and Ellesburn parishes combined is 1,300. This parish is at the foot of the dales bordering on the vale of Pickering.

383. *Mr. Boddy's* farm, four miles from Thornton. Part under the Duchy of Lancaster, part under Mr. Hill. Is a dale farm far removed from any village where work is done almost entirely by the lads living on the farm. Women here are hardly at all employed except a chance day for turnip hoeing by the piece. This farm like other large dale-farms on the edge of the moors is partly arable and partly sheep-run.

384. *George Ward*, relieving officer to the Pickering Union. The employment of children in this district is confined to a few boys who may go six or eight together for brassacking and a few also are employed in bird-tenting. This is a large straggling union.

Ryedale, or the Vale of Pickering, reaches nearly to Seamer Junction on the east. This district contains nearly an equal proportion of tillage and pasture. There are large sheep farms in the Dales.

Many labourers here are paid 8*s.* or so per week, and their meat, which I consider a very bad system for the families.

There is a bit of land attached to most of the cottages, and many cottagers have a cow.

We have not had more than one able-bodied labonrer in the workhouse for 10 years.

The education in the district wants improvement; there are plenty of means, but the people themselves are careless about it, and nothing will be done with them without compulsion.

There is no fear of a farmer losing anything by boys and girls being kept out of field work up to 12 years of age, if a certain time is allowed at certain seasons in case of emergency. Those small farmers who employ their own children to cultivate the land are very indifferent about their attendance at school as soon as they are capable of doing any work.

The cottages in the union are improving as the old ones tumble in. The class of small freeholders is rather on the increase near Pickering; the small tradesmen buy a bit of land, but I do not know of many instances of a labourer having raised himself and become an owner of land; there may be some few who have saved money when at service.

The system of statutes and farm servants exists here as in other parts of Yorkshire.

PICKERING.

Population, 3,000. - Acreage, 15,000.

385. *J. Kitching, Esq.*, Chairman of the Board of Guardians.—No boy should go to field work under 10 years of age, and they may fairly go to service at 12 years of age. Girls are not hired here for singling turnips; one may occasionally go with her parents. The women go out corn hoeing, &c. There is very little employment for boys.

There is a district four miles from here called "Pickering Moors," which is joined to Newton parish. There are 500 inhabitants who have from 10 to 40 acres apiece, partly moor and partly cultivated, mostly grass. They keep cows and hardly one of them will ever hire a labourer. They break up the moor and have a cottage to live in, and will pay for, say 20 acres, taken out of the moor and a house, 5*l.* a year. They are well off for Sunday schools, kept by the dissenters, and there are two chapels, but there is no day school nearer than Newton, which is from two to four miles from different parts of the district. In other parts near Pickering there are some large farms. My farm is close to the town, and I prefer having married men as labourers to lads as they are

more careful in their work. I employ married men to look after my horses and stock, and have but one lad in the foreman's house. I pay them their wages in full money and do not approve of the system of "meating," as I think it much better for the families that they should have the whole weekly money. I employ one boy under 8 years, six between 10 and 13, and one between 13 and 18 years; 10 married women and two unmarried over 18 years of age. The boys are employed in singling turnips, the women in hoeing corn.

Boys from 12 to 14 years go to school in winter. The school accommodation is good except at the "High Moors."

One cottage per 100 acres is sufficient for the requirements of the land. The cottages are not crowded; rooms are usually 15 ft. × 12 ft.; they belong to people of all classes. The rents vary from 50*s.* to 5*l.* a year.

Eighty per cent. of the children in Pickering attend school in the summer, and 90 to 95 per cent. in winter. There is a night school open for 20 weeks in winter, for two hours on five nights a week. There are about 20 scholars who receive instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic. In my opinion it supplies the deficiencies of the day school.

386. *Mr. Nelson*, farmer, Sinnington.—I have a farm 400 or 500 acres in Sinnington and Marten. I pay an ordinary labourer 2*s.* 6*d.* a day and do not approve of the "meating" system. The people here with a few exceptions are very well off. No children are employed under 10 and very few under 12 years of age.

There is a good school at Sinnington and at Marten, and they are both well attended. I think that 10 years would be a good limit, below which children should not be allowed to go to work. The children may be wanted for perhaps three weeks in the year, at weeding time on the wolds, but not much in this part. Cottages on the farms are desirable in cases of large occupations.

There is no large landowner in this neighbourhood, but very many small holdings. The farm lads are boarded in the house and not the labourers. Some of my lads can read and write and some few take pains to keep up their education. I formerly farmed on the Lincolnshire wolds.

387. *J. H. Phillips, Esq.*, Beadlam Grange, Helmsley.—Children of both sexes as young as 8 or 9 are employed in singling turnips; the foreman goes with them and looks after them; they are sometimes taken to distant farms in waggons. They would be absent from school for three weeks at a time. An ordinary labourer's wages are 15*s.* a week, perhaps a little less in winter.

The cottages are in a very bad state in some of the parishes. They all have gardens, and the rent of the dearest is 3*l.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* a year. The labourers will sometimes pay 8*l.* a year for three or four acres of grass for their cows. They make their profits out of the butter, and it is a great benefit to the children of the parish that there should be a good supply of milk.

It would be very beneficial if Government aid were more liberally given for the support of small schools, as in many parishes there are no funds available for paying a good and efficient master.

388. *W. McLauchlin, Esq.*, Helmsley.—A regular labourer gets 13*s.* 6*d.* a week. Some of them keep cows and have a run for them in large pastures, of which in Helmsley there are two; one which feeds from 50 to 60 cows, and another which feeds 13 cows. There are gardens to almost all the cottages in the country villages, and allotments belonging to many that are situated in the town. The farms in this district are for the most part small. The children of both sexes are employed in the fields at 9 years of age, though girls are not often so employed. The parents send them to school pretty well at other times and I think a certain amount of school attendance might be required without specifying the months during which such attendance should take place. A certificate of such attendance might be required before hiring, and such certificate should be registered in some public office for reference.

"Runch" is hoed by men and not pulled by children. The Dale farmers mostly feed stock, but grow enough corn, &c. for the use of the farm; work the land themselves, and very rarely employ a labourer or even have a lad in their house.

In Bilsdale there is a school at Chopgate near the head of the Dale. In Farndale the population is scattered. There are two schools in the Dale; for one of these a school-rate of 2½*d.* is levied in the Dale for the support of a certificated master. The farmers send their children to this school. At the other school there is an old-fashioned master. There was very little opposition to the school rate.

In Helmsley there are good schools and some good new cottages with three bedrooms each.

There is much difficulty in preventing cottagers with small families from taking in lodgers when they have a third bedroom unoccupied by themselves.

[Throughout Bilsdale the farms are very small, and are with a few exceptions worked by the occupier and his family without any labourer. There are however in the Dale a few cowkeepers who are labourers and hold a few acres of grass and a cottage.]

Chopgate School, Bilsdale.

389. *J. Johnson*, master.—June 1866 to June 1867, On the books in summer, 44; in spring, 54.

Average attendance.

In Summer - - - -	24
In Spring - - - -	35
In Winter, on the books - -	52
Average attendance - -	32

The oldest boy in the school 14 years of age, the oldest girl 13, and the youngest child 5½ years of age. The children of farmers, labourers, and mechanics living in the Dale attend this school, they come a distance of 2½ miles from down the Dale, and three miles up the Dale over rough roads. The boys attend more regularly than the girls, and the parents seem to care more about the boys' education. The field work in summer keeps them from school. Sewing is taught, but many girls are obliged to be forced to bring their work. I find the boys very stupid and bad to teach. The school payments are 6*d.*, 4*d.*, and 3*d.* a week for children of farmers and mechanics; 2*d.* for labourers; half-pay up to seven years of age, and the pay is only for 40 weeks in the year. At times there is a great scarcity of labour in the Dale. There has been of late a good deal of jet work. I shall present this year 30 children who have attended 200 times. The average attendance last winter was 36.

EGTON.

390. Meeting, June 9th.

Townships represented: Egton, Goathland, Grosmont, Sleights, Sneaton, Danby, Glaizedale, Lealholm.

The Rev. I. Fish (incumbent of Egton) and the Rev. F. Callabert (Roman Catholic priest) attended.

This district is called Eskdale. It appeared that only two really efficient rural schools at present exist in Eskdale, namely, at Danby and Grosmont, and that the education of the poor is rather declining than increasing in efficiency.

Children are employed to a small extent at 10 years of age. The schools are badly attended in summer, and more than half the children are away at times of potato planting and picking. The distances to school in the district are very great, sometimes three or four miles, the average may be taken at a mile to a mile and a quarter.

The educational state is less satisfactory than it was; the proportion attending school is very small. The older persons can read better than the rising generation, and the deterioration of education was

N. R. York.
Mr. Portman.
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said to be owing to want of funds to provide good teachers. The carelessness of parents about sending their children to school was said to arise from a want of good masters, as where there is a good master the attendance is pretty regular.

The population consists chiefly of small farmers. There are not many who are purely labourers whose children go to school.

The wages for children are 6*d.* a day and meat; the men, 9*s.* and 10*s.* a week and meat. This "meating" is the custom of the country.

The largest holdings are 120 acres. All farmers of 50 acres and upwards have lads living in the house.

The system of statute hiring exists here, and there appears no probability of a change at present.

It was thought that half time or alternate days at school and work would not answer, but the farmers were anxious to have an improved system of education, and said that a certificate of a certain amount of school attendance for two or three years previous to hiring might perfectly be worked, and that the penalty for non-production of such certificate should be placed on the parents of the child as well as on the employer. It was thought that such certificate would be a great inducement and spur to the parents, but that increased assistance from Government to these small schools was very much needed, so that the payment might be reduced to 1*d.* a week. It was agreed that some compulsion is necessary in the matter of education, more especially for the children of parents who were either indifferent about, or averse to, education. There is a night school at Grosmont which is fairly attended by farm servants and the children of agricultural labourers, but as a general rule these schools have not succeeded.

The dwellings are very bad and very old. They are held under the landlord, and most of them have gardens. There are not many freeholders but several cowkeepers.

The rent of a bare cottage varies from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* a year; cowkeepers holding four or five acres pay 7*l.* to 8*l.* a year.

The people are physically well off.

It is a common practice among agricultural servants to save money and to take bits of land. There are benefit clubs which are extremely popular with the people.

[I visited some farmhouses on the estate with wretched sleeping accommodation, thatched roof, a thin ceiling to room, with no chambers above; the cottages are rather worse; the estate of the principal landowner being in chancery. There is a good reading-room in the village. This is a large and straggling parish, as are most of the parishes on the edge of the moors. There is here a large Roman Catholic population. The funds for the schools at Grosmont and Danby are provided by Messrs. Bagnall and Viscount Downe.]

ORMESBY.

Acreage, 2,882. Cultivation, three-fourths arable.

391. *J. S. Pennyman, Esq.*—There is no private gang system here. There are very few children, young persons or women employed in agriculture, but the few that are so employed go out hoeing corn. The hours of work on the land are from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. They breakfast before going to work, and are allowed an hour for dinner; their health does not suffer. The effect of field work on females is generally not good. I do not see any necessity for a restriction over such work. It is very difficult to get any women for field labour; the custom is dying out, as the labourers being well off the women stay at home and attend to their domestic duties. There is no necessity for any restriction on boys' work. A few boys of the age of 14 go out.

I think a system of alternate whole days at school and whole days at work, would be the best for enforcing school attendance. The distances are not sufficient to affect attendance at school, and the parents can well afford to send their children. Needlework is taught in all the schools.

Cottagers will some times take in lodgers when they have no proper accommodation for them, thereby breaking into the decency of the family. Landed proprietors can stop this by a clause in the agreements. I think one cottage per 100 acres is sufficient for the requirements of the land; we have more than that proportion, and the cottages are conveniently situated with respect to the farms. The cottages are very various in construction, usually one living-room and one or two bedrooms, the size of the rooms being 11 feet by 10 feet, or 12 feet by 12 feet; they are made of brick with tiled roofs, they mostly have gardens, a good supply of water, and good drainage; they are chiefly owned by the landowners, and leased at a moderate rent. I believe that the cottage tenants can afford to pay for good accommodation if they choose.

SCHOOL.

In Summer and Winter.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	20	17
Between 10 and 13 -	6	5
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	14	9
Between 10 and 13 -	6	5

There are a few children in summer and winter who are neither at work nor at school. There are ten males and seven females growing up with imperfect education, and forgetting what they have already learned. We have a night school for three months in the winter open for an hour and a half or two hours for three nights in the week, but it is not attended by the agricultural labouring class. In winter the farmers will not spare the boys from foddering the cattle, the boys are not wishful to attend, and for young girls it is not desirable that they should come to school in the dark with the lads. There is a reading-room in the parish which is well supported and much appreciated.

In many of the cottages there are two rooms, one on the floor with a sort of cupboard beds in the same, and the space is not even partitioned off into two rooms.

392. *Hardy*, labourer, with a family of nine children, lives in one of them; has brought up his children well, he says that there is very little employment of children under 20 years of age and that most of the weeding is now done by horse-hoes, his boy of 14 is now "looking" in the fields at 1*s.* a day.

393. *Mr. Harrison*, Cleveland.—The occupations here are from 50 to 400 acres two-thirds to one-third grass. The children are hardly employed at all, not even for ketlocking; the youngest that goes out would be from 10 to 12 years of age. The women hardly ever go out; singling turnips is done here with the hoe without a child to follow.

Wages for an ordinary labouring man 16*s.* a week, women 1*s.* a day, and a boy 8*d.*, and 9*d.* a day. If the limit of age for work is to be placed at 10, it would not affect this district, and from the ages of 10 to 13 the children might perfectly have six months' schooling. A certificate of such attendance previous to hiring might be required, but I think there would be some difficulty in enforcing the system.

I would rather have lads living in the house than in a cottage close by, even if they were sons of the hind; it is more convenient for the operations of the farm.

394. *Mr. Deacon*, agent.—The agricultural labourer as a householder hardly exists, they have gone to the iron works. The work on the farm is done by farm-servants and by the Irish, and we have also had to

import a good deal of labour from Norfolk and other counties.

No children of either sex are often employed in the fields except with their parents. Boys of 11 and 12 years of age will earn 2*s.* a day driving horses at the works. The servant girls from the farm go to work in the fields with the farm lads which does not improve their morality; they are employed for hoeing thistles, weeding, &c. This applies to a farm of 120 acres or so where only two lads are kept; on the larger farms where more lads are kept, the girls do not go out. The largest occupations about here are 250 acres.

The wages for a man are 2*s.* 6*d.* a day to 16*s.* a week for constant employment. Women 1*s.* a day, and the hours of work 7 a.m., to 5 p.m. The cottages are generally good with two low rooms and three bedrooms above, and the rent 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a week, usually with a garden or allotment. The allotments in Skelton parish called "Spring Gardens," are from an eighth to a quarter of an acre, let at 15*s.* per quarter acre.

The state of education among the older people is bad, they can seldom read or write much; the younger men are better educated, but are more ignorant of the skilled work, such as "weeding, banking," &c. Draining is usually taken by the piece, men will then take their own boys to help them, and they can earn from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* a day when the days are short and broken, and 4*s.* a day in good weather.

The calculated cost of a man on the farm is 40*l.* a year including piece work; and a farm lad of 16 to 18 years of age will cost from 14*l.* to 16*l.* a year. 1*l.* in harvest, and 20*l.* keep for the year = 35*l.* to 37*l.* a year. The state of morality is very indifferent. The farm girls go off to live with the men at the works. A system of school attendance by half-days or alternate days would not work; I think compulsion would not be acceptable to the employers, or to the parents on account of the loss of earnings. In this district there is great competition for labour on account of the ironworks and the number of agricultural labourers is in a minority.

395. North Ormesby School.

This school was built and is managed by Mr. J. S. Pennyman. North Ormesby is a suburb of Middlesbro', and the children who attend this school are those of people who are employed in the works, consequently the attendance does not vary with the seasons.

Number on the books	- -	156 boys
Average attendance	- -	105 „

Only one agricultural labourers' child in the school and a few half-timers. School payments, 4*d.* each for the elder ones, 3*d.* for others; 2*d.* each when there are three or more of the same family.

Girls' School and Infants' School.

Number on the books	- -	143.
Average attendance, about	- -	93.

There are here two children of an agricultural labourer, sisters to the boy in the other school. The girls leave school young.

MARTON-IN-CLEVELAND.

Population, 587. Acreage, 3,436. Mixed cultivation, chiefly arable.

396. *Rev. C. Bailey.*—There are, properly speaking, no gangs whatever, the field work being chiefly done by Irishmen, or the farmers' own servants or children, and in two or three cases by the hinds' wives. The hours of work for women are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and men from 7 a.m. to 5 or 6 p.m., one hour being allowed for dinner. The young farm lads and girls are in many cases deficiently educated, owing to the parents sending them too young to service. The remedy I should propose is compulsory education until the children can pass Standard V. at least. This end might also be attained by no child being allowed to be employed until he or she can produce certificates of having passed this standard, signed by one justice and the school inspector. There are about 18 small farmers in the parish, of these about eight or nine employ servant girls partly in field work, and about 18 boys under 18 years of age and five married hinds. I do not find their health injuriously affected. The effect of the employment of females in agricultural work, is, in my opinion, to lower very much their moral tone and unfit them for being domestic servants. This result is owing to their being thrown so much with men in the fields and stack-yards, and also to the loose and coarse kind of jesting prevalent in such places. No boy should be employed before he had passed Standard V., or was 12 years of age. I think that school attendance for a certain number of hours for six months in the year would be the most practicable scheme for securing school attendance in agricultural parishes. There is a great difficulty in inducing parents to keep their girls at school beyond 11 years of age, owing to their being employed in helping at home.

The cottage accommodation in many cases is not good, and where there is over-crowding there is a corresponding looseness of morals. The cottages in this part have been over-crowded with lodgers, mechanics, &c. Most of them have a living-room and pantry on the ground floor, two bedrooms upstairs; some only one room near the roof next to the tiles. The water supply and the ventilation are for the most part good; they belong to the landowners, and are rented at 4*l.* 10*s.* and 5*l.* a year. Some improvement is being made in the cottages.

Average attendance at school does not vary much in winter and summer. There are seven or eight males and females, who will neither go to school or work. Many through the indifference of their parents are kept away from school to do odd jobs; some girls are taken too young from school for service, but the small farmers are the most indifferent about education. The attendance at a day school is from 70 to 80, and the Sunday school about the same. Last year there was no night school. We have had night schools attended by a few grown-up lads, but for the most part these schools are impracticable for farm lads, owing to the distance from the farmhouses and the bad roads; it was open twice a week for two hours, and those employed in agriculture are generally too tired to learn at night, and it interferes with the feeding time of horses. In this district one of the great evils we have to contend against is the little interest the farmers take in the education, religious improvement, or even moral conduct of their servants; so long as their work is done, they seem to care for little else.

The system of public hiring does away with the necessity for a good character in order to obtain a place. The public hirings are a great evil. Neither landlords nor farmers will second the efforts of the clergy to do away with them.

FIELD HOUSE, HUTTON-LOW-CROSS.

Population of parish, 251. Acreage, 1,526.

397. *Ralph Robinson.* — There are no gangs. Turnips are generally let to people at 6*s.* an acre to weed, or to hoe at 6*d.* per every 100 yards in length. There are 10 males and 6 females between the ages of 13 and 20 employed here in planting potatoes and spreading manure for turnips, weeding, and gathering potatoes, and occasionally in assisting to thrash. The hours for women are eight, for the men from nine to ten hours a day, with one hour allowed for meals. The sexes do not work much together, and I do not think that their health is injuriously affected. I do most of my work by machinery, and my married men are paid 15*s.* a week in money, and have house, garden, and potatoes free of cost.

Parents should be compelled to send children to school. They are altogether to blame in this district for the morals of their children, as education is free or nearly so.

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There is no particular time for work in our district. The men have 3*s.* a day for nine hours, and the women 1*s.* a day for eight hours; in harvest the women have 2*s.* a day for eight hours. I would prohibit females working in the fields at all times under 13 or 14 years of age, and at that age let them go out to service.

Every farm of 300 acres should have three cottages attached to it for labourers. I have four cottages, with two bedrooms each, and every other convenience. These cottages have on the ground floor one room 14 feet square, another 8 by 14, and a pantry, two bedrooms up stairs, and every accommodation necessary for the comfort of the labourers. They are let to the tenant along with his farm, and he pays all rates and taxes, so that the labourer lives entirely free of charge. Every cottage is worth five per cent. to the farmers. The property here is owned by Mr. Pease and by the Crown.

Our school is attended by about 20 boys and 23 girls. We have also an evening school in the parish, which is open at any time in the year.

The farm-buildings here are large and new. There are two good cottages adjacent, where the hinds live with some lads and two girls in the house. They all work in the fields and milk cows when wanted. Women and children are not employed for hoeing, as I should have to pay them 1*s.* a day each, and I can do it much cheaper by horse-hoe.

[Mr. Robinson farms 420 acres, mostly under the Crown. Has only of late taken to farming.]

GILLING.

Population, 985. Acreage, 4,730. Cultivation, mixed.

398. *H. J. Turner, Esq.*—The private gang system should consist of those regularly employed upon the farm under the superintendence of the farmer himself, or a responsible person appointed by him. In this parish there are 20 males between 13 and 18, and one girl between 10 and 13, and 20 married women over 18, employed in agriculture, in weeding corn crops and cleaning the land, in hoeing turnips, and in winter in helping to feed cattle and to work the thrashing machine. The distances to work vary from half a mile to two miles, and the hours of work are usually from 8.30 a.m. to 5 p.m., and the health is not injuriously affected. A very great change has taken place in the habits of the children of the farm-labourers within the last 25 years. A large proportion of the girls go into the towns, first, perhaps, as nurses, and then as domestic servants, and in general only the dullest children remain wholly for farm service. I think females should not be allowed to work on farms until 14 years of age; after that I would put no restriction; and boys should not be employed till 12 years of age. All attempts to define distance in such matters would fail. I let some farms that are two miles in length; how could distance be defined in such case?

If boys are kept at school till 12, and girls till 14, they will require no further schooling. If this cannot be accomplished, then I would prefer half a day at school and half a day at work. Distance has very little to do with the children's attendance at school, and the rate of payment is fixed so low that the children of all parts can be sent to school if the parents are so inclined.

There are no special efforts being made for the industrial training of girls.

The cottages here are not overcrowded, but the effect of overcrowding is most pernicious to the morals of all, especially of the young. The cottages are chiefly in the village, but sufficiently near the farms. They are built generally with stone walls, and the roof covered with tiles or gray slates. There are in most of them a sitting-room of about 12 ft. by 15, a small scullery, with two bedrooms above, and in some cases three small bedrooms. Many of them are owned by large landed proprietors, but some also by small owners. I know of no instance of cottages being owned by tradesmen who compel their tenants to deal with them. I think no ordinary farm labourer with a family can afford to pay more than 3*l.* to 4*l.* annually for rent, and such rent would not include common interest on the cost of the erection of suitable cottages, hence I think cottages could not be provided on self-supporting terms. There are many objections to building the cottages on the farms at a distance from the village and the school. The women who live in these isolated places become uncivilized and hardened, and rarely attend a place of worship, and are unable to send their children to school; added to this, the labourers themselves much prefer living in villages. The labouring classes are in a more flourishing state and better educated than the small farmers.

399. Gilling School—Mixed and Infants.

On the books, 115; average attendance, about 95, the attendance in summer being greater than that in winter. Children are taken as young as 2 years of age. The boys of 10 years go off to the grammar school a mile off, where schooling is free with the exception of payment for books. The attendance here is pretty regular, as there is not much work for children to do. The mothers go to the fields and leave the small children in charge of some person during the day. I should say that the average attendance is one out of seven of the population. The payment for one child, 2*s.* a quarter; for two or three in the same family, 3*s.* a quarter. There is no night school.

400. *Rev. James Wharton.*—I would suggest that when the farmer wants a young boy for field work he should apply to the schoolmaster, who will apportion him two lads to work, either half weeks or alternate days or weeks, as might best suit the work of the farm and the school.

401. *Mr. Moscrop*, agent to Lord Zetland.—This neighbourhood is more grass than arable; the farms average 200 acres. Boys under 10 are very seldom employed on the farms, and girls of any age are very little employed. There are not more than two or three grown-up people on the estate who cannot read nor write. There is one boy who cannot write.

I would place the limit for employment of children in the fields at 10 years. The loss of earnings if a prohibition were put between the ages of 10 and 13 would be very serious to the parents. The winter months might without any difficulty be given entirely to schooling, but half time would not answer. The district is well supplied with schools, and the working classes send their children pretty regularly. The hinds' wages are 14*s.* a week and a cottage; an ordinary labourer 14*s.* to 16*s.* a week. Cottage rent is 3*l.* or 4*l.* a year, with small gardens, and there are some allotment fields divided into portions of half a rood, which I consider quite sufficient for any man to work properly. There is a savings' bank in Richmond, which is well supported by the agricultural classes. Interest paid on deposits 3 per cent.

Manfield Parochial School.

402. *Amos Haughton*, master.—The number on the books—

In summer	74
Average attendance	47
On books in winter	68
Average attendance	48

Girls leave school about 14 years of age, and go to field work and service. The oldest girl in school is 13. None had been out to field work, and they attend pretty regularly. I do not think that compulsion would have a good effect. The girls are taught sewing four afternoons in the week, and the payment is 3*d.* a week, except for a few free scholars who are sent under an endowment. The boys stay here till 12 years of age, though there are two boys of 13 and 12 in this school. They remain longer at school here than they did in Gloucestershire, where I formerly was, in consequence of the wages here being higher.

403. *Robert Herring*, 13 years, son of a market gardener.—I have been out gathering fruit and vegetables for markets on Wednesday and Thursday every week. Attended during the past year 193 times; writes well and reads fairly, but said "he forgets the "sums."

Allotments are let by the quarter acre at 10*s.* a piece.

BARTON, NEAR DARLINGTON.

Population of the parish, 592.

404. *Samuel Rowlandson.*—We do not know the meaning of the word gang in this district as relating to agricultural labourers. The sexes are never intermixed except in such cases where it is perfectly impossible in farm operations to keep them distinct. The system is quite different in those districts where the farms are much larger and the villages farther apart. The labourers here are now earning such high wages that a great portion of the work formerly done by females is now done by Irishmen. There are in the parish 53 males and 30 females employed in agriculture, from the age of 13 upwards. They are generally hired to places for a year and live in the farmhouse. Those men above 24 years of age are employed partly in draining and other "take" work until they marry, and then either engaged as hinds for the year or continue in the same kind of work, earning from 3*s.* to 4*s.* 6*d.* a day. The wages of a hind are 15*s.* a week, a house and garden at 1*s.* 6½*d.* a week, coals led from the pit, 6*d.* a week; 20 bushels of potatoes, 1*s.* 6½*d.*, two bushels of wheat at Christmas, 3*d.* a week, total earnings for the week, 18*s.* 10*d.*, to which you may add a few minor privileges.

There are very few females employed to what there were 12 or 14 years ago; the husbands are better off and are earning such high wages, that they will not go to work. Ten years ago I employed from 12 to 15 women on this farm, I now am not able to get more than four to six, or at a chance time seven. There are a very few unmarried women who go out to field work; those who do are mostly aged spinsters; the younger ones will go out gathering potatoes sometimes. The hours of work for men, are from 6.30 to 5.30, for women from 8.30 to 5.30. If they have to go any great distance, they generally receive an extra wage, and an hour is allowed for dinner in winter, and one hour and a half in summer. Their health is not injuriously affected, and the per-centage of immorality amongst the female population is not to be compared with that in populous towns; but each separate case is brought more fully before the public.

The greater portion of the young can read and write well; there are quite as many cases of neglect in sending children to school among the artizan as among the purely agricultural labourers. Among the male labourers here employed all can read and write well, except one old man.

If you either restrict the hours of female labour in this district or abolish it altogether, you would very soon reduce the produce of the soil and cripple the farmer to a great extent; if you limit the hours, how are you in a critical time of turnip season to get turnips sown without working over hours. (This being here our staple crop, the question is a serious one to us). I would not allow boys to go to work below 10 years of age. The farmers would not employ children under the half-day or alternate day system. There are certain seasons during the year when boys can be spared to go to school. Regular attendance at school up to 10 years might be enforced, but previous to making education compulsory, attention should be paid to the assessment of the poor's rate. In this district there are good schools in every village, probably from two to three miles apart. The parents are all able to send their children to school, and most of them attend pretty regularly.

The cottage accommodation on the estates in this neighbourhood is very insufficient, and in my opinion is a subject requiring legislative interference much more than the education question. The labourers have in many cases to walk one or two miles, whereby much labour is lost to the country, and the accommodation in many of those cottages on the estates is very inadequate to the requirements. There ought to be cottages on each farm for the number of male labourers required upon it. One cottage to every 50 acres of arable, and one to every 200 acres of grass, is about the necessary quantity. There are probably half that number on the farms, when there are cottages in the village for which the tenant farmers have to pay rent if they take them. The proportion of farm labour depends very much on the briskness of the large ironworks in the adjacent towns, many of the men go for the week to work there when the trade is good. The cottages generally have two rooms, one a sitting-room and bedroom, and the other a bedroom; some have only one room which acts for a sitting and bedroom, and some have three rooms, and in rare instances four rooms. Many of them are crowded to a disgraceful extent, ventilation in many cases is bad, but this is often due to the neglect of the occupiers. Improvement is being made in the drainage. There is usually a garden to each cottage and outhouse. Rent from 3*l.* to 5*l.* a year. Taking into consideration the rents at which farms are let in this neighbourhood compared with many others, the landowners ought to find cottages for their tenants rent free, in the proportions I named before.

At the National school the average attendance in summer is 52, and in winter, 72 boys and girls. There are two others, dame schools. I know of four boys and five girls who are neither at school nor work, but there may be a few more, as it is a disjointed parish, partly outlying and intermixed with another parish. I very rarely meet with a young person who cannot read and sign their agreements in a good legible hand. There is no night school in the parish.

CATTERICK.

405. *John Outhwaite.*—I employ on my farm 12 men, 2 boys, and 10 women; one boy between 10 and 13, and no women under 18; they are employed in gathering quicks, hoeing turnips, and in winter in pulling turnips and helping with the cattle. The hours for the men are 10 and for females 7½ hours, with an hour allowed for dinner, and I am not aware of any injury being done to their health. I would not recommend any restriction on female employment nor on that of the boys, but as a fact, in this township no boy is employed under 10 years of age.

The wages for an ordinary labourer are 14*s.* a week, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., with payment for extra hours. They get 2*l.* for the harvest, and other help; women earn 10*d.* a day from 8.30 a.m to 5 p.m., 1*s.* a day and a pint of ale from 7.30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

I think that there is no occasion for enforcing school attendance in this township, as the labourers are anxious to obtain suitable education for their children; with very few exceptions all are able to read, and write, and cypher. There is a free school in Catterick, to which every parishioner is allowed to send his or her child on a payment of 1*s.* a quarter in advance; all books and slates are found for each child for that sum.

The farms average from 200 to 300 acres; they are about one-third grass and two-thirds tillage, and few of them have cottages on them. The cottages are clean and in good repair, and have sufficient size and accommodation. Tenants have for the most part to deal with the landowners. The rents vary from 1*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* and 5*l.* a year. The labourers' cottages are as a rule within reach of the school. There are 16 boys and 14 girls in attendance at the school without much variation in winter and summer. There is no night school.

406. *J. B. Booth, Esq.*, Killerby Hall.—I am two miles from any village. I employ on the farm four males and 11 females from 13 years of age and upwards. Two of the boys are between 10 and 13; they are employed in planting and taking up potatoes,

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and in winter in threshing, and most of them live on the farm. Some come two miles to work, and the hours are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with an hour for dinner.

The females as a rule are a steady and respectable class, and I do not find that field work has any injurious effect upon their health or their morals, or their training for domestic duties. If the women were not allowed to work in the fields it would be a loss of capital to the family; there is no other employment in the neighbourhood for them. Very few boys are employed in agriculture under the age of 8, and those only in harvest time, when they can earn 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a day. They are a help to their parents and their schooling is not affected by it. As a rule they are not employed under 12. I would not place any restriction on the distance to work nor on the hours of work.

Wages for a hind are 15*s.* a week, a cottage and garden free, a cow kept, and 20 bushels of potatoes. I have five men at present on my farm earning that sum. A few years ago wages were 9*s.* and a cottage. Women earn 10*d.* and 1*s.* a day. Wages have been raised in this district by the ironwork, and the people are very well off. Though the wages are higher the expenses of cultivation per acre are not increased, as, owing to the use of machinery, fewer extra hands are wanted at certain seasons.

There is no occasion for any mode of enforcing school attendance in this district; the parents are anxious that their children should attend school. In the townships of Catterick, Tunstall, Brough, Bolton, and Hipswell there are five schools and a Roman Catholic school at Brough. Distance, therefore, does not affect the school attendance, except with the very small children.

The cottages are good, healthy, and comfortable. The proportion depends on whether the land is grass or arable, and on the number of people in each cottage. On a farm of mixed cultivation one house to a 100 acres would be sufficient. The cottages have two bedrooms and a sitting-room, with pantry, washhouse, &c., pig-houses, and outbuildings. They are owned by the landlord, and generally held rent-free by the labourer as part of his wages.

BEDALE.

Population, 2,800. - Acreage, 11,327.

407. *Rev. J. G. Beresford*, rector. — Returns received from 37 farms out of 44 shew the employment as follows:—

Boys:		
Under 8 - - -		9
Between 10 and 13 - - -		11
Between 13 and 18 - - -		43
Total of boys -		63
Females:		
Under 8 - - - -		2
Between 8 and 10 - - -		1
Between 13 and 18 - - -		13
Over 18:		
Married - -	33	
Unmarried - -	17	
		50
Total of females -		66

They are employed in spring in cleaning the land and preparing turnips. In summer in hoeing turnips. In autumn in potatoing; and in winter in getting up, topping, and tailing turnips. The hours of work on the land for men from 7 to 5, women 8 to 5, with an hour allowed for dinner. The work does not injuriously affect their health, but I think that the comfort of their homes is injuriously affected thereby, and in the cases of married women, the habits of the husband and the welfare of the children. I cannot recommend any restriction on the employment of women at the present time in this parish, since, owing to the difficulty of obtaining male labour, the farmers would be at a loss to know how to get the necessary work done without the employment of women. Boys should not be employed under 12 years of age.

With regard to obtaining a prescribed amount of school attendance, a restriction in regard to the age at which a child may be employed seems to me preferable to any other mode. Combined with this, it might be desirable that a certificate of attendance up to the stipulated period signed by the master or mistress, and countersigned by the managers of some licensed school, should be required by an employer before engaging the children for the first time, and such certificate should be registered at some appointed place or office at the time of hiring; this if feasible would have a great effect in securing a regular attendance of those at school. School attendance is in the case of 12 or 14 children living a mile and a half or two miles from school affected by this distance and slightly by the pecuniary resources of the parents though such excuse is often made without any foundation; the charge for schooling is twopence a week.

Two cottages per 100 acres are considered sufficient for the requirements of the land; we have that proportion and the greatest distance from the farms is a mile and a half. The cottages vary, but in the most populous parts of the parish are small and badly constructed, ventilated and drained; there is a sufficiency of water and the principal proprietors are large landowners. And several tradesmen possess cottages, but I have not heard of any system of compulsion in regard to their dealings. There are 184 allotments of land let for the most part to agricultural labourers residing in the parish averaging a quarter of an acre each, and let at a rate of 2*l.* 10*s.* per acre inclusive of all outgoings. The children are found first to absent themselves from school between the ages of 8 and 9, and are employed by their parents in the allotments when not old enough to obtain work from the farmers.

School.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	74	58
Between 10 and 13 -	59	30
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	124	89
Between 10 and 13 -	64	49

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	75	52
Between 10 and 13 -	66	44
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	126	94
Between 10 and 13 -	69	54

There are a number of young persons growing up with insufficient education, that is to say about equal to the second standard in the National schools. The night school was kept up for three years in connexion with the National school, but ceased last year in consequence of the indifference of the lads after the novelty had worn off.

408. *Mr. Morton*, guardian.—There is no pauperism to any extent in this parish. Relief is given to widows having large familes, on condition that the children are sent to school. Very small boys are sent out for tenting.

409. *G. Serjeantson, Esq.* (Camp-hill).—It is very desirable to secure a certain amount of school attendance for children between 8 and 13 years of age, who are earning wages. I would not allow boys to be employed under 10 years of age; the girls are not employed at all in this part of Yorkshire. I think it would be desirable to limit the hours of work for boys and girls. Most of the children have been to school for a short period during their lives.

The deficient state of education among the young is frequently caused by the insufficiency and neglect of the clergy and occasionally by the poverty of the parents. I do not know of any pressure put upon the parents by the employers to induce them to allow their children to go to work at so early an age. Except in the cases of large families the labouring classes are generally able to pay for the schooling of the children. The cottages are very rarely overcrowded in this district.

Carthorpe School Mixed.

410. Under Government inspection, was four years ago a dame school with about 20 scholars, it now has from 60 to 80, and a Government grant of 46*l.* There is a night school in winter for boys only, out of 11 on the register the average attendance is 10, of ages varying from 12 to 17 years. There is also a reading room open three nights a week, excepting in the summer, supplied with books and writing materials and newspapers gratis; lectures also are occasionally given there.

THIRSK.

British and Foreign Boys' School.

411. *Mr. Ashman,* master.—The number on the books, 80; average attendance 62. The highest attendance is from November to April. The school is composed partly of agricultural children from the outlying parishes, there are also some farmers' sons. There are at this moment (the 15th of June) 40 agricultural children absent at work on turnips and other crops, they begin to leave school at 11 years of age, and rarely come back even in the winter months; I would forbid their going to work up to 10 years of age, and require six months attendance at school up to 13, and a certificate of such attendance to be required before hiring. There is no lack of schools in the district, the great difficulty is to secure continuous attendance, and I am sure that nothing but compulsion will have any effect upon those parents who are utterly indifferent about the education of their children.

At the girls' school it was said that there was no withdrawal of the girls for field employment.

Church School.

412. *J. Walton,* master.—Number on books, boys 87; average attendance in summer, 80; in winter, 65. This is a new school and has been under Government since September 1866, and the numbers are increasing. Three parts of the children are those of agricultural labourers; the boys go out for occasional work at 10 years of age, and some are away now for turnip hoeing. Payment for a quarter 2*s.* The attendance is pretty regular. I do not think that the limit for work at 10 years of age would affect the attendance here; boys are able to get more than six months' schooling, if they choose between the ages of 10 and 13. Lads go out to service at 12 years of age and never return to school; there is also a large number of children in the town who never go to school at all. There is no night school. If the boys attended regularly up to 10 years of age, they would be well-grounded in writing, reading and arithmetic.

Girls' National School.

413. On the books 101; average attendance in summer 60, and in winter 47. The mistress has been here only six months. The attendance is very irregular, the children are absent for trivial reasons. Very few girls are employed in the fields.

414. *Sarah Flint,* 13 years of age, went out turnip singling with her stepfather, believed she got 1*s.* 6*d.* a day.

415. *J. Rob, Esq.*—Calton near Thirsk, 827 acres, two-thirds arable, one-third grass. There are no private gangs. I employ 8 married women, but no children in raking and gathering twitch in the spring; and in summer, in turnip hoeing; they live within a mile of their work. Their health is not injuriously affected.

I do not think it would be necessary to place any restriction on the employment of women. There would be no objection to fixing an age for boys' work at 10 years; they are in this district very rarely employed before that age.

The cottages are conveniently situated with regard to the farms where the men have to work; they have usually two and sometimes three bedrooms, and are not at all crowded. The labouring class is better off than the class of small farmers.

The wages for a man are 14*s.* and 15*s.* a week, occasionally, but very rarely, 8*s.* and 9*s.* and their meat. Women earn 1*s.* a day at turnip singling and potatoing, but more in harvest. There are allotments for cottages of half a rood each.

The district is fairly supplied with schools, but the people are in some instances indifferent about the education and attendance of their children.

416. *Mr. Brooks,* farmer.—Formerly lived in North Lincoln. I have several regular labourers living in cottages on my farms; they are very well off and many of them keep cows. I am in favour of fixing a limit of age below which no child shall be employed in the fields, but I do not think that any legislation will secure regular attendance at school except downright compulsion.

417. *B. Wilson,* Brawith.—The children are employed at turnip hoeing and other jobs. Education is not much thought of, the parents say they cannot afford to pay for the schooling and are very indifferent about it. Wages are 14*s.* a week. My men are in cottages on the farms, but some way from the homestead. I give them 8*s.* a week and their meat. Knayton is a small village and I do not get my labour from it. There is not much distress among the labouring classes. I think if the schools in small rural parishes received more aid from Government the children would attend more regularly.

TOPCLIFFE, near THIRSK.

418. *George M. Lomas.*—The cultivation is mixed but the greater proportion is arable. There is no gang system is this neighbourhood. I employ on my farm of 200 acres three married women and one young person, and I believe that that is the proportion on most of the farms. They are employed in spring in raking and gathering couch grass; in summer, in hoeing turnips, beans, &c.; in autumn, after harvest, in collecting turnips and mangel; and in winter, occasionally in barn work. They all either live on the farm in cottages or in the adjacent villages. They leave home at 8 a.m. and return at 12 p.m., and then work from 1 to 5; but if they remain in the field they have a full hour allowed for dinner. The work does not injuriously affect their health, and it is not the custom to put the women to any unseemly or oppressive labour. I have found that the morals of the females in agricultural districts are decidedly of a higher standard than those of a manufacturing locality, and they are eminently better qualified for domestic servants. There are no women employed under 16 or 17 years of age; of these very few, excepting at harvest. Very few boys are engaged below the age of 13. It would not interfere with the convenience of the farmers to limit the age of boys for work in the field to 12 years, excepting at harvest. There is no necessity for placing any restriction on the distance to which they go to work, and these observations will apply not only to our own parish, but as far as I can judge to the whole of this important agricultural district.

N. R. York.

Mr. Portman.

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Generally speaking, I might almost say invariably, in this portion of Yorkshire, there are ample means of education provided by either private or public beneficence for the children of the agriculturists; that there is nothing to interfere with them availing themselves of it every day in the year until the age of 12 or 13, excepting at harvest, and that it is very rare to meet with a child that cannot read his Bible and write, and who has not a good elementary idea of general useful subjects.

The cottage accommodation is generally, and with very few exceptions, sufficient in number. Most of them have good gardens attached.

Ainderby Steeple Parish.

419. *Mr. Booth*, of Warlaby.—There are 100 children at school in the week and 199 on Sunday. The average age at which children leave school is 12 years.

There is very little employment of young children except at harvest. Placing the limit for children's work at 10 years would hardly affect this district. Women are employed at different seasons of the year, but as little as possible in winter. Girls from 12 to 13 are employed in the summer in stubbing the thistles; they usually go to service at that age and work in fields, milk, and do housework besides. Labourer's wages 14*s.* a week; a hind will have 14*s.* a week, a cottage and garden free. Women earn 10*d.* a day, and 2*s.* a day in harvest. Boys under 12 years of age, 6*d.* and 8*d.* a day.

There is generally a school in every parish, but those in small rural parishes are much in want of more Government aid. I do not think that compulsory education would be generally acceptable; the parents would feel the loss of the earnings which their children are able to bring in. Last year they complained a good deal of the difficulty of finding money for the school payments. It might be possible to enforce a certain amount of school attendance during the year for boys earning wages, and to require a certificate of such attendance to be produced before hiring; but what are you to do with those that do not attend school, and so cannot get employment. The cottages in many places are very bad and have only one or two rooms, there is, however, I think a tendency to improvement; still the state of the labourers' dwellings is the worst feature in the present condition of the agricultural class. I consider that a double cottage costs 200*l.* to build.

The labouring class in this district spend a great deal on their living; the butcher's cart goes round the village every Saturday, and the women are also extravagant in dress. There are many benefit clubs which give to their subscribers 7*s.* and 8*s.* a week in time of sickness, and pay the doctor.

The district east and north-east of North Allerton towards Stokesley, is the worst part of the North Riding. It is a district of poor clay land. The farmers are a poor class of men and very often worse off than the labourers.

Kirby-Wiske School.

420. *J. Smith*, schoolmaster.—This school is not under Government inspection. The attendance for six winter months is pretty regular, and the rest of the year very irregular. Boys go out at 9 years of age for bird tenting, and children of both sexes at that age for singling turnips and potato planting; they begin to go in April. We have one boy of 13, and two or three girls of 13 in the school. The girls are taught sewing in the afternoon by a woman. The school payments are 3*d.* a week for boys, 3*d.* and 4*d.* a week for girls.

The parents are very indifferent about education, still they make rather a favour of letting a child go out tenting for a farmer. I do not think that the loss of earnings of children under 10 years of age would seriously affect the parents. Half a day at work and half a day at school would be the best for education, but the fear is that it would not be practicable in an agricultural district. There are allotments belonging to the parish, in portions of about a rood, which are in the township of Newsan but close to the cottages of this parish. The district is with the exception of Sandhutton, well off for schools. I have here six children from Sandhutton.

HUTTON CONYERS, near RIPON.

Population, 160 - - Acreage, 3,052.
Cultivation, chiefly arable.

421. *Henry Morton.*—There are no private gangs. Lads under 10 years are not employed, nor any unmarried women. Men work for 10 hours a day, women for 7 to 7½ hours. There is no need of any restriction on the employment of women or boys, the latter are not put to any hard work till they are 14 or 15 years old.

I think that no cottage should be built with less than three bedrooms, and that there should be a fire-place in each room as well as good light, and the windows to open. The lower rooms should not be less than 9 feet high, nor the upper ones less than 8 feet to the ceilings. One cottage per 100 acres is sufficient for the requirements of the land. We have about one to 150 acres. There are some exceedingly good cottages with three bedrooms, recently built by Earl de Grey and Ripon, two good ones built 30 years ago, and three or four good ones on the different farms; but the rest are old and low, badly ventilated, some without chambers, and the water supply bad. There are good gardens to all. Rent from 10*s.* to 60*s.* a year. Earl De Grey is improving his cottages by degrees.

An attempt was made a few years ago to establish an evening school, but it did not succeed.

Hutton Conyers is in the ecclesiastical parish of Sharow, and the school is close to Sharow church. This township is in the North Riding, Sharow is in the West Riding; and there are other townships within the same district whence the children go to Sharow school.

EVIDENCE ACCOMPANYING MR. NORMAN'S REPORT.

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2. Meeting at Brixworth.
3. Do., Islip.
4. Northampton Chamber of Agriculture.
5. Circulars of inquiry.
6. Answers received as to requiring some account of school attendance.
7. Do. as to cottage accommodation.
8. Do. as to numbers in attendance at day schools.
9. Do. as to night schools.
10. Educational return as to Northamptonshire militia.
11. Letter from Mr. J. J. Graves, secretary to the Northampton School Teachers Association.
12. Account of income and expenditure of an agricultural labourer's family.
13. Do. of a single man.

13 b. Total amount of average annual earnings of a good labourer.

14. Dr. Paley, Peterborough.
15. Dr. T. Walker, do.
16. Letter from Dr. Barr, Northampton.
17. Rev. R. P. Lightfoot, vicar of Towcester.
18. Earl Spencer, Althorp.
19. Letter from Mr. J. Beasley, Chapel Brampton.
20. Albert Pell, Esq., Hazelbeach.
21. Paper by Alfred Hughes, Esq., Brampton Ash.
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Local Evidence.

23. Mr. Beecroft, Eye; Mr. H. Little, Peterborough; Mr. Wright, Helpstone.
24. Mr. J. Hopkinson, Dogs Thorpe.
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28. Mrs. Griffin.

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180. Return by Mr. W. Shaw.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

1. During my visit to Northamptonshire I attended the ordinary meetings of the boards of guardians at Northampton, Wellingborough, Kettering, Oundle, and Towcester. In addition to these I attended a meeting of a few guardians of the Hardingstone union specially convened for my benefit. The following is

a brief abstract of the opinions arrived at by these boards upon the most important questions submitted to them.

[NOTE.—The opinions here recorded are those given on the more general questions only. It is thought more convenient that the opinions given upon questions of minor importance should be collected from the evidence given by individuals.—F. H. N.]

Place.	Should female labour be restricted by law.	Age at which boys' labour commences.	Effect of labour on boys' health.	State of education among the children engaged in agriculture.	Up to what age could the labour of boys be dispensed with.	How could education be best provided for after work commences.
Northampton -	No	8 to 10	Not injurious	Defective	Not named	Day or night school
Hardingstone -	No	Not named	Do.	Do.	10	Night school.
Wellingborough	No	8 to 10	Do.	Do.	10 with certain exceptions in summer.	Day or night school
Kettering -	No	8 to 10	Do.	Do.	9	Night school in winter.
Oundle - -	No	8 to 10	—	Not defective	Any restriction seriously inconvenient.	—
Towcester -	No	7	Do.	Defective	8, and in winter 9	Night school.

2. I attended a meeting of landowners, clergy, and farmers specially convened for my convenience at Brixworth; about 25 attended.

It was resolved, that the employment of women in agricultural labour, excepting in hay and harvest, and in spudding or rooting up thistles on pasture land in summer, is undesirable and unnecessary, and should not be permitted.

That no boy under 8 years of age should be employed in agricultural labour, and that boys above that age should not be so employed unless they can produce satisfactory evidence of previous education.

That the difficulties necessarily attendant upon compulsory education, as respects the class of agricultural labourers, preponderate over the uncertain benefits expected from it, and that indirect influence is more expedient than compulsory education.

That the allotment system, understanding thereby the letting to farm labourers a plot of land not exceeding a quarter of an acre in each case, for the exclusive purpose of garden cultivation, and the produce thereof to be consumed by the labourer and his family, has been found advantageous, and is a great moral as well as material benefit to the labourer.

3. At a meeting held at Islip, present about 12 (clergymen and farmers), it was stated in answer to my questions,—

1. That few females were employed in that district in agricultural labour, and generally only from April to August.
2. That boys generally began to work about the age of 8, and that the labour was not injurious to them.
3. That the state of education was defective.
4. That young girls were not wanted for field labour; that boys between the ages of 8 and 10 were wanted from March to November, and that after the age of 10 they were wanted during the whole of the year.
5. That education could only be provided for children after they begin to work by night schools.
6. That cottages in this district were generally insufficient in number, frequently inconvenient in position, and quite insufficient in accommodation, principally in bed rooms; it was also thought desirable that a public officer should be appointed upon a system analogous to that provided by the Building Acts in towns, to see that cottages were provided with necessary accommodation.
7. It was stated that the allotment system prevailed generally in the neighbourhood; it was thought that gardens were greatly preferable; that the amount of an allotment should not exceed one rood; that it became very inconvenient if more than half a mile from the labourer's cottage; but it was thought unnecessary that the mode of cultivation should be regulated when the amount of the allotment did not exceed one rood.

4. I also attended a meeting of the Northampton Chamber of Agriculture at Northampton, where the following resolution was proposed by Mr. W. Shaw and seconded by Mr. H. Little:—

"That in the opinion of this meeting the employment of children in field labour may be postponed until 10 years of age, without seriously increasing the expenses of cultivation."

In moving this Mr. Shaw said, "If wrong had been "done at all, it had been done in ignorance. The "farmers did not wish to keep their labourers in "ignorance, nor would it answer their purpose to "do so."

The following amendment was proposed by Mr. Blott and seconded by Mr. Adcock:—

"That in the opinion of this meeting the employment of children under 8 years of age is unnecessary, and that having respect to the requirements of the parents, and the education of the children, the employment of children in farming pursuits in the winter months may be dispensed with, without any material increase in the cost of production, between the ages of 8 and 12."

Mr. Blott in moving this amendment is reported (in the Northampton Herald, March 7) to have said, "They are all agreed that they could dispense with "the labour of children up to 10 years of age, for it "would be an easy matter to get a boy at 10½ years "old for a shilling a week more. That would not be "any material loss to them, therefore, if the resolution "was adopted. The question, however, really was, "how could the education of children be accomplished "without interfering with the interests of the agricultural labourer. He would suggest a course which "appeared to him to be the only practical one. It was "generally agreed that under 10 years of age children "were of little or no use in agriculture, but from 10 "to 12 they were of great service in the summer "months."

Northamptonshire.

Mr. Norman.

e.

The amendment was negatived and the original resolution carried.

The following resolution was then moved by Capt. Rickett and seconded by Mr. J. Gee :—

"That this meeting is of opinion that the present state of education is defective, but that the extension of the present system of national education will meet the requirements of the agricultural population, and that compulsory rating for the purposes of education, beyond providing school accommodation where it is absolutely necessary, would be highly objectionable."

The latter part of this resolution which refers to compulsory rating was objected to by several gentlemen present, principally on the ground that there was not sufficient time to discuss the whole question of rating that day. It was therefore omitted and the first part of the resolution, as far as the word "population," was put and carried.

5. While making inquiries I distributed between 80 and 90 copies of the printed circulars of questions with which I was provided. Of these 38 have been returned to me more or less fully answered.

The following is a summary of the information contained in the papers so returned.

In 19 parishes, containing a total population of 8,975 (census 1861), the following is the number of women, young persons, and children employed in agricultural labour.

Males.

Under 8.	8 to 10.	10 to 13.	13 to 18.	Total.
8	80	248	285	621

Females.

Under 8.	8 to 10.	10 to 13.	13 to 18.	Over 18.		Total.
				Married.	Unmarried.	
—	10	36	30	80	34	190

In seven of the parishes comprised in this table no females at all are returned as being employed in field labour.

In answer to question 22*c*, 24 answers were given, from which it appeared that in 12 cases the labourers had to walk less than one mile to their work, and in the other 12 cases some of them had to walk more than that distance to work.

In answer to questions 22*g*, *h*, *i*, it was stated that the usual times allowed for meals were half-an-hour at 9.30 or 10 a.m., one hour in the middle of the day for dinner, and, in a very few cases, half-an-hour at 4 o'clock. In no case was it thought that the health was injuriously affected in consequence of the labour, or that the young and females were subjected to any ill treatment.

In answer to question 22*l*, 21 answers were given; of these 15 were opposed to any restriction on female labour, five were in favour of prohibiting it altogether, and one was in favour of permitting females to work alone but not with males.

In answer to question 22*m*, 25 answers were given; of which eight were opposed to all restriction upon the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed, and the remainder were in favour of restrictions up to the following ages: two in favour of restriction up to the age of 12, nine up to the age of 10, one up to the age of 9, four up to the age of 8, one up to the age of 8 or 9.

In answer to question 22*n*, 22 answers were given; of which 19 were opposed to all restriction upon the distance to which children and young persons should be permitted to go to work, two were in favour of a restriction up to two miles, and one in favour of the plan laid down in the printed table.

6. In answer to question 26, asking advice as to the best mode of enforcing some amount of school attendance, 20 answers were given; of which seven were opposed to all compulsion, four were in favour of prohibiting labour up to the age of 10, in order to give an opportunity for attendance at school, three were in favour of some examination before permitting a child to go to work, four were in favour of some modification of the Printworks Act, chiefly by means of night-schools, one was in favour of the alternate day system, and one in favour of compulsion when a child was not at work (*i.e.*, employment in field labour was to be the only excuse for non-attendance at school).

[*Note.*—The answers to this question were so various that it is impossible to summarize them more concisely than I have done. The different plans suggested are all inserted in the evidence given by individual witnesses.—F. H. N.]

In answer to question 27, 26 answers were given; from which it appeared that the school attendance was not affected by the distance the children had to go to school in 24 cases, and was so affected in two.

7. In answer to questions 33, 34, and 35, asking particulars as to the cottage supply in respect of number, situation, and accommodation, 24, 25, and 26 answers were respectively given, the result of which may be collected from the following table :—

—	Number.	Situation.	Accommodation.
Good - - -	17	21	8
Fair - - -	6	4	13
Bad - - -	1	—	5
Total number of answers given -	24	25	26

And in 11 cases it was stated that the cottage supply was improving, and in six that it was not.

8. The tables asking for returns of the numbers on the register and in average attendance at school, were filled up in the case of 21 parishes, containing altogether a population of 11,939. From these statistics it appeared that the following is the total number of children on the register and in average attendance at these parishes.

In Summer.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys :		
Under 10 - - -	524	403
10 to 13 - -	110	81
Total - - -	634	484
Girls : - - - -		
Under 10 - - -	587	420
10 to 13 - - -	191	124
Total - - -	778	544

Total on register 1,412 = 1 in 8·45 of the population.
Do. in attendance 1,028 = 1 in 11·61 " "

In Winter.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - - -	507	419
10 to 13 - - -	131	100
Total - - -	638	519
Girls:		
Under 10 - - -	548	440
10 to 13 - - -	194	142
Total - - -	742	582

Total on register 1,380 = 1 in 8·65 of the population.
Do. in attendance 1,101 = 1 in 10·84 „ „

The returns for winter do not include the night schools, the results of which are given in the following table.

9. In 12 parishes, with a population of 7,302, the following numbers are on the register and in average attendance respectively at the night schools.

In Winter.

—	On Register.	Average Attendance.
Under 12 - -	69	61
Above 12 - -	236	176

I have met with no case of a night school being kept open during the summer months.

10. Northamptonshire Militia.

Table showing the Number of Recruits enrolled each Year who could neither read nor write, compared with the total number of those enrolled.

—	Number Enrolled.	Number who could neither read nor write.	Per-centage.
1 Oct. 1860 to 31 March 1861 - -	275	129	46·999
1 April 1861 „ 1862 - - -	344	170	49·418
„ 1862 „ 1863 - -	316	138	43·607
„ 1863 „ 1864 - - -	236*	116	49·152
„ 1864 „ 1865 - - -	161	64	39·751
„ 1865 „ 1866 - -	289	128	44·2907
„ 1866 „ 1867 - - -	247	111	44·931
„ 1867 „ 1868 - -	474	210	44·303

* The return of this year is not complete. In the case of many of the recruits no entry is made in the educational column of the roll book. I have therefore included in the total number enrolled only those recruits who have these particulars respecting them given. The total number of those enrolled is therefore incorrect; but the proportion of those who can neither read nor write (116) to the whole number enrolled (236) is correct.

11. To F. H. Norman, Esq., Assistant Commissioner for inquiring into the Employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women in Agriculture.

Lamport Endowed School,
May 15th, 1868.

Sir,

The four questions which you sent to me, and on which you desired the opinion of teachers of Northamptonshire to be given, I submitted to the two associations of schoolmasters in this county: to the East Midland at Wellingborough on April 25th, and to the Northampton Association on April 4th and May 2nd, and to other teachers at various times. The result I now send you in as brief a form as possible.

I. Question 1. "At what age do the children of agricultural labourers usually leave school, and what progress has a child of average ability, at an average school usually made in reading, writing, and arithmetic, when he leaves?"

Most teachers agree that, for the most part, boys cease to attend regularly some time before leaving; that they go to work for the summer season for a year or two years before they leave school for good. From the returns I have received, and the opinions that have been expressed, the general opinion of teachers here is that the age at which boys thus begin to leave school is about 8, when, under ordinary circumstances, they could pass Standard II.—very few Standard III.—of the Revised Code; and that the age at which they leave school altogether is 9, when they could pass Standard III. well. Exceptional instances are given where boys stay at school till 10 or 11 and can pass well in Standard IV., but they are in such parishes as are in the hands of only one or two proprietors, and where the labourers as a class are better cared for than in more open parishes.

II. Question 2. "What progress would you expect a child of average ability who attended school regularly to have made in reading, writing, and arithmetic when he arrives at the age of 10 years?"

The progress made would depend on two things:—

1. The age at which the child began to attend school regularly; and,
2. The kind of school and teaching it met with.

A good infant school materially aids the progress of children, and where there is one, children that go to it usually get further advanced than in places where there is none. The general opinion is that children can usefully begin to attend school at 5 years old, and that their attendance, to be called regular, ought to be at least 200 days in the year. The school is taken to be an average school, by which is understood a school equal to the generality of those under a certificated teacher, and being fairly supplied with books and other apparatus.

Then, beginning regular attendance at 5 years old, and under the condition of good teaching—*i.e.* such teaching as the supposed average school would afford—the general opinion is that at 10 a labourer's child would fairly reach Standard V. of the Revised Code. There is a singular unanimity of opinion on this point.

III. Question 3. "Do you think that the deficiency (if any) in the amount of education usually possessed by a labourer's child when he goes out to work can be adequately supplied by his subsequent attendance at night school while at work during the day?"

The first consideration here was what might be understood by a sufficient education. The estimate you mentioned, viz., "the reading of a newspaper "with ease and fluency; the writing of a letter to a "friend without effort; and the understanding, so as "to be able to detect mistakes in, an ordinary bill of "a tradesman," was considered to give considerable latitude in its interpretation, and might be taken to mean more than was intended. But, to fix a standard to the meaning, it was taken to be equivalent to Standard VI. of the Revised Code, as, for several years, it seems to have been the opinion of the Committee of Council that that standard was a sufficient education for the working classes from their not giving grants for anything beyond it.

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The question may then be stated thus: Can a child, leaving school at 8 or 9 and being able to pass Standard III., by subsequent attendance at night-schools be made to reach Standard VI.? To this question, under present circumstances of night schools, a most decided "No" is the answer. Night schools, as found in most country parishes are deemed of very little use. Yet many think that this might be accomplished by a regular attendance at night schools for three evenings per week for the greater part of the year after a child has been to the day school regularly from 5 to 10 years of age, as supposed in Question 2.

IV. Question 4. "What are the chief difficulties you encounter in carrying on night schools; and can you suggest any practical remedies for the purpose of rendering them more useful than they at present are?"

It is much more easy to point out difficulties than to mention practical remedies for them. The difficulties encountered in carrying on night schools arise from two main causes:—

1. The indifference to education prevailing among the labouring classes in villages; and
2. Want of encouragement and support.

Each of these brings others with it. The former begets—

(1.) A scarcity of scholars; children please themselves about attending the school;
(2.) Irregularity of professing attendants; and
(3.) In some degree, aided by the fatigues of the day, inattention and sleepiness.

The latter results in:

(1.) A want of good and sufficient teaching power; the only remuneration too often given being the few pence the scholars pay, which barely find the fire and lights;
(2.) A mixture of young boys with their elders; and
(3.) A very meagre programme of subjects taught.

Other causes may help to produce some one or more of these difficulties, all of which stand in the way of making night schools efficient and popular. The small fee usually charged seems not to affect the attendance in most instances; though in a few it does.

The evils engendered by the first of these main difficulties may be partially, though not wholly, removed by the removal of the second cause. With a more generous support, more teachers might be found, more divisions made in a school, and a more attractive list of subjects supplied, all of which would more or less tend to decrease the bad attendance, inattention, and sleepiness complained of. To render night schools valuable there must be a radical change in them. The result of my inquiries and experience brings out the following as being the principal practical remedies for the existing evils of night schools:—

1. A generous pecuniary support as a *sine quâ non*.
2. A more attractive list of subjects and method of teaching; the instruction must be varied, and more entertaining than a continuous attention to reading, writing, and arithmetic alone can possibly afford.
3. A larger and efficient staff of teachers to give vigour to the school, say one teacher to every 20 scholars.
4. A small library of instructive books; travels, history, &c., with some periodical publications.

Evening schools cannot be said to have been fairly tried; they have not received the attention they deserve; as speculations they have at best only partially succeeded; they have never been, except in a few rare examples, fully developed so as to show what they are capable of, and under present circumstances they cannot accomplish what might be expected from them.

Such, sir, is the result of my inquiries among my fellow teachers in this part of Northamptonshire. I have been as brief in my remarks as I could be compatible with clearness and fulness; I may have failed to express myself so clearly as could be wished, in which case I shall be glad to give any additional information or make any explanation which I may be able to furnish.

I have, &c.
JOHN J. GRAVES.

12. The following account of the income and expenditure of J. G., an agricultural labourer, at Haselbeach, and of a single man in the Isle of Ely, were collected by Mr. Albert Pell of Haselbeach. He has kindly given me permission to publish them.

[These particulars were collected in July 1867.—F. H. N.]

The family consisted of—

J. G. - age 55, ill and earned nothing.
Mrs. G. „ 44, average earning 2*s.* 6*d.* per week, and food one day per week.
Elizabeth „ 23, absent from home.
Henry „ 18, do.
Daniel - „ 15, earned 8*s.* per week.
Sarah - „ 13, absent from home, but cost in clothes.
Kate - „ 10, earned nothing weekly.
John - „ 7, do.
Annie - „ 5, earned nothing.

Total at home 6, bring in weekly:—

	s.	d.
Mrs. G. - - - - -	2	6
Daniel - - - - -	8	0
Weekly wages -	10	6

Yearly wages—	s.
Mrs. G. - -	10
„ (food in house) -	40
Daniel, wages (harvest)	32
„ (beer) - -	10
John (scaring) - -	20
Donations—	
Value of milk - -	10
„ fire wood -	5
„ subscription to clothing club - -	10
	137

$\frac{137}{52} = 2\frac{33}{52}$ = about 2 8

Total weekly 13 2

EXPENDITURE.

Weekly.	£	s.	d.
Rent—House and six poles of land -	0	1	3
Bread—Eleven 4-lb. loaves at 7½*d.* -	0	6	10½
Flour—One stone at 2*s.* 9*d.* - -	0	2	9
Beer—One and a half gallons at 1*s.* 1*d.* -	0	1	7½
Meat—2 lbs. (breast of mutton) at 7*d.* -	0	1	2
Groceries—¼ lb. tea, 9*d.*; 3 lbs. sugar, 1*s.* 1½*d.*; 1½ lb. currants, 6*d.*; ¼ lb. coffee, 4*d.*; soap and oddments, 9½*d.* -	0	3	6
Butter—1 lb. - - - -	0	1	2
Coal—2 ton (for wood see income) per week - - -	0	1	0
Hardware, crockery, &c. - -	0	0	2½

Annual.	£	s.	d.
Dress—			
J. G. - -	1	0	0
Mrs. G. -	2	10	0
Daniel - -	4	0	0
Sarah -	3	0	0
Kate, Johnnie, Annie	4	10	0
	15	0	0
House linen—			
Pair sheets, 8*s.*; two teacloths, 8*d.*; two towels, 7*d.*; two pillow cases, 2*s.* -	0	11	3
Clubs—			
J. G., 1*l.*; Mrs. G., 12*s.*	1	12	0
Total ann. expendt.	17	3	3 ÷ 52 = 0 6 7½
Weekly expenditure			1 6 2

	£	s.	d.
Total weekly expenditure -	1	6	2
„ income - - -	0	13	2
Deficiency -	0	13	0

This deficiency is partly made up by Union allowance weekly to J. G.—

	s.	d.			
Money - - -	4	0			
Five loaves (6 lbs.) - -	4	3½	0	8	3½
Unaccounted for -			0	4	8½

Amount annually unaccounted for = 4*s.* 8½*d.* × 52 = 12*l.* 4*s.* 10*d.*

13. Cost of a single man's living in the Isle of Ely, ascertained January 24, 1865.

Weekly.

	£	s.	d.	s.	d.
Bread—7 lbs. at 1*d.* - -	0	0	7		
Flour—3½ lbs. - - -	0	0	6		
Meat—3½ lbs. (pickled pork) -	0	2	0½		
Butter—½ lb. at 1*s.* - -	0	0	6		
Potatoes—1 gallon - -	0	0	2		
Sugar—1 lb. -	0	0	4		
Coffee—2 ozs. - - -	0	0	3		
Spices - - - -	0	0	1		
Cooking - - - -	0	0	5		
Lodging and washing - -	0	1	0		
Weekly expenditure -	0	5	10½	5	10½

Clothing for year.

	£	s.	d.
Working jacket, 1*l.* 6*s.*—lasts two years - - -	0	13	0
Breeches and gaiters, 1*l.*—last two years - -	0	10	0
Sleeved waistcoat, 14*s.*—lasts two years - -	0	7	0
Two shirts - - -	0	8	0
One jersey - -	0	5	3
One pair stockings -	0	4	6
Cap - -	0	1	6
Boots - - -	0	14	3
	3	3	6

Sunday clothing—
Every fourth year costs £3 2 6 / 4 = 0 15 7½

	3	19	1½
52			
= weekly about	1	5	
	7	3½	

13 (b). Total amount of the *average* annual earnings of a *good* labourer. Supplied by ALBERT PELL, Esq.

When the ordinary wages for six days work are 12*s.* (winter weeks included); if an able man and good workman be put to task work, such as draining, hedge-cutting, ditching, hoeing, throwing up dung, raising stone or clay, he would earn 15*s.* a week, and he ought not to work for these wages for more than 10 hours exclusive of meal times. If he is mowing by task he ought to earn at least 24*s.* a week, and anything under 30*s.* would not be excessive; but much of these wages will be spent in tools and beer, and the hours of labour are very prolonged, say, from 5 in the morning to 8 at night, with three hours' rest in the heat of the day. During harvest the wages with me would be 25*s.* to 27*s.* a week, and the hours of labour indefinite and dependent on the weather; this will last for four weeks, to be followed by a fortnight's labour at about 21*s.*; but during the harvest work a labourer will require 5*s.* to 6*s.* worth of beer weekly, which he has to pay for.

For the whole year the account will be thus—

	£	s.	d.
20 weeks at 12*s.* - - - -	12	0	0
*4 „ (mowing) at 25*s.* (less 5*s.* beer) -	4	0	0
4 „ harvest at 27*s.* (less 6*s.* beer) -	4	4	0
2 „ „ 21*s.* (less 5*s.* beer) -	1	12	0
22 „ at 15*s.* - - - -	16	10	0
	£38	6	0

= 14*s.* 8¾*d.* per week, and beer given also=in cash 1*s.* 1¼*d.* per week.

Total 15*s.* 10*d.* per week out of the master's pocket.

14. *Dr. W. Paley*, Peterborough. — I am an M.D. of the University of London, and have practised here about 30 years. For 26 years I have been physician to the hospital, where nearly 2,000 cases go through my hands every year, and those cases are principally from the agricultural districts. There are many agricultural gangs here. I may say generally that the labour performed by women and children in the fields is not injurious to them. I think that the benefit they receive from being out in the open air more than counterbalances some few ill effects which arise from exposure to wet, &c. Rheumatism affects men principally and not children. I have never seen cases of rheumatism in children which I can trace as the result of exposure in fieldwork, and I do not think that rheumatism occurring late in life can be said to be the result of exposure in early life. I think that the foundation of bronchitis is more often laid in infancy than in childhood; very few of the cases of bronchitis which are brought to the hospital appear to me to be the immediate result of fieldwork; I wonder that it is so, but that is the result of my experience. There is no question that the poor (women especially) are insufficiently fed, and many of the diseases which they are subject to might be avoided if they had better food; but the field labour cannot be said to be the cause of these diseases, but rather tends to diminish them, by supplying the poor with better wages, and therefore better food than they would otherwise have. Flat feet arise not from field labour, but from the thickness of the soles of the boots, which won't bend. Cases of varicose veins and curvature of the spine are very rare. I sometimes advise delicate children to go to light, easy, out of door occupation instead of going to school, as being far more healthy for them. Most of the field work for children, such as weeding, &c., is very light, and not injurious; it requires no severe muscular labour. Even in the cases of weak circulation without absolute disease, gentle exercise in the open air is one of the most effective remedies. I am a magistrate here and approve highly of the Gangs Act, but I don't think it should be extended to private gangs, because I don't think there is any decided evil existing in the management of private gangs. I have frequently seen much good arise to the poor from the air and exercise they get in the out of door work.

[Dr. Paley was kind enough to furnish me with a statistical account of all the cases which had come under his treatment in the hospital; the total number was 36,243. The diseases which attacked the agricultural population most frequently were:—(1.) Rheumatism, of which there had been 593 cases = 1 in 61 cases. (2.) Inflammation of air tubes (bronchitis) 1,034 cases = 1 in 36. (3.) Asthma (with bronchitis) 690 cases = 1 in 52.

* There will not be four weeks' mowing on most farms, but I suppose the mower to do the thatching; and if not this, to single turnips or do some skilled work in the weeks preceding harvest, which will bring his earnings up to my quotation.

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The following table will show the ages at which these diseases occurred :—

——	0 to 1	1 to 2	2 to 5	5 to 10	10 to 15	15 to 20	20 to 30	30 to 40	40 to 50	50 to 60	60 to 70	70 to 80	80 to 90	Unknown.	Total.
Inflammation of air tubes.	239	148	137	48	23	16	54	58	77	75	73	48	21	17	1,034
Asthma (with bronchitis).	4	4	10	17	16	21	60	125	153	152	95	26	3	3	690
Rheumatism -	—	—	—	17	36	61	130	96	96	79	41	11	4	—	593

[It will be observed from this table that although in the case of inflammation of the air tubes the number of infants attacked was very numerous, children between the ages of 5 and 15 (which may be taken as the limits within which children are engaged in field work) were decidedly healthy.—F. H. N.]

15. *Dr. T. Walker.*—I have been surgeon to the hospital at Peterborough for five years. On the whole I think that the agricultural labour is healthy. The poor may suffer from want of food, but not from diseases contracted in consequence of field labour. A few children who have been injured by accidents occurring in field work are brought to the hospital every year, but not many; horse accidents are not so frequent as accidents arising from machinery; and the latter usually occur to children about the farmyard carelessly playing with machinery. My impression is that the per-centage of those injured is very small. I hear of almost every severe accident that occurs in the neighbourhood; I have several times met with cases of bad accidents causing loss of limb, and occasionally loss of life, to boys intrusted with fire-arms for scaring. The diseases which come under my notice as surgeon most frequently are strumous diseases of the bones, glands, eyes, and skin; these are very common and are caused rather by bad food than exposure, although if there is a tendency to these diseases, exposure to cold and damp would be likely to foster it, more particularly when the food is insufficient. Where the women go to work, as in the fen districts, the infants suffer, and sometimes have drugs given to them. On the whole I think that the field work is rather healthy than otherwise.

16. Letter from Dr. Barr, M.D., of Northampton, Surgeon to the Northamptonshire Militia.

Sir, Northampton, April 8, 1868.

In reply to your letter of the 22nd ultimo, requesting information as to whether field labour is physically injurious to the women, youug persons, and children engaged in it, I regret to say that I am not in a position to give any very decisive opinion on the subject, as the number of persons connected with agriculture, who come under my medical observation is but small, my experience among the labouring population being almost entirely confined to the inhabitants of Northampton, who are all eugaged in the manufacture of shoes. I have a few agricultural recruits to examine for the militia, and I have frequently to reject some of these lads for curvature of spine and flat feet; I consider these defects are generally caused by carrying heavy weights at an early age. I may mention that these recruits are extremely deficient in intelligence compared with those from the town; they are generally destitute of any education, it being quite the exception to find one who can either read or write.

I am, &c.

W. R. Barr, M.D.

17. *The Rev. R. P. Lightfoot,* vicar of Towcester.—I have been here one year, but have lived in Northamptonshire all my life. I have been diocesan inspector of schools since 1860. I think it would be desirable to prohibit children from going to work until the age of 8, and to compel them to attend school a portion of the year up to 9. The state of education is decidedly defective, especially in arithmetic. I am opposed to all compulsion after the age of 9 as regards agricultural labourers. The two causes of the want of education among labourers are indifference and unwillingness on the part of the parents to forego the weekly earnings of the children. The second of these causes would be in some measure obviated by restricting the age at which the children might go to work. After they begin to work night schools are the only means of education. I have returns relating to night schools from almost all the schools in the diocese of Peterborough; they show that in the opinion of more than half the clergy the night schools, as at present conducted, are either unsuccessful (*i.e.*, few attend them), or unsatisfactory (*i.e.*, those who do attend are indifferent). By far the best thing the Privy Council could do would be to enable the managers of schools to provide efficient machinery for the management of night schools. This might be done if the Privy Council paid for results without requiring certificated teachers, and at the same time increased their scale of payments. Country parishes, as a rule, cannot support certificated teachers, but they can provide sufficient teaching power for night schools. My experience teaches me that you can do much more by inducement than by compulsion. The results of day schools are on the whole satisfactory, and I think that if the same inducements were held out to maintain efficient night schools as are now held out to maintain efficient day schools the results of the night schools would be nearly if not quite equal to those of the day schools. Night schools require much more delicate management than day schools, on account of the age of the scholars who generally attend them. I am convinced that education is making considerable progress in the rural parts of this county; that applies to day schools only; they have increased in number and efficiency. I have formed that opinion as a diocesan inspector. I think that the superiority of assisted schools over others is far more marked now than it was five years ago. I was a guardian in the Hardingstone union for five years. I was then appointed one of the Nuisances Removal Committee nominated by the guardians. I visited almost every cottage in every village in the union, and acquainted myself with the sanitary condition of them. I found in numberless cases very insufficient drainage and privy accommodation, and the water supply in many cases bad and unwholesome. I found that the powers now conferred by law upon inspectors of nuisances were perfectly sufficient to remedy all evils; but the powers conferred by ss. 19 and 20 of the 29 & 30 Vict. c. 90. are not generally understood or effectively carried out.

18. *Earl Spencer,* Althorp.—I am much opposed to the general employment of women in agriculture, excepting perhaps at hay-time or harvest; it is bad for their morality, and, under certain circumstances, for their health, and prevents them learning when young, and afterwards attending to, domestic duties which are of immense importance to the comfort and prosperity of a labourer and his family. In this neighbourhood they so rarely do field work that there seems to be no call for parliamentary interference. In Norfolk, however, where I have property, the evil is greater, and the employment of women and girls in the fields could be regulated by Parliament with advantage. The difference of custom appears to arise

from this not being a purely arable county, and there is not so great a demand at all times of the year for boys' and women's labour. In Norfolk I have heard it urged that women are necessary for certain kinds of work, such as twitching, turnip cutting, &c. This work is generally done by men here, and might be equally well done by men in Norfolk, if there were a sufficient supply of them. The state of education amongst the agricultural labourers seems to me at present decidedly defective. Much as the present system has done, it is not complete enough in its operation for a national education. It cannot meet the wants of the poorest village schools struggling for existence, because they cannot fulfil the Privy Council regulations, and it leaves in other places a large number of the young inadequately educated. The first remedy is to ensure there being a sufficient number of efficient schools within reach of every cottage. The next to secure regular attendance of the children under a certain age. My individual inclination is in favour of compulsion, but great opposition would be raised to it at the present day, and I don't think it could be carried out. I believe, however, that public opinion may so change as to render some scheme of compulsion practicable. It would be desirable to try some indirect means, somewhat on the principle of the Factory Acts; boys might be kept away from work until they are 10 without serious loss to the parents or inconvenience to the farmer. After the age of 10 they should be compelled to attend a certain number of hours a year. I cannot name a specific number. I am alive to the different circumstances of the agricultural and manufacturing communities; the residence of labourers being at best some way from their work, and the work itself being scattered over many acres, creates difficulties which do not exist where the factory is in a town and all the work done within a small space. The work, too, varies at different seasons of the year. The principle, however, of the Act which has been so successful in the factories could, I feel sure, be applied with modifications to agriculture, and with great advantage. I think the principle of an education rate perfectly just; the rate would be borne partly by landlords and partly by farmers, the latter of whom, with few exceptions, give hardly anything towards the expenses of education, and are benefited by it. The clergy at present contribute far more than their proper share. The rate should be supplemented out of the Consolidated Fund in proportion to the efficiency of the school. A system of better education could only be gradually enforced. I am in favour of the scheme which in the first instance gives all parishes an opportunity of improving their own condition, and calls in parliamentary interference on their failure to attain certain results in a given time, somewhat in the nature of the University Commission. I think that by education the labourer ought to be and could be so raised as to enable him to engage in other than in agricultural labours, and the farmer would then have to compete with other employers of labour. The result would be a rise in agricultural wages, and with the improved labour cultivation would be improved, and the farmer and landlords benefited as well as the labourer. I do not see why a rate should stop voluntary efforts of a pecuniary kind, and still less those which take the form of personal interest and care. The clergy would still be the most active and intelligent members of a rural parish, and would not lose their interest in education because others were brought to take part in it. Relief would be given to the few who now bear more than their share on their shoulders, and a larger number of persons would become interested in the matter.

The supply of cottages in this neighbourhood may be sufficient for the labour of the district, but labourers often come from distant parishes to their work, and their homes are inconvenient in accommodation; this has arisen from the old state of the law favouring parish instead of union chargeability. A change has set in since the Act of 1863. I think it necessary that a labourer should have a cottage with three bedrooms to bring up a family respectably; therefore, in building cottages, I always build more with three rooms than with two. My tenants as a rule are anxious to have cottages near their land, and some of them are willing to pay 5 per cent. on the outlay. Cottagers themselves are willing to pay an increased rent for a good cottage. For instance, at Theddingworth I removed some squatters on the wastes who only paid a nominal rent of 1*s.* a year for a cottage with one bedroom to new cottages with two and three bedrooms at a rent of 2*s.* a week, with small gardens. My agent has never had any difficulty in collecting their rents; I have never heard any complaints. This occurred in three or four cases. The average of my cottage rents is 40*s.* a year, but I consider that too low, and now they can well afford to pay 70*s.* or 80*s.* a year for a good cottage with a garden. A landlord should make his cottages, as far as possible, profitable, for the sake of example to others. I permit no lodgers without special permission, and I think that all labourers should, with scarcely an exception, rent their cottages directly from the landlord, as it makes them more independent. I am, however, usually ready to let cottages attached to what in this country is called a lodge or isolated farm to the nominee of the farmer. I think it desirable that cottages should be put under inspection, and that guardians should be able to indict the owners and occupiers of cottages which are overcrowded or unhealthy; and if necessary to do the repairs required for rendering such cottages wholesome and decent; the expenses so incurred should be charged to the owner, and on failure by him to pay I would give the guardians power of selling the cottages. They should remunerate the union in the first instance for the outlay, and hand over the surplus, if any, to the former owner. Were such a principle adopted machinery no doubt ought to be constructed, in the form of some appeal, to protect the landlord from arbitrary and vexatious use of the power thus given to boards of guardians. A clause in the Act of 1866 gives considerable powers for this object, but I believe its powers might be increased, and its enforcements and application should be compulsory.

I think it very desirable for the Government to give facility to proprietors who have no capital to raise money for the purpose of building cottages. I consider allotments of great importance, as tending to raise the independent character of labourers; they should be limited to a rood or thereabouts within easy reach of the village. Occasionally corn is necessary as a change of crop. On the whole I am in favour of allowing these labourers to manage as they please; allotments become objectionable when so large as to detract from the labour which the employer has a right to expect, and not large enough to support independently the labourer.

Co-operative stores have been generally established about here, and have done an immense deal to raise the character of the labourer.

19. Letter written by Mr. J. Beasley, of Chapel Brampton.

Chapel Brampton, Northampton,
17th Feb. 1868.

As the questions contained in the circulars you placed in my hands will be filled up in detail by farmers in this and the adjoining parishes, I will endeavour to answer the inquiries you made of me more generally. I am not now in the occupation of any land, but for half a century I farmed largely, having for many years occupied a thousand acres of land. I have directly and indirectly been an extensive employer of labour, and have now under my management and superintendence about 57,000 acres of landed property, all belonging to two noblemen, and the greater portion in this county. In speaking hereafter of the cottage accommodation for agricultural labourers, the properties to which I have alluded must be excluded. Upon these estates a great deal has been dome to meet the crying evil of bad cottage

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accommodation, and with most beneficial results, and though not sufficient to meet the want, yet far above the average of what has been done in the county as a whole.

The system of public or private gangs is all but unknown in this district; in some cases a number of boys and young persons are employed in weeding corn, and one adult labourer engaged to look after them to keep them at their work and see they do it properly; but they are all employed and paid by the farmer, and no evil arises from this practice.

Women are scarcely employed in this district except in haytime and harvest, and from what I have seen of the result of their being employed I should not hesitate to prohibit their employment altogether in agricultural labour except in haytime and harvest. The mother of a family must neglect her children and her home duties, and her husband's comforts cannot be attended to, and it is very doubtful whether her earnings are a sufficient compensation for the wear and tear of clothes and the want of good and economical management in her household. Upon young women the effect is most demoralizing; they get into loose and disorderly habits, and are rendered unfit for domestic servants and badly trained for labourers' wives.

I think no boy should be employed in agricultural labour under 10 years of age, and I should like it to be rendered illegal for a boy to work at that age unless he had been at school six months in the previous year. I would make it illegal to employ a boy of 11 years of age unless he had been three months at school in the previous year, and illegal to employ a boy above 10 years of age unless he could read and write. In this latter opinion, if not in all the others, I should no doubt be in a great minority, but what would be considered a great hardship would soon find its own remedy. If you are to have compulsory education at all, you must make it the interest of the employers and the parents of the children to see that the children go to a parish day school, a night, or Sunday school.

In an economical point of view I do not think there is any advantage in employing young boys and women in agriculture. I believe the cheapest labour is an able-bodied skilled labourer, and I should not anticipate any scarcity of them.

It is not many years ago since the great cry was, What is to become of the surplus labour of England? The question was answered by the passing of the Poor Law Bill of 1832 and subsequent action upon it, especially the test of the union workhouse. There might be some inconvenience during the time of transition, but it would soon be met by improved cultivation of the land and improvements in agricultural machinery.

It would have been thought a short time ago a most tyrannous act to forbid many kinds of manual labour which are now entirely superseded by machines, such as threshing corn, &c. There is certainly no scarcity of labourers in this neighbourhood, and some of them find it difficult to get employment without walking an inconvenient distance to their work. The only difficulty, however, arises from an unequal distribution of labour, caused by the old law of settlement, and which I anticipate the Union Rating Act will remedy in a short period. The greatest improvement to the condition of the agricultural labourer would be increased cottage accommodation near the scene of his employment.

In many parishes there are not half as many labourers residing as are required for the proper cultivation of the land, and in some not more than one-third; and in many cases they have to walk two, three, and four miles to and from their labour. This is not only a great hardship upon the labourer, but a great waste of time and strength, alike injurious to the employer and employed.

The crowded state of cottages is very demoralizing, as may be easily conceived when families of five and six children are brought up in a small cottage with only one sleeping room. I have known cases of one, and sometimes two, married daughters living with their husbands in a small cottage with their father and mother and grown up brothers and sisters. I was in a cottage a few days ago, which measured 16 feet by 18 feet, in which lived an old man 84 years of age, his son and son's wife, and 11 children. There was no office attached to the house, and the mother of the children was washing linen for her family in the only living room.

I do not think any Act desirable for enabling proprietors to borrow money from the Government for building cottages. I find most of the tenants upon the farms under my management willing to pay 5 per cent. upon the outlay necessary for building. I think, however, as a general rule it is very desirable that the labourers should hold their cottages directly from the proprietor. Taking the average of farms, I think there should be three labourers' cottages for every 100 acres of land.

The average cost of the last 17 cottages I have built has been 154*l.*; most of these have three bedrooms. The cost includes offices, a supply of water, fencing, levelling the ground, &c. They are built very substantially, and have more room than cottages in general, but not more than is needful for health and comfort. They would, perhaps, cost a private individual 10 per cent. more; we have no builder or architect to pay. Some of these cottages are let at 2*s.* per week, and none under 1*s.* Of course they are not directly remunerative to the proprietor, indirectly I believe they will be.

The farmer gets a better labourer and more work done for his money, even though he may pay higher wages; his land is better cultivated, and he can afford to pay a higher rent. A good labourer is worth and gets from 1*s.* to 2*s.* per week more living upon the farm than if living at a distance. That the habits, character, and temper of the cottage labourer is improved by a good cottage I have no hesitation in saying from my own experience and observation. If you wish to improve the moral and religious condition of the agricultural class, you must lay the foundation by improving their physical condition. A clean cottage and a well-kept garden creates a feeling of self respect, and gives to the occupant that spirit of self-reliance so necessary to the well doing of this class.

Whenever a cottage is vacant there are many applications for it, notwithstanding the increased rent, and the rents are always paid to the day. I think it very desirable a public officer should be appointed with power to inspect labourers' cottages, and when out of repair or unwholesome from deficiency of accommodation, want of ventilation, or drainage, to order the necessary alterations and improvements to be made and charged to the owner, if, after proper notice, he refuses to do them himself.

Power of sale should be given to the officer on failure of the proprietor to pay the sum thus necessarily spent on his property, and the money arising from such sale should, after paying all necessary expenses, including the expense of alterations, be handed over to the proprietor.

A cottage allotment or garden under proper regulations is a great boon to an agricultural labourer. It should consist in all cases of one rood, or the fourth part of an acre. It should be near his home, if possible good land, and should be let at the same rent as the adjoining farm land. If he has less than a rood it will not admit of a variety of crops, if he has more it may improperly take up time from his daily labour, and give dissatisfaction to his employer.

I could adduce innumerable instances in which these gardens have been the means of improving not only the comfort, but the character of the tenants The satisfaction and contentment which the occupation of this small piece of land gives to the occupier is immense. It is too a great pecuniary benefit; the labour costs him nothing, it supplies him with vegetables through the year,—especially that important article of consumption in the family of a poor man, the potato,—and it enables him at a little cost to keep a pig.

I have about one thousand of these tenants under

my management; they pay their rents most punctually, and at this moment I have not a single arrear. So great is the advantage, that it enables them to pay a higher rent for their cottages with greater ease to themselves, and with greater cheerfulness. That the plan is not generally popular I am perfectly aware, but where it has failed I am convinced it is because it has not been properly managed, that the plan I recommend as to quantity, nearness, &c. has not been adopted, and perhaps there has been no supervision. That it may be made a powerful lever for good I have no doubt.

I attribute the deficient state of education amongst the agricultural labouring class to the indifference of the parents and the employers. Neither the one or the other are willing to make any sacrifice to obtain the least education for the children, and no legislative enactment will be effective which will not make it the interest of the parents and employers to secure this desirable object by some such stringent regulations as those to which I have alluded in a former part of these remarks.

That so little education is received by children in agricultural districts is not for the most part owing to the want of schools, for these are to be found in most parishes; it is not owing to the poverty of the parents, for their child can generally be sent to school by paying a penny a week; it is not because the earnings of the child are an object, for they seldom equal the cost of extra clothing and food required for a child thus employed; it is not for want of funds to support the schools and sufficiently qualified teachers, for these are generally forthcoming; but it is because the children, and especially the boys, are sent to work before they can even read. It is seldom you will find a boy in a village school above 10 years of age, not many above 8. If a child of 10 years of age had receved the smallest portion of education, or if he were not allowed to labour until he had received this modicum, both the parents and the employers would have an interest in encouraging it, and when a boy could read and write the night and Sunday school might afterwards be all that was necessary, but a boy who cannot read at this age will neither attend the one or the other; he grows up into manhood in the greatest ignorance, and is as indifferent to the education of his children as he was to his own.

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20. *Albert Pell, Esq.*—I farm 685 acres of land in Leicestershire and Northamptonshire; half arable; soil variable, but very little light. I have farmed land in Middlesex, in the fens of Cambridgeshire, as well as here. Have been a farmer since I was 21. I am also a landowner in Leicestershire and Cambridgeshire, and own, or partly own, between 30 and 40 cottages. Boys' labour is useful for driving horses. I don't think a boy would be fit to have the charge of horses unless he was early accustomed to them. I have only one boy working for me under 10 years of age, and I am employing seven under 16 years of age at present (March). One of them is scaring, and he will return to school when the corn is up. In my opinion birds could be kept off the corn by agencies other than that of boys, and in some instances I know them to be so. As a fact, many children under 10 years of age are employed with advantage in singling turnips, and I think that their labour, although not indispensable, is very convenient for that purpose. As a rule juvenile and female labour is employed on light more than on heavy land. As a farmer I could usually dispense with boys' labour up to the age of 10; but there are exceptional occasions when the labour of boys under that age is very valuable. For instance, when a forcing time comes with young turnips and they have to be rapidly singled, and during the hurry of harvest Between the ages of 10 and 13 boys are usually employed with the team. Their labour is constant; I could not wholly spare them at any particular season of the year. From the beginning of November to the beginning of March I could spare the boys after half-past two, as my horses come in at two. At other seasons I could not spare them. I don't think that the state of education in Northamptonshire is defective; the boys are much better scholars than their fathers were, but I do not find that they are more skilled or better farm labourers on that account. My bailiff, who has many thousands of pounds pass through his hands yearly, is illiterate; so is one of my foremen, who has the sole management of 245 acres of land; but both these men regret their want of education, and believe that they would have filled a higher situation in life if they had been better taught. I have introduced the use of machinery extensively on my farms, and I do not find that my present labourers are unable to use or take charge of such machinery. I think there is immense room for improvement in the school education among the labourers, *i.e.*, I should like to see their reading, writing, &c. taught better, because I think it would be more useful to them as men. But the technical education which is necessary for farm labourers can only be acquired by long experience at farm work and practice in the particular employment to which their life is to be devoted. I think that for the purpose of giving them an opportunity of obtaining a better education it is desirable that the poor children should be restrained from going to work at all before the age of 10 years. I think that any system of education founded upon the alternate day or half day principle would be extremely inconvenient when applied to agriculture, and I therefore think that a longer period should be wholly devoted to education by agricultural children than by children engaged in factories before their regular labour begins. I don't believe that the night school can be made a substitute for the day school, though it may be a useful supplement after the age of 10 for those who choose voluntarily to attend it. I have taken great interest in the education of the lower orders in London and the country, and have myself taught many of my labourers. Cottages are wanted in two of the parishes where I farm; those cottages which do exist are extremely good. This village (Haselbeach) has been wholly rebuilt since I have been here. I think that the net earnings of a child up to the age of 10 are of very little value to the parent, having regard to the fact that it depresses the wages of the children above 10. I do not think that there is any present defect in the law to operate against cottage building. The old law of settlement certainly did so. I do not see the need of any additional encouragement being afforded by the Government or Legislature for the purpose of building cottages in the way of lending money or facilitating the borrowing of it on settled estates. I believe that such a vast number of houses in the country have been built with a disregard to, or in ignorance of, arrangements essential to the health of the inmates, that the establishment of a State department with plenary powers and instructions to make such structural alterations as would render the houses wholesome would, in many instances, lead to changes not much short of demolition. Whole villages or portions of villages are built in situations entirely inconsistent with health; in some cases subject to flooding, in others with no natural or accessible supply of good drinking water; and it is just in these unhealthy spots that the cottages of the poor, in contradistinction to the houses of the classes above them, are found. I have long thought it desirable that some provision should be made by Legislature to prohibit the building of houses in situations and under conditions known to be detrimental to health. The sanitary laws, though somewhat numerous, have proved of hardly any advantage hitherto in rural parishes, being for the most part permissive and the object of constant amendments. Few care to be meddlesome in these matters and to put the law in operation; and when this has been attempted little (as far as my experience goes) has come of it, except the intermittent expenditure of money upon no fixed principle, and often with

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no commensurate return. An officer or ministry to direct public action, to take the initiative in legislation, and to have the control over public sanitary works in the country would, I think, be desirable. With regard to allotments, I consider them almost indispensable in a manufacturing district, where the out-of-door work becomes a relaxation to a man who has been confined for the day at factory labour, and is of as much, if not more, value to him than the crop which is to accrue from it. There is not this double advantage in the allotment to a field labourer; but there is still a positive profit to his family in the occupation of a small allotment, say, not more than one rood. The value of the allotment depends materially on its situation in reference to the cottage; the nearer, of course, the better, as opportunity is thus afforded for the wife and children occasionally employing themselves in its cultivation; and where a pig is kept the manure and the food are not distant from each other. When the allotment is far removed from the cottage and placed, as it often is, on inferior land in the outskirts of the parish, the exertion and time devoted to walking to and fro, and the cultivation of an ungenerous soil, deteriorates the value of the labourer as a hired servant, and interferes with the proper and honest fulfilment of his duties to his employer. When I have built new cottages I have as far as possible placed them so that they might have the allotment adjoining, with the pigstyes on the allotment a little distance from the house. I build from two to four houses in a group, none with less than two bedrooms, the others with two and a large landing for the boys' sleeping room; and the houses are so arranged that as a young family grows up in a house with two bedrooms, and the children who may be grown up in the adjoining three-chambered house go out to service or marry off, the third room upstairs may be shut off the one house and opened into the other, the tenants remaining in other respects undisturbed.

[The following are extracts from a paper addressed to me by Alfred Hughes, Esq. of Brampton Ash. Mr. Hughes is now the occupier of a large grazing farm of about 800 acres. He previously occupied a farm in the Isle of Wight, and before that a farm in Norfolk. His experience, therefore, is very extensive.—F. H. N.]

21. I would abolish the employment of females on the land altogether, except for a short time at the harvesting of hay and corn; on moral grounds it is very objectionable, and it incapacitates them for domestic duties in their own homes or for service in gentlemen's families.

From my own observation, and from evidence taken from the most reliable sources, I believe that, be the necessities of the family what they may, or the demand for labourers ever so great, that there is in the end, or in fact, no real economy in employing boys in farm work under 12 years; they eat more, wear more, tear more, learn nothing, and earn next to nothing. Take for instance the case of "scaring;" a lad paid 1*s.* a day, with a gun at 3*d.*, will keep the birds off a large farm as effectually as possible, whereas two little boys at 6*d.* a day would certainly do no such thing; after the age of 12 the boy will walk to his work as far as the man can or ought to walk, say, one mile.

So far as the boys' health and strength is concerned, I see no reason why they should not do the work usually allotted for as many hours as the grown-up labourer; but if the education of the young is to be kept up by means of night schools (which I consider most important), I would have all lads between the ages of 12 and 15 leave work at 3 p.m., provided they regularly attended and contributed towards the said night school. As a farmer, I see no reason why such an arrangement could not be provided for.

I consider the most advantageous system of educating the agricultural poor to be to afford them every facility and the means to attend school regularly up to that age; that they should then pass an examination qualifying them for employment of any kind; that failing in that examination they should return to the day school for three months, but contribute to the night school as if they had passed; and that failing a second time their case should be referred to the inspector. That boys who pass the day school examination should have a certificate qualifying them to obtain employment at any trade or labour, and that certificate should also procure them the privilege of attending the night school established in any neighbourhood in which they might find employment up to 15 years of age on their contributing the usual subscription towards its support.

I have never yet lived where cottage accommodation was so disposed as to provide for the requirements of the land, or sufficiently good to provide for the comfort of the poor; where there has been an excess of cottages the tenements themselves have been so small as to occasion crowding; and where improved cottages have been erected, in all the cases I have yet met with, more have been pulled down than have been rebuilt, and in too many instances comfort and convenience has been sacrificed to external appearance or whimsical contrivance. As a rule, the poor do not like modern cottages; the reason, I think, is that their notions are not sufficiently consulted, the circumstance of their limited time and limited means not sufficiently considered. Among their reasonable objections the following are to be found in the majority of modern cottages: the sitting room too large; back kitchen too small; staircase cramped; and a lack of closets and cupboards above and below.

Few poor people can afford two fires; consequently either the principal room should be adapted for cooking, or the kitchen or wash-house sufficiently large to allow of the family getting their meals there occasionally.

Cramped and difficult staircases are very objectionable with the poor—their reason is always the same; it is not the inconvenience to the living, but the difficulty and distress entailed in the removal of the dead; most housewives have a real liking for old fashioned closets and cupboards, and with the poor they save furniture.

I am of opinion that a kind of barrack on a small scale would be found very convenient in every village, where the young men could board and lodge themselves under the management of a married couple.

This would be a great relief to the cottages, would facilitate the "night school movement," and deter many young men from leaving the country altogether when their homes become crowded.

Under the direction of two or three of the principal inhabitants such an establishment ought to be entirely self-supporting, and afford the best means for the young men to provide economically for themselves.

In my opinion this question of improved cottage accommodation is the first and most important we have to deal with in seeking to raise the character and condition of the agricultural poor, and to stay the increasing emigration to the sources of skilled labour.

The artisan is paid in proportion to his skill or qualifications for positions of responsibility; the agricultural labourer is paid by the week, and to a very great extent good, bad, and indifferent receive the same reward.

Education with such a system of wages will necessarily increase this drafting of the best men in the country to the manufacturing towns, railways, &c. All the employers can do to stay this is to be more scrupulous and liberal in rewarding good services. All the landlords can do is to provide healthy, comfortable, and attractive homes for the labouring poor.

Regular employment throughout the year, a comfortable cottage and good garden to render it self-supporting, will go a long way towards obtaining the object we have in view. As to whether these cottages should be held directly under the landlord or should be sublet by the tenants of the land, is a question upon which I do not give a positive opinion; indeed, it must be an open question with the landlord; but I do think that where the occupation exceeds 300 acres

a certain number of cottages should be let with the farm at fixed rentals with a special condition that the value of the cottage, garden, &c. is by no means to enter into the arrangement of wages between master and man.

I think it better to base the estimate for cottage accommodation on the amount actually paid in wages in each district than on the average. We can, however, arrive at the answer required and adopt that mode of calculation.

Suppose the average wages per annum paid to a family on account of work done on the land is 80*l.*

My wages here on a farm chiefly grass amount to 20*s.* per acre, so that here it would appear that a cottage would be required for every 80 acres, but if we take into account the extra hands of a migratory character employed at certain seasons and the bachelors lodged in villages, I think that in our district we should be well off with one cottage for every 100*l.* actually paid for labour, or for every 100 acres.

On the whole our cottages are conveniently situated for the workmen, but in some cases this point has been carried too far, the man walks 100 yards to his work, but all the family must walk one mile and a half to church, and the children two and a half to school; the consequence is in such cases that both parents and children are very ignorant and heathens.

I don't think isolated cottages are desirable in the country; they don't get visited by those who are inclined to take an interest in them; the assistance which neighbours receive from each other in sickness and absence from home is very valuable among poor people, and they are more expensive to construct.

On the last farm I occupied a very large sum was laid out in farm buildings, drainage, and cottages, the plans approved by the Commissioners were in no way adapted to the requirements of the place, and the work passed by their surveyor simply scandalous; the result of this lavish, ill-considered expenditure has been the ruin of the property.

In order to carry on a day school and a night school in an agricultural village I think some such arrangement as this should be adopted: First, that the school-house should be as central as possible. Of course there is much in the internal arrangement of a school that cannot be entered into in this inquiry, where, judging from the space left for answers, we are not expected to be troublesome with suggestions. At the same time the questions asked raise the whole question of the amendment of the character and condition of the agricultural labourers, and I am anxious to press these points, which I consider most important, to bring about so desirable an object.

1. Simple, comfortable, and attractive dwellings. Simple in construction, comfortable in arrangement, and attractive in situation and garden ground.

2. The prevention of the employment of women and girls in agriculture, except in hay time and harvest, and of boys before 12 years old, or until they are provided with a certificate from the inspector of schools.

3. In addition to the day school a night school permanently established, conducted by the master of the day school, and contributed to by the scholars.

4. It would be most desirable that farmers should combine to come to some better arrangement in the rate of wages, either by a more systematic adoption of piece work, or by paying the men in some proportion to their usefulness.

In order to establish permanently a night school, I believe it to be quite necessary that the teacher in the day school should undertake it; to accomplish this where there is only one teacher the work in the day school must be curtailed, and from my own experience I believe this may be done without loss to the scholars generally in this way: I would assemble morning school at 8.30, all the scholars who can read and write should be kept to secular instruction only. The little ones, in addition to their usual employment, to receive some simple lessons in religion.

Afternoon school from 2 till 4, where only one teacher is kept. No scholar should attend afternoon school but those that can read and write. That one hour should be devoted to reading from the Bible and in religious instruction, the remainder of the time to writing from dictation and in questionings on the different subjects taught in the school, to finish off with singing. The girls should sew in the afternoon.

(If there are two teachers and a class room there is no reason why the little ones should not re-assemble in the afternoon). The clergyman and visitors should be especially invited to assist in the afternoon school, not only to relieve the teacher as much as possible, but to interest the scholars.

It is a great question, in my mind, whether in our national system we have not too much hard teaching. The teacher goes ahead far quicker than the learner, and answers are extracted from the common voice of the class without the mind of one-third of the scholars being engaged in the subject.

As regards religious instruction to little children. except of the simplest kind, the advantage gained by our present system may be ascertained by selecting and examining those who are able to read and write; their absolute ignorance, or the extraordinary answers they will hazard, sufficiently prove the necessity for a more patient system, and for less hard teaching.

Form an upper and a lower school out of morning and afternoon, and you will do much to emulate and interest the scholars and preserve the energy and skill of the teacher. We should not cram the exceptionally intelligent children quite so fast, but the milder treatment and refreshing school will do far more in the long run towards giving a sound and useful education to the children of the agricultural poor.

22. *Mr. W. Higgs*, Stamford.—I have lived here 33 years. I am agent to Lord Exeter, and during the last 28 years I have had the entire management of the estate. I am well acquainted with all this country as far as Peterborough in one direction, and King's Cliffe and Wakerley in the other. I have also been a farmer myself, but not in this district. What I am about to state applies to the whole of that district. The cultivation is mixed, but chiefly arable. Women and children are very little employed about here. In haymaking the women and children turn the hay, and during harvest they rake, &c. I know no district where the poor are as well off as they are here. The ordinary wages for men are 12*s.*, that is the lowest, many earn more, as much as 15*s.*; besides which a great deal of work is done by the piece. Women earn from 8*d.* to 1*s.* a day. There are no gangs; very few boys are employed. The little boys are paid 6*d.* a day for scaring, and are wanted three or four months a year for that purpose. They are also employed a little in weeding and picking stones, &c. They are all well treated. If I were to hear of any one of Lord Exeter's tenants ill treating a boy I should be the first to speak to him. I don't think a boy is of any use to guide the plough under 14 or 15. They are also very useful at that age in helping to feed stock, &c. They are useful to drive horses at the plough at the age of 9 or 10. The ordinary hours of work are from 6 to 6 in summer, and during day time in winter. The horsekeepers come early in the morning, but I don't think the boys come with them. The supply of labour is plentiful. There are many young boys not employed about here. I don't think the alternate day system would be feasible. Parents would not agree to it, because they want the whole week's wages. The supply of schools is ample; and there is a greater desire for education among the poor than there used to be. The supply of cottages is fairly good. The cottages are improving both in quality and quantity. The men rarely have to go more than 1½ mile to work. The rent is from 20*s.* to 80*s.* a year; the cottages are usually let direct to the labourers, some with and some without gardens; the average rent is about 30*s.* I have had good opportunities of observing the allotment system, and approve of it highly, provided the allotment is near the house. If this is the case, a labourer who comes home tired from work

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is able to go out and walk about his allotment with his children and do a little work. He could not do that if his allotment or garden was at a distance.

When the parish of Easton was enclosed five pieces of land of about 20 acres each (four arable and one pasture) were set apart for the labourers in five different parts of the parish. The most distant were two miles apart. Each cottager who has an allotment has an acre in each place. There is also a piece of land of 29 acres reserved as pasture, upon which those cottagers who hold portions of the five pieces of land may turn out a cow. One man with five acres, a house, and pasture for a cow pays 12*l.* a year rent; another with the same, except the house, pays 9*l.* a year; that is about the average amount of rent. I think that arrangement is very bad; the labourers have not enough work to do on their own land to employ themselves constantly, and they become too independent to work regularly for the farmer. The best of the labourers who have holdings of this kind get their employers to work it for them. I don't approve of land being let, except as a garden, or if for agricultural purposes, in pieces of not less than 20 or 30 acres. It pays them best to grow vegetables, and growing corn is a temptation to them to steal. There is no Sunday labour here, except what is absolutely necessary, such as feeding the horses, bird scaring, the shepherds' work, and milking. Some of the cottages are much crowded; I usually prohibit lodgers.

23. *Mr. Beecroft*, Eye; *Mr. H. Little*, Peterborough; *Mr. Wright*, of Helpstone; farmers and guardians.—The county about here is mixed, but principally arable; private gangs are employed, but not generally; when they are employed the sexes are generally mixed. Some of those who work in the gangs work all the year round, but the gangs are most numerous from the beginning of April until July. The children begin to work at about the age of 8; and it is usually only the larger boys, and rarely the girls, who work in the winter. The ordinary hours of work are from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Few live more than two miles from their work. The poor usually had rather live at a distance from their work than from the village. A little concession is made for the distance they have to go to and from their work. Sometimes half an hour each way; 1½ hours are allowed for meals, and if they work overtime, as in hay time, they have an additional half an hour. They are subject to no ill treatment. We do not think that parliamentary interference is necessary to regulate private gangs. It is the interest of the employer to manage his labourers well. Private gangs usually work by the day. Women earn 1*s.*, and boys 6*d.* to 10*d.* a day. Men's wages about here are 14*s.* a week. The plough boys are from 12 to 14 years old, and they work with the gangs on those days when they do not go out with the horses. There are plenty of cottages; they are of all sorts, but all the new ones are good. That is the first step towards making a man respectable. The rent varies from 50*s.* to 120*s.* a year. The dearer cottages have gardens; and in many cases allotments of about 20 poles are given gratuitously. We think that some public officer should be appointed to inspect cottages. The number of cottages necessary per 100 acres must vary in different districts, and we cannot fix upon any definite number as the correct one. The education of the poor is decidedly defective, but it has improved recently. There are plenty of schools, and they are usually well attended during the winter months. We think that the boys should not be employed under 8, and girls under 10. School attendance should be enforced up to that age, but not afterwards. There are not enough children in this district to make it possible to organize two gangs to work on alternate days.

24. *Mr. J. Hopkinson*, Dogs Thorpe, Peterborough.—I farm 350 acres of land belonging to the Bishop of Peterborough. I have been here about 10 years. I very rarely employ women; I have not employed above three since I have been here; besides that, they sometimes come to help their husbands when their husbands are working by the piece. I don't think little boys are of any use to farmers. I rarely employ a boy under 9 years old, and I think farmers could easily do without them up to the age of 10. At the worst, it would only cost a farmer 6*d.* a week more to get a boy over 10 to do the work which is now done by a boy under 10. In the winter, when the boys go out to drive plough, they come in at 2 o'clock. They then have their dinner, which lasts until 3, and I often send some of the little boys home at that hour, because I have really nothing for them to do. I cut chaff by horse-power. Even if I did want them, I should have to make a very small sacrifice to let them go at 3 o'clock. They earn 6*d.* a day, *i.e.*, ½*d.* an hour; so I should only have to sacrifice ½*d.* for every hour they were absent. They would certainly be more useful to me if they were better educated. I hire 13 cottages with my farm; most of the farms about here have cottages let with them. I think three cottages per 100 acres is the proper number for the cultivation of the land. Farmers about here hire some of their men, such as horsekeeper, plough, and milk boys by the year. They receive a portion of their wages weekly, and remainder at Michaelmas. That is done to give the farmer a greater hold upon them.

25. *John Beeby.*—I am foreman to Mr. Hopkinson at Dogs Thorpe. My wages are 14*s.* and a house. I have five children; the eldest is aged 7. I have lived here seven years, and been engaged in farmwork all my life. Boys are of very little use younger than 9 and only the biggest of them then. Farmers would not be put to much inconvenience if no boys worked until the age of 10. I don't think that that restriction would stop the farmwork at all. Boys are wanted to scare, but not under 9. It would be impossible always to get old men to scare. I don't think that any child under 9 earns more than 15*s.* a year. I think it costs more for victuals and clothes when they go to work than when they do not. I intend my boy to go to work about 9, if he is strong and well. I think that boys employed in the fields should be bound to go to school three times a week at 4 o'clock for three hours each day, except in hay and corn harvest. The farmer should send them. They should do that up to the age of 14. They could be very well spared from the farms. If you had a night school, and they were not obliged to go, they would none of them go, they would play truant. The farmer must be bound to make them go. If they went from 4 to 7, the farmers would lose two hours, because they are now bound to work for him until 6, and the boys themselves would lose one. A boy who has been taught is much more useful on the farm than one who has not.

26. *Thomas Adams*, age 14.—I work for Mr. Hopkinson; I have worked for him for two years. I began to work at 8. I first went to scare for two years, and then worked in Jackson's gang for two years. I worked in the gang about seven or eight months a year. I went to school from the time I was 4 until I was 8, but have never been since, except sometimes on Sunday. I earn 4*s.* 6*d.*; I have only one brother and one sister; they are both younger than I am, and go to school; they can both read and write. I cannot read.

MARHOLM.

Population - - 172.

27. Extract from the return sent in by Rev. R. S. Blacker, of Marholm.

I think it would be inexpedient to attempt to enforce attendance at school after the age of 10. All the objections against compulsory education would have to be met, and I do not see how teaching power is to be regularly supplied for evening schools in addition to day schools.

I am opposed to all compulsory education, an enactment that no child should be allowed to go to work

until the age of 10 (I should prefer 12, but this is hopeless) would under the new Government scheme be a sufficient aid to the present voluntary efforts of educationalists. In this small parish all under 18 can read, write, and cipher fairly; as a rule all above 25 have grown up with very insufficient education.

28. *Mrs. Griffin*, Marholm.—My husband is a labourer, and earns 15*s.* a week. I have nine children living. We pay 56*s.* a year for our cottage with a garden. My eldest boy is nearly 9; he is bird scaring; he went to work rather before he was 8. Boys are usually older than that when they first go to work. Since last May [this being April] he has only been out of work about three weeks; but Mr. —— is very kind, and employs him as much as he can on account of my large family. I think my boy has been rather more regularly employed than boys of his age usually are. He has been very healthy since he has been at work; more so than he used to be; his hours are from 6 to 6; he earns 2*s.* and sometimes 2*s.* 6*d.* a week, according to the work he does. I think he eats twice as much when he goes to work as when he goes to school, and he certainly wears out more clothes. I now pay 12*s.* for bread, and 1*s.* 4*d.* for flour per week. My younger children go to school; but my husband is not much of a scholar, and my eldest boy does not often do a lesson. I think every mother who is a mother wants to have her children taught. My girls have never been to work in the field. I should not like to send them out, though I used to go myself; they learn what they ought not to learn, and it is bad for their constitution. My children picked up two sacks of barley and two of wheat gleaning last year. The youngest of those who went to glean is only just 4.

EYE.

Population, 1,375.

29. *The Rev. T. Tomlinson.*—I am minister to the Free Methodists' Church at Eye. I have resided here 1½ years. I think there is a very decided want of education among the agricultural poor in this district. I think that on an average labourers' wages are about 13*s.* or 14*s.* a week here. I attribute the want of education here to a disinclination on the part of the parents to forego the earnings of their children. I don't think the poor are indifferent about education. There is a considerable dissenting interest in this parish, but as a rule the dissenters are unwilling to send their children to the national school. There are two private schools to which they do send them, but these schools are not good, and we want either an undenominational school or a school for dissenters. There is nothing in the mode of teaching at the national school to which we object, but we find that our children do not stand on an equal footing with the other children.

30. *Mr. J. Harris*, schoolmaster, Eye.—I have been here five years. At present in the first class there are only three boys and three girls who are the children of labourers; they are all above 11. Children usually begin to leave about the age of 7, but some continue to attend for three or four months in the winter up to the age of 14. Last winter, out of a total of 90 children in the school there were 24 between the ages of 10 and 14. I think it would be a good plan to compel children to go to school until they are 10. I do not think that the cultivation of the soil would be seriously interfered with if children were not employed before the age of 10. I think there are a sufficient number of children in this parish to form relays of children to work on alternate days, but many children go from here to work in other parishes, and I do not think that there are enough children in this parish to form relays for other parishes. I find that when children return to school after having been at work eight months they have forgotten most of what they knew. There is a night school here, but we could only keep it open from the beginning of October to the end of March; at that time there were only seven in attendance. None would attend a night school in the summer months, because they go to work in their own gardens. It would be impossible to keep night schools open throughout the year with the present staff of teachers; the labour would be too severe.

31. *Joseph Headland*, labourer.—I have lived at Eye for 20 years. I work for Mr. Beecroft. I have seven children alive. My wages are 14*s.* a week. I have never earned less than 12*s.* a week since I was a boy. I know nobody in the parish who pays as little as 13*s.* My eldest child, a daughter, aged 17, is in service; the second, aged 15, a boy, works for Mr. Beecroft; he goes to school on Sundays; he only went to night school one winter; I could not keep him there; I had to pay 3*d.* a week for him. I should have liked to have kept him there if it had not been for the money. My third child is a girl, aged 11; she went out with the gang for about a year. The gang is not at work now, or she would be at work with them. She earned 5*d.* a day. She does not go to school because I cannot afford to pay for her. I have one son, aged 8, who has never been to work; he is at school now; he is not strong enough to go to work. I shall let him go to school all the summer if I can any way spare the money. The children get about 4*d.* a day in the gang when they first go out. I think it would be better for him to go to work, because he is sickly. If women are a little poorly about here they usually say they would be better if they could get out into the fields. I think no girls go out to work in the gang as young as the boys. I think it costs rather more to feed and clothe children when they are at work than at school. I have an allotment of one acre and a half. I have employed two men one day each and lost one day myself to work in it since last Michaelmas. None of my children but my eldest boys work on it. I pay 12*s.* 6*d.* for it. I think it pays me. Grow vegetables.

32. *John Franklin*, aged 10.—I live at Newark, and work for Mr. ———. I have worked for him since last harvest. I worked in a gang a short time before that, but I never worked before I was 9. There were not many boys in the gang smaller than I was. My father is dead. I have three brothers (younger than I am) and four sisters at home; only one of my sisters works in the field; she is 16. None of us go to school. There is no school at Newark. There was a dame's school there, but the mistress was taken ill and had to give it up. I cannot read.

[This was a very small boy. When I saw him he had a horse and iron roller under his sole charge, and was engaged in rolling a meadow; he could only just reach the horse's bridle. He told me that he was often sent out alone in charge of horses.—F. H. N.]

WITTERING.

Population - - 235.

33. *Mr. John Hockney.*—I farm 255 acres. I employ no females, except a few women in weeding. I employ no boys under 18 years old, because I cannot get them; they are all employed. I could not get a boy to scare this year. Some farmers employ little girls, but they are no use. There is no school at Wittering; there is one at Thornhaugh, about one mile off. None of our labourers' children go there. The labourers are indifferent, and will let their children play in the streets instead of sending them; the least shower will stop them. The school is kept by a dame. The little boys earn 4*d.* to 6*d.* a day when scaring, and work about 10 weeks a year. The educated labourers are the worst we have. I object to legislation as regards education.

DEENE.

Population - - 540

34. *The Rev. E. T. Sylvester*, of Deene.—This parish, with the hamlet of Deene Thorpe, is 400 acres. All except the rector's land belongs to Lord Cardigan. Lord Cardigan always provided a suit of clothes every year for each child between the ages of 5 and 14, whether at school or not; but if they did not come to the night

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school, or were guilty of gross misconduct, the clothes were immediately stopped. The school was provided gratuitously. The cottages are let for 1*s.* a week, with gardens; the cottages are some old, but all in good repair and comfortable. There is a clothing club to which the labourers subscribe 2*d.* a week, and Lord Cardigan adds 6*s.* 4*d.* at the end of the year, and a coal club. Each family is allowed one ton of coals, and Lord Cardigan pays one-third of the price of the coal, besides carting it home; that amounts to about 12*s.* per ton. All the winter each child under 14 and each of the parents is allowed one pint of soup per week; 100 lbs. of beef is converted into soup every week for this purpose. All the widows and old men have pensions, young widows 1*s.* 6*d.*, old widows 2*s.* 6*d.*; this is only to supplement the parish allowance. Every man under 50 has a woollen jersey once a year, this costs 4*s.* 6*d.* On Christmas day every man and woman has 1 lb. of meat and 1 lb. of bread, and 1 pint of ale, and every child ½ lb. of meat, ½ lb. of bread, and ½ pint of ale. The women go to work in the fields whenever they can, and boys rarely attend school after 10. In the parish in which I formerly was I had a night school; a man of 60 attended it; he could not read or write, but learnt to read by the end of the first year, and to write by the end of the second.

[Notwithstanding the vast sum given away annually in this parish, the labourers did not keep their children at school longer than elsewhere. Can they be said to value education?—F. H. N.]

35. *Mr. R. Parker.*—I am bailiff to Lord Cardigan. I have been here 11 years. I am well acquainted with this district as far as Oundle and Kettering. Women are employed here at certain times in twitching, picking stones, and breaking manure. About Glapthorne they are employed more in winter in cutting turnips. If they were not employed about here at all it would not seriously increase the expense of cultivation; it would be more loss to them than to the farmers. A good many of the women who work are under 20. A few old women work all the year round. Boys are employed as soon as they can hollow; they then hoe, &c., and as a general rule as soon as you get a boy away from home, you usually find something for him to do all the year round. I don't think it would be a serious loss to farmers if boys were not employed before the age of 12. All the labourers here have allotments; they manage them as they please. I think it is very desirable that the labourers should be better educated; I think an Act of Parliament is wanted. Children should not work until the age of 10; it would not create much inconvenience if they did not work until 12. If we knew we could not have them, we could do without them. The wages here are 12*s.* The people are not good labourers; they are discontented and difficult to satisfy.

BRAMPTON ASH.

Population - 107.

36. *John Pipe*, foreman to Mr. Hughes.—I think an allotment of a quarter of an acre within half a mile is the best plan. It does not pay to grow corn. If I had that amount I should grow 30 poles of potatoes, that would occupy me three whole days in spring and four in autumn, besides odd times before and after work. I should grow at least 15 sacks of potatoes (each sack containing 3 bushels of 80 lbs. each) worth 10*s.* a sack. I should grow turnips, or mangold, or cabbage on the other 10 poles, which would be worth, perhaps, 1*l.*; the labour for the whole at odd times would cost 10*s.*, and three loads of manure at 4*s.*, 12*s.*

The expense and receipts would be as follows:—

Payments.	£	s.	d.
Seven days' labour -	0	14	0
Extra labour at odd times	0	10	0
Rent (at 2*l.* an acre) -	0	10	0
Manure (3 loads at 4*s.*) - -	0	12	0
	£2	6	0

Receipts.	£	s.	d.
Potatoes on 30 poles, (producing 15 sacks at 10*s.*) -	7	10	0
Produce of 10 poles - -	1	0	0
	£8	10	0
	2	6	0
Net profit -	£6	4	0

You might grow potatoes on three-quarters of the land every year. It does not pay to grow corn. Many men are so situated that they cannot keep a pig, and then they have to sell the corn straight off the land, and that does not pay. There is more waste on an allotment than on a farm, and when men are employed at harvest they ought to be getting in their own corn, and then the birds eat it. There are many men out of work here in winter, and they are always the worst educated and the most immoral.

MARKET HARBOROUGH.

Population - 2,302.

37. *Mr. E. K. Fisher*, land agent, Market Harborough.—I am well acquainted with Northamptonshire. I understand the mode of cultivation necessary for the grass country. Women and children are scarcely at all employed upon it. There is nothing for them to do except in haymaking and harvest. As a rule on farms in the grazing district not more than one-third is arable. It is quite as necessary to have skilled labourers on grass land as on any other, because the work they have to do is of a character requiring intelligence, viz., care of stock, draining, hedge cutting. Wages here are about 12*s.* I should think that a good labourer in the district would earn from 13*s.* to 14*s.* a week throughout the year, including his extra wages earned in piece work. From January to the end of May there is really no work for women and children on the grass lands. In June, July, and August they are employed in hay and harvest, and occasionally in spudding or drawing thistles, and after harvest there is no work for them to do during the remainder of the year. The work for women and children on the arable portions of the pasture is of course the same as on the arable farms elsewhere.

There is a sufficient supply of cottages on the grass country, but not always most conveniently placed; the alteration in the rating law is gradually having the effect of remedying this evil. The usual rent is 50*s.* to 80*s.*, generally a garden with the house; a cottage per 100 acres for grass land is amply sufficient, and 2½ for arable is sufficient. In most parishes there is a certain amount of allotment; but I object to any labourer having more than a rood. I think there is no harm in their having a rood; I object to the system of growing corn; but I think that by restricting the quantity of the allotment the growing of corn is virtually prevented. I don't think boys are of any use until they are 10. I think sending them to scare is the worst thing for them; whenever I go about boys employed in scaring are constantly asking what "o'clock it is," as if the employment was wearisome. I think that the object might be effected by an old man or big boy with a gun more effectively and as economically as by employing little boys. It seems curious that some means of scaring by mechanical means could not be found out. I think there are four months in the year (November to February) when boys under 13 could be generally spared from the farm altogether, *i.e.*, very few are required during these months for general field labour. No labour is performed on Sunday except what is absolutely necessary, such as feeding stock, &c. There are co-operative stores in most of the large villages. I don't approve of them in small parishes, because I think they interfere with legitimate trade, and in order to work them well a manager should be found who understands several different trades, which is impossible; and it is difficult for labourers to exercise a proper supervision over the manager.

MARSTON RUSSELL.

Population - - 219.

38. *Maria Wright*, labourer's wife.—I have a son at work aged 12. He has been at work two summers before the present year, but this is the first whole year he has been at work; June, July, August, and September are the busiest months. The first summer he worked he earned 2*s.* a week, now he earns 4*s.*; he has been to school whenever he has not been to work. I think it costs me one-fourth more to have to feed and clothe him now than when he goes to school. I think it would be a good thing to say that no child should go to work before the age of 10.

39. *Mrs. Crisp.*—My husband is a labourer. I have five children; the eldest is 12. He has been at work ever since he was 7, except for three months, when he was injured by an accident. I have been very sorry he went so young; although he has been healthy. He has been to school at odd times, but not regularly. Few boys go to work as young as 7; I think 12 is quite young enough for them to go. I think it would be very fair to prohibit boys going to work until the age of 10; I don't think it would be any loss to the parents, for the boys do need so much when they go to work. We have an allotment of one-third of an acre, and grow about 15 bushels of wheat on it, and consume three stone of flour a week.

[They expect to get three stone of flour from one bushel of wheat. Therefore they grew 15 bushels=45 stone flour, or a sufficient amount of flour to last 15 weeks.—F. H. N.]

COTTINGHAM.

Population - - 1,139.

40. Extract from return sent in by the Rev. William Yates, of Cottingham.

I think an educational test would be best; no boy should be employed, nor girl enter service, unless they had passed an examination in reading, writing, and arithmetic, until the boy was 13 or the girl 14 years of age.

Bad cottage accommodation is certainly injurious to modesty and morality; of these the poor are quite sensible themselves, and I think the feeling is growing; the effect on health does not seem so injurious as I should have expected, but when there is sickness in a house I think it increases infection and retards convalescence. Out of a confirmation class of 16 boys, one did not know the Lord's prayer, and five could not say two consecutive articles of the Apostles Creed. The girls can most of them read, but not write.

We find that what is learned at night school in the winter is to a great extent forgotten in the summer, and we can seldom bring any of them above Standard IV. The indifference of the young people themselves to education and the dislike to return to school after they have once left it are the chief difficulties; those who do attend are for the most part made to do so by their parents, those who do not, ridicule those who do; of course it must be allowed in extenuation that after a hard day's work it is natural they should be more disposed to play than study.

41. *The Rev. W. Yates*, Cottingham.—Very few children attend in the school here after the age of 10. The mass of the children are in the 4th Standard, when they go to work. When they come to the night school after one or two years of work they are about the 2nd Standard. By attending the night school from November to March they would just about regain what they had previously forgotten. The cottages are very bad in this village; in one place there are seven cottages with only one privy, and in another 12 with only two. The seven cottages belong to a publican and are let for 65*s.* They are tolerably well built and comfortable in other respects, but they have no gardens. The parishes all round here are close; some men go three or four miles, and one boy five miles to work. I think there would be a difficulty in putting cottages under a building inspector; it would probably increase the expense of building and might, therefore, reduce the number of cottages.

42. *Charlotte Ward.*—My husband is a labourer, and earns 12*s.* a week; he gets 18*s.* a week with beer for four weeks in harvest. I have seven children, six of whom are at home. I have one son aged 16; he went to work when he was 7, but only for a few weeks a year; he did not go regularly until he was 10. He earned 2*s.* a week at first; I don't think he worked for more than two months a year. He cost me more in food and clothes when he went to work than when he went to school. I think he would eat at least a loaf a week more. I might have saved 6*d.* a week out of his earnings. We have three pieces of allotment; one piece of one rood 1½ miles off, another of 10 poles three-quarters of a mile off in the same direction, and another of 10 poles close by. We pay about the same rent as is paid for the surrounding land. My husband cannot manage all. When he employs other men he pays them 2*s.* a day with beer. We usually grow about 13 poles of wheat; we get about one sack from that with what we glean. It costs 2*s.* 6*d.* a sack to grind, and supplies us with bread for three weeks or more. I pay at least 10*s.* a week for bread and flour now. I think it would be a very good thing if no child went to work until the age of 10; I would make all the sacrifice I could to send them to school. It is no saving to keep a child at home rather than at school, because it costs at least 2*d.* a week more to feed him, and that is the price of the schooling.

BARTON SEAGRAVE.

Population - - 199.

43. *William Maycock*, labourer.—I live at Barton Seagrave, and work for Mr. Wallis. I have worked for him altogether 15 years, but not consecutively. Most of his men come from Barton Seagrave (half a mile) or from Burton (one mile); one comes from Kettering (two miles), but he is a Kettering man. Mr. Wallis employs no women, nor any boys under 12; he employs three or four who go with the horses, also a few to clean turnips; but that work does not last above two weeks altogether. He also employs about four scaring, but they are the same boys who clean the turnips; they are employed in scaring from now [February 26th] till May, and a little in October. A man is employed to scare with a gun when the corn is ripe, because a boy is not tall enough. There are plenty of boys about, and the parents are quite willing to get the boys out; they are anxious for their children to go to school; they think it would be better for them if they got a little more learning. I don't think any parents are prevented sending their children to school by having to pay the 1*d.* a week; the older children are sometimes useful to the mothers at home, when she is washing and wants somebody to take care of the younger children. It would be a very good thing to say that no boy should go to work unless he could read and write. I never heard of a farmer saying to a man, "Unless you bring your boy you shall not come yourself." Most of us could go to school for two hours in the evening during winter, and should like to. The cottages at Barton are good; I pay 30*s.* for mine. It has only one bedroom and no garden. There are allotments up to 40 poles; I should like to have half an acre. We are not allowed to plough. The boys who are employed in scaring have to come on Sundays. The men who are employed on Sundays are, (1) a man to look after the horses, who comes twice in the day, for one and a half hours each time; (2) a man to feed the beasts, who comes twice for three hours each time; and (3) the shepherd; his work would occupy him all day, but another man usually does a portion of it for him.

BURTON LATIMER.

Population - - 1,158.

44. *The Rev. F. Newman*, curate of Burton.—Women are not employed here. The children remain at school up to about the age of 10½, but are absent at certain times of the year before that. The half-time system would not answer here. The education

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of the poor is at present insufficient. I attribute the insufficiency to the indifference of the parents and farmer, and to the demand for the children's labour. Some children we cannot get to school; I think some such plan as demanding a certificate of a certain amount of proficiency before allowing the child to go to work, would obviate this difficulty. The irregularity of attendance is the great difficulty; they come for a fortnight, and stay away for a month on frivolous excuses. I think the field labour takes them away earlier than the shoe trade. I think that the field labour is objectionable, because it prevents the children from growing up as strong as they might; it is bad upon moral grounds, because the boys are mixed with men and learn bad language, and are exposed to temptations before they are old enough resist. There is a night school here, but it is not so well attended as it might be; the men won't come with the boys, so this year we had two nights a week for the men and two for the boys, and then the boys would not come because they would not be ticketed as boys. This is an endowed school, and we never thought it advisable to apply to Government for a grant for the night school, because our grant would have been subject to a considerable deduction, on account of our endowment. The night school is open for three months; nobody under 12 may attend. I think there is a growing desire for education here; it arose very much from starting a store, when it was discovered that nobody except the tradespeople could keep the accounts. The store works well. We are too well off for charities; people depend too much upon them, and they bring in outsiders from other parishes. Cottages are sufficient in number, but the sleeping accommodation is insufficient. Labourers do not have to go far to work.

WARKTON.

Population - - 315.

45. *Rev. H. Stobart*, Warkton.—I think that the early labour in the fields is physically injurious. The state of education among the young is defective; I attribute that to the fact that children attend school irregularly, and are taken away too early. Mine is a free school, and that is a bad thing; the parents keep their children away on insufficient grounds; owing to want of education themselves they have no tact in managing their children. The most powerful cause of the insufficient state of education is the desire to have the child's earnings. I don't complain of the girls, they stay long enough; there are no lace schools here. I think that a system of prizes for good attendance at schools would be desirable. I think the plan of giving a certificate of proficiency would be difficult to work, it would be so invidious to have to give the certificate. The night school is well attended; held twice a week, during four months. There are 27 on our books, and 20 usually attend; they behave well. I have no help, and I cannot pay special attention to bad cases. If there was any master to teach them on Sunday to read and write, they would probably come and do well; they do not go to work, and are not tired; and I do not see any objection to their learning on that day. I have a choir here of 27 men and boys; they like it, and come to be taught twice a week; they are common labouring lads; it keeps up their reading. I think additional help should be given to night school, but I cannot suggest the best mode. We are badly off for cottages; the labourers often tell me that they would be willing to pay more rent if they had better cottages. They pay about 40*s.* or 50*s.* a year, and get two dinners on the two rent days. There are allotments which I approve highly of, and think a great boon. One little boy in my parish was killed by being run over in 1865; he had the charge of the horses when it occurred; his brother subsequently had his foot severely injured by a harrow.

RUSHTON.

Population - - 484.

46. *Rev. A. Hawkes*, Rushton.—Women do not work in the fields here; they glean for themselves. Girls work at harvest a little, occasionally in scaring and picking up stones, but scarcely at all. The boys go to work so early that we cannot keep them at school; the work does them no harm physically. All the people are well off here; all the people are respectable, if they were not they would be turned out, as all the village belongs to Mr. Clarke Thornhill. As a general rule, the poor do not value education as highly as they ought. I am totally averse to compulsion; I think it interferes too much with the liberty of the subject and would create opposition. A system of rewards for attendance would be better than compulson. The dissenters gain many adherents by saying that the people are oppressed by the upper classes, and if compulson were introduced the Government would be identified with the upper classes. There are 400 people in the village, and there are no children either at work or at school; we look them up. Night school is well attended; we take them as young as 10. This year I adopted the plan of getting several of the chief people in the village to take the school in successive weeks with the schoolmaster; the scholars are pleased at seeing that others take an interest in them. Cottages are sufficient in number and well placed as regards the work; but this is a respectable place; people are always coming here from the surrounding villages, and we have great difficulty in preventing lodgers being taken in. Most of them have gardens and allotments; gardens I consider under any circumstances very preferable, because the allotments are half a mile off, and the men have to pass a public house to get there.

PILTON.

Population - - 144.

47. *The Rev. R. Hodgson*, rector of Pilton, Oundle.—We put every spur on we can to keep the boys at school. They pay 1*d.* a week. We have a boot club; the boys put in a certain sum per week, and sacrifice it all unless they attend school a certain number of times, and if they do attend we add something to the sum and give them each a pair of boots. They cease to attend day school about the age of 11. At that time they can read and write so as to be of use to them, and know as much arithmetic as they would ever have any use for. The school here is for the parishes of Pilton and Achurch. There is a night school every year at Achurch, and when it is wanted here; there are only 140 people here, and that is not enough to make it worth my while having one always. We have a village library, which is kept up by a subscription among the farmers. We have 300 books; the poor like it very much. I don't think the farmers value education at all; they think it necessary to have boys young so that they may be enured to their work; that is injurious to the boys' physique. All the old men are crippled and rheumatic. I think it very desirable that the Factory Acts should be extended. The half time would not do; we might have the plan of working three days in succession in the week if there were enough boys to form relays; but there must be a little hardship at first. Sometimes in the case of illness it is necessary for the mother to keep the elder children at home to look after the younger ones, but I don't think that necessary in any other case. Field labour is injurious to the morality. We never like to take back to a mixed school (boys and girls) a boy who has been out to work with men. We are badly off for cottages. There is a small property in the village which belongs to a man who won't sell. His cottages are very bad, I would not keep a pig in them. Lord Lilford's are good, and his rents are merely nominal, about 40*s.*, with a dinner every rent day. The cottages on the other property are about 70*s.* a year. The labourers generally have not far to go to work; a few as much as two miles.

BARNWELL.

Population - - 240.

48. *Mr. A. Tate.*—I am agent for the Duke of Buccleugh at Barnewell Castle. I manage 8,000 acres, and have been here 35 years. The property includes parts of 10 parishes in this county and Huntingdonshire. No women are employed on this property except in hay time. Hoeing corn is done by contract, and a man brings his wife to help him; but I don't think that men ever bring anybody except their wives and children to work with them. Boys are employed here with the horses, bird-keeping, &c. Women also pick stones by the load, but that work is not general. I have frequently known a girl go bird-keeping with a gun, but more in Huntingdonshire than here. We are well supplied with cottages; the smaller ones let for 20*s.* to 30*s.* All the duke's cottages are let directly to the labourers. The farmers all want cottages, and when they get a man into their cottages they make a slave of him. All the boys about are employed as soon as they are able to work. I think that if you educate them you must pension them. I have been here 35 years, and I find that when they have been taught much they become too independent. If kept at school until 12 or 14 years of age I would not engage them. We occasionally have men from Oundle come to work here, but not often. There are schools in all the villages.

POLEBROOK.

Population - - 488.

49. *Mr. S. Deacon.*—I live at Polebrook. I farm 400 acres of land at Hemington, and am a land agent besides. I employ no women or girls as a general rule; they are not nearly as much employed as they used to be, and are employed less every day, owing to the use of machinery. I am a tenant right valuer, and know that to be the case. Little boys are employed a little in weeding and picking stones, but very little. I don't think the farmers ever put pressure upon the parents to induce them to send their boys to work. Some of the parents of the boys ask me to give them leave to go away in the winter to go to school. Some of the best taught are the worst labourers. I pay my men 13*s.* 14*s.* and 15*s.* Not much lace or shoe trade here. There are plenty of cottages, and the labourers have not far to go to work; the rent per cottage is about 50*s.* or 60*s.* with a garden. I don't like allotments; I like a garden not exceeding 20 poles near the cottage, but not small farms. Some of the allotments here are half acres. They grow corn, and the farmer ploughs for them. I think it would be a good thing if all could read and write, but progress is gradually being made; I object to all interference by Parliament.

50. *Samuel Milburn*, age 16.—I live at Polebrook. I am stable boy to Mr. Deacon. I have been in the stable one year, and was at field work up to that time. I first went out scaring when I was about 6; I went out scaring for about two years. I went to school for about three or four years on and off, partly before I began to work, and partly when I was not actually employed. I cannot read or write now; I am sorry I cannot. I don't hear the boys about say that they wish they could; most of them can. I am the eldest of seven; all my brothers and sisters go to work now, except two, who are too young. Father can read and write, but mother cannot much.

GLAPTHORN.

Population - - 396.

51. *Mr. H. Kirby.*—I farm 457 acres of land belonging to Lord Cardigan at Glapthorn (120 are grass). I usually pay 12*s.* a week. I employ seven women now, and shall have another to-morrow; four of them are old widows, and two girls, one 14 and the other 13. I employ women from about February until November, but they never work on wet days. They are now gathering stones; they sometimes twitch; in summer they hoe corn and turnips; they sometimes work together and sometimes singly, but never in a gang. I pay the women 7*d.* a day and the girls 6*d.* In hay time and harvest the women have 1*s.*, and girls 10*d.* I never have girls to work younger than I have now; I usually have no work for them between November and February, and some of them have to fall back upon the rates. I have lived here 38 years, and been a guardian ever since the Poor Law was passed. I have four boys always with the teams, aged about 13 or 14, to whom I pay 4*s.* They are no use to me before they are 10. I always employ one or two boys scaring, at 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. I usually employ a bigger boy or a man with a gun to scare when the corn is ripe. I don't want any child before the age of 10 or 11. All my boys can read and write. I don't ever have boys to scare on Sunday; they only get other boys with them, and do mischief. Men are wanted to look after the horses and stock, and this time of the year the shepherd must stay with the sheep all day, because of the lambing. All my men live in the village. [The farm was in the village.] There are three times as many labourers here as are wanted for the parish; they have to go four or five miles to work. There is a great deal of extra-parochial land about where there are no cottages. The parents never ask me to let the boys go away from work to go to school. I have sometimes gone to the night school myself to teach them. I had two (twin) boys here about 15 years ago; my daughter taught them to read and write, and now one is a gentleman's coachman, and the other occupies land in Australia; they have saved a great deal of money. There is no question that the men would be of more use to us if they were better educated. I have an engine, and the men are useless with that, unless they can read and write. There is no question about it, it is worth a farmer's while to make a sacrifice to have his men better taught; they can't read the indicator of the engine. It is the parents' fault, we cannot get the men to send their children to school. I used to have machines broken, not from ill-will, but simply because the men were uneducated, and could not understand them. I think that the persuasion of landlords, &c. is more useful than Parliamentary interference. It is a Christian duty. If I were Lord Cardigan's agent here, I would not allow any man to occupy a cottage who did not send his children to school.

52. *George Leveret*, labourer.—I work for Mr. Kirby. I have worked here nine years. I have three children. The eldest, a boy, aged 11, has been at work three years. He has never been to school, except night school, during that time. He can read and write a little. He first went to scare; that occupied him about three months, and he went to school the rest of the year. He has been to work regularly about two years, and during that time he has never been to day school, and only a little to night school. The reason I sent him to work was because I wanted the money. The boys who go out young get a little rheumatic. My house is bad; it has but one bedroom. I pay 30*s.* a year for it, with an allotment of 40 poles. It takes me all my time to manage my allotment without losing time. Most of the men here have an allotment of 20 poles, for which they pay 3*s.* 4*d.*

53. *Mrs. Peach.*—I live at Glapthorn. I have four children. The eldest is 9; he has gone scaring, and earns 2*s.* a week. He has only been at it a week; but bread is so dear that I could not pay for it. I shall send him to school again when he has done his scaring. My husband works for Mr. Kirby, and earns 13*s.* Last Sunday afternoon my boy went to church, and his father went to scare for him. I don't think it hurts my son to go out scaring; I did not let him go at all until the weather took up. We eat 10 loaves a week, at 8½*d.* a loaf, and ¼ stone of flour, which costs 9*d.* [7*s.* 10*d.* spent in the week on bread and flour alone.—F. H. N.] I dare say it will cost me 1*s.* a week more to keep my son when he scares than when he stays at home, because he eats more. If bread had been cheaper he should not have gone out at all.

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[Cottage consisted of one sitting-room, two bedrooms, all very small and bad, and a ground floor; no scullery or pantry. Rent, 30*s.*, with garden.]

54. *John Underwood*, labourer.—I work for Mr. Kirby. I have four children at home now. I have others; one (a girl, aged 10) goes regularly to school now. I have always sent my boys to school. They can all read and write. I cannot; I wish I could. I could not send my two eldest girls to school; I could notafford it when they were young. There was no school here when I was a boy; we got up schools since that time. I usually sent my boys to work when they were about 10. I am sure it would have been better for them if they could have been kept longer at school. My children used to cost me 9*d.* a week for school; 1*d.* a week for three at a day school, and 2*d.* a week for three at night. I think the parents ought to do all they can to have their children taught. Sometimes one of the elder children must be kept at home to help the mother. It is hard work for a woman when she has five or six little children to take care of. They are no use at work, except for scaring, until they are 11 or 12. If I could keep them at home, I should like all of them to leave; but they won't be any better than they are now, I know.

55. *James Ingram*, age 10.—I live at Glapthorn. Father is a labourer. I have two brothers and one sister at home now. I have been out scaring four times. I first went out three years ago.

[This boy was lame from birth. He read well.]

56. *Charles Hostead*, age 15.—I work for Mr. Kirby. I have been at work many years. I milk and look after the cows. I have been at night school since I have been to work. I did not go last winter, but went the winter before. Father is no scholar, but can reckon anything in his head. I have two brothers older than me, who can read and write. [Read well.]

57. *Mary Ann Cottingham*, age 14.—I came to work for Mr. Kirby, on and off, last summer; always work with mother. [Her mother was working with her at the time I saw her.—F. H. N.] I was stone-picking, twitching, and haymaking; mother reaped and I helped. I never went scaring. I have always been to school since I was 3 or 4 years old. I went last winter. [Read very well.]

58. *Susan Whittingham*, age 12.—I have been at work in the fields a year; I go to school in winter. I live with my aunt here; my relations live in Bedfordshire. I go to Sunday school. [Read very well.]

[These two girls were picking stones when I saw them, in a field, with three women, all apparently healthy; the only women I have seen at work in Northamptonshire during more than three weeks travelling in the county.—Feb., F. H. N.]

COTTERSTOCK.

Population - - 211.

59. *Capt. Rickett*, landowner, and agent to Lord Melville, at Cotterstock.—I have lived here 26 years. I don't farm myself. We are badly off for schools. If a woman takes up an infant school she is satisfied with the pence she gets from the children; but if we take it up she is not satisfied with that, and then the expense is thrown on us. There is no school here; but there is a National school at Oundle [one and a half miles], and Lord Cardigan's school at Glapthorn [about one mile]. There is no building for a school here; we had one in the church, but that was objected to and stopped. There are 204 people in the parish; a few of the children go to Oundle to school, but none to Glapthorn. I think it very desirable that no boys should go to work until they are 12, both on physical and moral grounds. It might be done without too great interference with the cultivation. My idea is that the exposure of young boys must affect their vigour and growth. You are obliged to keep your calves and horses warm. I think that the attendance at school must be optional; interference would provoke opposition. I don't think that the parents are indifferent to education here. If there is a want of education it is due to the fact that there is no convenient school. I have had to borrow money for the improvement of land; I did it through the General Land Drainage and Improvement Company. That institution is very useful, but the expenses made necessary by Acts of Parliament are so great that it is not worth while borrowing less than 500*l.* If these expenses were diminished, small holders and proprietors might borrow money for building cottages. I see no objection to the advertisement. The chief expense is caused by the inspector from the Inclosure Commissioners. My own experience tells me that anything that would improve the dwellings of the people would be of the greatest value. The poor people themselves value good cottages immensely; I have had the most convincing proofs of that. I receive for some new cottages I have built, with one rood of land, 100*s.* and 110*s.* per annum; the men cheerfully pay the additional rent, in order to have a more comfortable house and save the doctor's bill.

FOTHERINGHAY.

Population - - 246.

60. *Mr. R. Barlow.*—I farm 300 acres at Fotheringhay. I employ no women or girls as a general rule; two women occasionally. Also one boy scaring, age 9, and five ploughboys; the youngest is 12. I don't think they are quite well enough taught; but the parents want the money. I don't think the Government can do any good by interfering. Most of my men have allotments, and take a day or two to to work on them. If they have no allotments I give them a piece of land.

61. *Thomas Peach*, labourer.—I work for Mr. Barlow; I have worked here 24 years. I have 11 children. I have eight at home; one aged 12 and another 9; the rest are younger. The one of 12 has been at work here two years; he went to school for two or three years before he came to work. There is no night school here. The boy of 9 has just come to work. If it was not for what they earn, and my large family, I should like to give them a little more schooling. I never hear the men about here say anything about education. I have a good cottage with three bed-rooms and two other rooms downstairs, besides brewhouse; I pay 2*s.* a week for it.

62. *Seth Peach* [son of 61].—I am 11. I think I have been here three years. I used to come scaring and keeping sheep at first. I used to go to school, and go now on Sunday. [Read a very little, could not write.—F. H. N.]

WARMINGTON.

Population - - 724.

63. *William Atkins*, Warmington, age 12.—I work for Mr. ———. I have been at work five years. I have never been to school since I first came to work. I have five brothers at home with my father and mother. There is only one bed-room; father and mother and six sons sleep in that. [Could read a little, but not write. The cottage in which this boy lived with his parents was only separated by the high road from the house of the farmer for whom he worked. From a conversation I had with the farmer I ascertained that he was quite ignorant of the boy's want of education, and also of the utter want of cottage accommodation from which his own labourer and immediate neighbour was suffering.—F. H. N.]

CASTLE ASHBY.

Population - - 183.

64. *Mr. Scriven.*—I am land agent to Lord Northampton, at Castle Ashby. My experience extends over the parishes of Castle Ashby, Yardley Hastings, Denton, Easton Maudit, and Great Doddington. The wages here are from 12*s.* to 15*s.*, perhaps a few are as low as 11*s.* Women are only employed very occasionally at hay time; it is quite the exception even then. No girls are employed, except occasionally

when a woman brings a couple of girls (probably her own) to help make hay. Boys are generally employed. There are schools in all the villages; the supply of cottages is not quite sufficient, but if the shoemakers were taken away there would be ample. As a general rule the cottages are fairly distributed; there are not sufficient in Castle Ashby for the work to be done, and the supply of labour has to come from Yardley and Denton, each one and a half miles distant. We have tried building cottages at the farmers' lodges, but we cannot get people to live in them although the farmers want them to come. The rent varies very much; some are let very low, because Lord Northampton does not like to raise the rent of old tenants; but when new tenants come, he charges about 10*s.* a room. Almost all have good gardens; some have allotments besides; they have from 20 to 40 poles, and pay rent at the rate of from 20*s.* to 30*s.* an acre. We make no stipulations as to cultivation; most of the labourers grow corn and consume it themselves. I like the allotment system; I don't think it interferes too much with the labour due to the farmer; the wives do a good deal of the work. I have no objection to their growing corn. Perhaps some of the men in the villages I have mentioned may have to go two miles to work, but very few. The cottages which do not belong to Lord Northampton are not so good, and are higher rented than his. A statute fair is held every Michaelmas at Northampton; men and maidservants are hired, but for the house only; I think the same fairs are held in all the market towns. All the villages have clothing clubs, and some coaling and blanket clubs as well. We don't allow lodgers in the cottages, and I don't think they are taken in without my knowledge. When the cottages are let with the farms, the farmer puts into them whoever he likes, but he generally comes and asks me about it before selecting a man.

65. *George Brawn*, labourer.—I work for Mr. White at Castle Ashby; I have worked for him for three or four years; I live at Yardley. I have two boys aged 8 and 15 and one daughter at home. The eldest boy has been at work since he was 9, and has never been to day school since that time, but he goes to night school at Castle Ashby; the night school goes on until about Whitsuntide. I think it is a good thing to let boys go to work, because poor people cannot keep them unless they do. If I keep well my youngest boy shall not go to work until he is 14; if he does he is sure to have a depraved nature, and catch up all that is bad. My eldest boy has always been pretty hearty since he has been at work. The youngest boy is at school now, and I often think that if I could get a place for him where he would not get all manner of mischief, and catch all manner of ugliness, it would be better for him to go out in the summer because he has sick headaches. Master keeps a bull, and the farmers round send all the small boys with the cows, and I think it a very bad thing for them. There are three boys at work on this farm, and when they are altogether their language is very bad; they want somebody with them; but then it is miserable to be with them, and difficult to keep them in order. Master generally employs six boys all the year round; two with the team, two cutting chaff, bird keeping, &c., and two doing little odd jobs. The boy who scares comes on Sundays. On Sundays a man has to be here for two hours in the morning and one in the afternoon with the horses; another man all day long with the sheep in the lambing season, but after that about 3½ hours in the day. I look after the stock, and I come on Sunday from 6 to 10 a.m., and from 2.30 to 5 p.m. from September to May, and about 5 hours on every Sunday during the remainder of the year. There are no poor people but what would be glad if they were prevented from sending out their boys until they were 14, if they had the means of keeping them up to that age; an Act would do no good unless the poor are paid. The farmers never press the parents to send their boys to work. I have 13*s.* shillings a week and some milk every morning. The usual wages are 11*s.*

66. *Charles Underwood*, age 11.—I work for Mr. White at Castle Ashby; I live at Yardley. I don't know how long I have been at work. It is a good while since I went to any school, except on Sundays. [Read a very little; could not write.]

ISLIP.

Population - - 626.

67. *John Jervis*, labourer.—I have seven children, five boys and two girls; eldest boy 19; girls 2½ and 8½. One of my sons at shoemaking, two at field work now, and I have had two more at field work. The eldest began before he was 8; had 1*s.* 6*d.* at first; had constant work from that time, and never been to school since; he is now at shoe work. The next began to work after he was 9, and went to school once again for a few months, and then to work again; he got 2*s.* at first. The third was not 9 when he went to work; he has been at work ever since; he got 2*s.* a week at first. The fourth went to work before he was 8, but has been to school three or four different times since between times. I earn 13*s.* now; the usual wages in this parish are 12*s.* I always felt myself better off for my children's wages, even when they only earned 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. It did not cost me the whole of their earnings to provide additional food and clothing for them when they went out to work. If I had to bring them up again I should send them to work as young as I did before. I have one son who, I think, has been injured by going out to work; he always seemed well before he went to work. I think all boys should be taught; all boys are sharper and more useful in the field if they have been taught. I am not sure whether a man would be worse off if his children did not go to work until the age of 10; they would be better taught, and would probably earn higher wages after the age of 10, although there would be a loss before that age. A great many women work about here; it is a very bad thing. I have known 10 or 12 belonging to this parish at work at once. The children are left at home with nobody to take care of them, and more than the mother's earnings are thus wasted. They might make hay and work in harvest, but twitching and weeding may be done by men just as cheaply as by women. I think the labour of women and girls should be stopped by law. I have known them work when there are plenty of men to do the work. I have 30 poles of ground a quarter of a mile off; rent 7*s.* 6*d.* I have to lose about three whole days a year to work on it. I grow 15 poles of wheat every year and rest potatoes. I grow 4 bushels of wheat; get 13½ stones of flour. That would last me nearly three weeks. My bread bill is 10*s.* a week. I should get seven sacks of potatoes, worth about 10*s.* a sack. I am horsekeeper, and can sometimes get away early; if I did not I should have to lose six days, and I have about the best piece of ground in the field.

SUDBOROUGH.

Population - - 321.

68. *Ann Jackson.*—My husband is a labourer. I have four sons, aged 18, 16, 13, and 11. All can read and write a little, but not much. Could not read the "Cornhill Magazine" [which I saw in the cottage. —F. H. N.]. Some of them went to work at 8, and all before 10. They earned 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* at first. They have had work all the year round since they began to work. Some of them drove plough at the age of 8. If I was going to have my time over again I would not send them so young to work. I think it is money in pocket for a parent to keep small boys at home; it costs so much to keep them at work. They ought not to go to work until they are 10 at least. I think it ruins children to go to work too young; they don't grow as they should. We have an allotment of 20 poles; we keep a pig for manure. It would not pay to keep a pig if we had no allotment.

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BRIGSTOCK.

Population - - 1,159.

69. *George Edwins*, age 16.—I work for Mr. Attenborough. I went to work when I was 9. I have never been to school since, except a little on Sundays. Most boys about here have been to school more than I have. My father is Mr. Attenborough's foreman. I cannot write.

[Could not spell "house" or "church;" says that 6 taken from 17 leaves 10.—F. H. N.]

70. *George Richards*, age 9.—I work for Mr. ——. I have only been at work four days. Father is a labourer. I have been keeping sheep. I have one brother older than myself. He cannot read as well as I can. My mother never goes to work in the fields. I like work better than school

[Reads fairly. Does not know what month it is. Says that his birthday is in July, but does not know whether that is a month.—F. H. N.]

DENFORD.

Population - - 429.

71. *Mr. H. Gale.*—I farm about 650 acres here; more than half is arable. I have been here about 30 years. I employ women in spring and summer, from about February to June. They are employed in bean setting, twitching, weeding, and haymaking. I employ none in winter. Perhaps I employ more women than my neighbours. I pay them 8*d.* to 10*d.* a day, and have no difficulty in getting them. Three or four of them are the wives of my labourers, and, I think, have children. Last week they did not come to work because it was wet and rough. The work they do cannot be done in wet weather. About a month ago I had 15 boys picking twitch together in one place, and eight girls in another. That was in consequence of my taking a new farm which wanted weeding. I only employed them for a few weeks, and don't often have as many as that; I paid them 4*d.* and 5*d.* a-piece. I generally employ a few children in that way for a few weeks in the spring. The boys I employ all the year round are about 11 to 15 years old. Most of my labourers come from Tichmarch [about two miles]. I pay 13*s.* a week. I am not put to much inconvenience on account of the distance my labourers live from my farm. I don't think I should be put to much inconvenience if I employed no boys until they were 10 years old. I don't like small boys for scaring; I employ a big boy with a gun.

STANWICK.

Population - - 669.

72. *Mr. Aris.*—I farm about 500 acres in Northamptonshire. I could dispense with boys' labour altogether until they were 10 years old; but they are convenient for eight or ten weeks in the spring under that age, although I don't employ them now that I can get women, whom I pay 10*d.* or 1*s.* instead of 8*d.* as formerly. I have found great inconvenience arising from the large allotments held by labourers; the labourers go to work early in the morning for themselves, and are tired when they come to work for us. There are many shoemakers here, and the labourers not only work on the allotments for themselves, but they are employed by the shoemakers to work for them at the busiest times, as the shoemakers find it pays them best to continue working at their own trade. I found that my labourers wanted to go away to work for themselves so frequently in spring and autumn that I found it difficult to carry on the work of my farm, and I do not now permit them to go away. They never want to go away except in fine weather, when the farmer has most work to do, and never in the winter months. If a man only had one rood of ground, I would let him go away whenever he pleased, because I think it would be a benefit to him. If a man has more than one rood, he is obliged to keep a pig, and most of the cottages have no sufficient accommodation for pigs, and nuisances are thus created. I find I cannot feed a pig at a profit myself.

73. *The Rev. J. H. Gandy*, rector of Stanwick.—I have been here four years; the land is chiefly arable. I have 15 acres of land let in allotments of a quarter of an acre each at the rate of 4*l.* per acre; and 12 acres more in allotments of two acres at the rate of 3*l.* 10*s.* per acre. I will not let the latter to day labourers; they are usually taken by tradesmen. I find that it does not answer to let land in pieces of two acres; the land deteriorates in value from want of capital, and the occupiers neglect their regular business. I have found the allotments of quarter acres answer very well. My only restrictions are spade cultivation, and only half grain crop. I also make mine dependent upon attendance at some place of worship, honesty, and sobriety. There are several other pieces of allotment in this parish, but let at a higher rent than mine. I think it would be desirable that children should be prevented going to work up to the age of 10. Some compulsion to attend a day school up to that age, and a night school between the ages of 10 and 14, would be necessary. I think that the present staff of teachers, if more highly paid, could and would be willing to undertake the night schools. Our co-operative store has been in operation two years; the sales amount to 120*l.* to 130*l.* per week. We have four branch stores in four other villages. The schoolmaster keeps the accounts.

74. *James Marriott*, labourer.—I have half an acre of ground. I can manage that with my regular work; I would not have so much if I could not grow half wheat; I feel a better man for having that; I could not manage more; I think a man is better off as a labourer with that amount than with two or three acres. I have belonged to a co-operative store for two years. I get better goods than I did before, and pay less money for them. It also acts as a savings bank. I hold one share, for which I paid 1*l.* 1*s.*; I have drawn out 2*l.* 6*s.*, and have now 3*l.* standing to my account. If I had not dealt with a store I should have spent all that money more. I think there are more men out of work in winter than there used to be. There are two or three men who are always out of work and do odd jobs on the allotments. Very little work is done by the women and children; it does not interfere with the attendance at school. I have had eight sons. I sent them out to work when they were about 8 or 9; but if I had my time over again I would not send them out until they were 10 or 12. I think that the mother of a family is best at home, she loses at home what she earns in the fields when she goes out to work. There are some men who do not belong to the store who are better off than those who do; because some men never pay their bills; they owe as much as 10*l.* If they come to the store they must pay.

WELLINGBOROUGH.

Population - - 6,382.

75. *Thomas Simmons.*—I am one of the relieving officers for the Wellingborough Union. I have 13 parishes under my direction; they are all agricultural, except the town of Wellingborough. All applications for relief have to come through me. I have no reason to suppose that in this district the agricultural labour performed by women and children is injurious to them. I recollect no applications for parish relief which I can trace to excessive labour; nor do I recollect any cases in which diseases have been developed by agricultural labour. The agriculturalists are more healthy than the shoemakers.

HARROWDEN.

Population - - 804.

76. *Mr. T. A. Somes*, Great Harrowden.—I farm over 700 acres, 300 of which are grass, besides 130 acres of wood. I have been a farmer all my life. I generally employ 25 men. My lowest wages are 12*s.* a week from Michaelmas to March, and 13*s.* the rest of the year. My horsekeeper has 16*s.*, and

shepherd 15*s*. I generally employ about six boys; the youngest boy I have had lately is 11. I pay them from 2*s*. 6*d*. to 6*s*. a week. A good workman who works by the piece will earn about 1*l*. I keep 12 horses, and four of my boys are at work with them all the year round; two boys are also employed in pulling and dressing turnips from October to April. I employ one or two old women in the summer to pick thistles, out of charity; I don't like them. I think boys are better off the land altogether until they are 10 years of age. We don't want them, and if it were not for their parents they would be better at home. I very rarely have extra boys. I sometimes set them to break clots, or do any small job if they are out of work. I employ men to pick twitch, and never employ a gang. I have two girls now at work for a few days setting beans; I only employ them to help the family, otherwise I never employ girls. None of my men live more than one mile from parts of my land, though the distance from their houses to the farthest part of my land may be more than that. I have four cottages in different parts of my farm. The men are very willing to take them, because I let them rent-free. All the boys go to the free school before they come to me. The shoemakers' boys are not so well off as the agricultural boys. My head man engages all my boys; they are well conducted and trustworthy. In summer they work from 6 to 6; in winter they come when they can see, and return home at 5. It would not signify to me if they left one hour earlier all the year round, except in busy times; I would allow them to do that if I thought they were doing good. The cottages are sufficient in number and well situated, but many have only one bed-room; rent from 1*l*. 10*s*. to 5*l*. a year. Landed proprietors let them at moderate rents, but speculators charge high. They hardly ever have gardens, but most of them have allotments which are let at the rate of 1*l*. 12*s*. an acre; the allotments do not exceed one rood in extent. I approve of the system. The great difficulty about education is interfering with the earnings of the family. I think you would interfere too much if the children were not allowed to work until they were 10 years of age unless they had acquired a certain proficiency before that time. After the age of 10 they might attend at least one hour a day without inconvenience to the farmers, except in hay and harvest. I should not object to the above scheme being carried out, although a little inconvenient to me. My boys are perfectly healthy, and I have no difficulty in getting plenty to come to work. I think three cottages per 100 acres is the proper proportion. I should like to have more cottages on my land. I think farmers would usually be willing to pay a per-centage on the outlay if landowners would build; I would myself pay four per cent. The Union Rating Act may be just, but it acts hardly upon some of us. Our rating has risen very much. The Act has filled the workhouses. I have frequently given men work, because if they went to the house I should have to pay as much as their wages in rates. I farm my land in the same way as my neighbours.

77. *Frederick Page*, age 10.—My father is a labourer. I have one brother [a little child whom F. P. had been sent out to take care of when I saw him.—F. H. N.] I first went to work in harvest when I was 7; I "frit" crows. I went to school before that, but have never been since, except on Sundays. I get very cold keeping crows, but I go to play in the village when I come home. I have not been to work for three weeks. I like school better than work, but work better than nothing. [Could read a little.—F. H. N.]

78. *Rev. W. C. Roughton*, vicar of Harrowden.—I do not think any compulsion would do, but I think there might be a scheme for making boys go to school when they are not earning wages. The evil which I want to remedy is, the children being kept from school by the parents without sufficient cause. The attendance is not sufficiently regular. The children are kept away from school for many purposes besides earning wages, *e.g.*, to collect acorns, and nurse the baby. I think the only excuse for keeping children away from school should be the necessity of earning money, and that arrangement should continue so long as the parent is responsible for the maintenance of the child under the Poor Law. The parents are not sufficiently alive to the importance of education. The expense does not operate here, as the children only pay ½*d*. a week, and that only in winter, for firing, &c. No pressure is put upon the children by the farmer to induce them to leave school, but our farmers are a superior class. I have not much faith in night schools, as now established; the work falls too much on the clergy. Provision might be made for the supply of teachers, which would render night schools effective. I have a night school. Many do not attend who might; they don't come because they object to discipline.

79. *G. Chaplin*, age 8.—Went twitching two months ago for Mr. Walker. There were four boys and four girls at work; the eldest was 12 years old. Thompson looked after us; did not make us work hard; he was kind. I was paid 2*s*. a week by Mr. Walker. We worked from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m., and stopped half an hour at 10, and one hour for dinner. I like going to school better than to work, because I ain't so tired. I have three sisters, and no brother. Father is a labourer. I read sometimes when I go home to amuse myself. [Read well.—F. H. N.]

80. *Mrs. Smith*, Harrowden.—My husband is a labourer. I have six children at home (four boys and two girls). The ages of my sons are 23, 18, 7, and 4. I send the young ones to school; I send them to work as soon as they can go, generally about nine. I never let them be idling about. The only reason I do not keep them at school longer than I do is, because I want their earnings. The boys usually go to work between 7 and 8; they earn very little before 10. They work a number together; I don't object to that, the parents are always paid, and the boys not beaten. My eldest son gives me 7*s*. a week for his board and lodging.

80(*b*). *T. A. Walker*, Little Harrowden.—I farm 180 acres (75 grass); the farm has been held by my family for 60 years. I employ a few women in summer, three or four, and two or three girls, from 10 upwards; they are employed in haymaking and picking twitch. I have two boys constantly at work, aged about 12; They are no use to farmers until they are 10. I have extra boys for bird keeping and weeding. When I want a field weeded, I get two or three women, girls and little boys under 10; they usually come to seek a job. Sometimes I have to send to them; I can get as many as I want without pressing them. When the boys and girls go out together, one of the women looks after them. I would not send them out without some one to look after them; I have not observed any harm from boys and girls being sent out together at the age I have mentioned. My neighbours do their jobs of weeding in the same way as I do. I have never employed a public gang. I always pay the boys and girls myself; women 10*d*., boys 4*d*. I don't employ them above three weeks or a month throughout the year. I think they would be more useful if they were better taught. I want men of trust; I think there are many children about the streets who ought to go to school. The boys are employed younger than they used to be. I don't think a law prohibiting the boys from going to work until they are 10 would be unpopular among farmers.

FINEDON.

Population - 1,840.

81. *Mr. W. Bearn*, farmer and land agent.—I farm 300 acres at Finedon (220 arable and 80 pasture); I have farmed it for 35 years. My general staff of labourers is ten men and two boys; the men have 12*s*. to 16*s*. a week, and boys 3*s*. to 4*s*. The boys are from 10 to 14 years old; they are principally employed with the team. They are also employed in twitching

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and weeding. No women are employed except in hay time and harvest, and then chiefly married women, the wives of my labourers. My farm is a "pair-horsed farm" [capable of being ploughed with two horses.—F. H. N.], and therefore I do not employ as many boys as I otherwise should. All my workmen come from Finedon [two miles]; one man has been here 39 years, and has walked to and from Finedon every day, except Sundays, [four miles a day=48,828 miles in 39 years.—F. H. N.] That is too far; I lose the time occupied in the walking; it amounts to half an hour night and morning. We do "dibbling" by the piece; I pay so much an acre, and the man finds the boys. So in harvest, a man contracts to cut the corn, and he brings his wife and child to help. The boys are also sometimes employed in draining, which is contract work; the boys carry and lay the pipes. I would pay 5 per cent. on the outlay to have cottages on my farm; and I should think it a great boon. I think the Rating Act is likely to have a good effect; the question of cottages is entirely a money question. I think there is a lack of education, which arises from the poverty of the parents. I don't think they are indifferent about it. I don't think the expense of cultivation would be increased, if we did not have children until they were 10 years old. Arrangements might be made to enable a boy to leave work at 3 o'clock at times, to go to the night school; it would not be a great inconvenience to us. In some cases the loss of the money earned by boys under 10 would be a serious loss to the family; but it would not be so if the boys were allowed to go to work during the summer months. I think on the whole that it is best for the Government to leave it alone. I think a law restricting labour would be unpopular among farmers, and would be resisted by the people.

ROTHWELL.

Population - - 2,285.

82. *Benjamin Coleman*, labourer.—I have lived all my life at Rothwell. I have worked here for 20 years. When master [Mr. C. Brown, of Rothwell Lodge,] wants weeding, or any job of that sort done, he sends two or three boys or girls to do it, with a man to look after them. Sometimes he employs girls to scare birds; they are 12 or 14 years old; I don't know how old. There is never a girl now at all at work here. There are four or five boys employed here now. I have seven children; they are all grown up. My girls did not go out to work much. I have a granddaughter aged about 11; she went out singling turnips last summer; she got 5*d.* or 6*d.* a day. Singling turnips is usually done by the piece; then the man engages the children; no man would take more than two or three children. Three or four men would work in a field together, and each would have a girl or two working with him. The girls are not made ill; they are healthful out of doors. My boys never went to scare and sich work till they were 9 or 10. Some doant go to scare on Sundays, and some do and some doant, just as it happens like. The school is good. I sent my children; they never went much to night school; most of them can read but not write. I think it is a good thing to learn if they make a good use of it; some make a bad use of it. My cottage costs 70*s.* a year without a garden. I have 10 poles of allotment; and I never do nothing there without interfering with my regular work. I never grow corn; potatoes are better. It would be a bad job for a poor man not to let the boys go to work until they could read and write. If you have a strong family you want them to nurse and wash in the house. I have never heard of a farmer saying to a man you shall not go to work unless you bring your boy.

THORPE MALSOR.

Population - - 251

83. *William Essam.*—I don't know how to spell my name; I don't know how old I am. I've been scaring two or three times before. I live at Thorpe. I come to scare at half-past 6, and leave at half-past 5. Sister brings my dinner and breakfast. I went to school before I came to scare. Father is a labourer. I have no brother at home, only one sister. She is 11, and is a year older than me; I know by that that I am 10. I never went to any work except scaring and keeping pigs. My sister went to scare for Mr. ——; she only went once; Mr. —— sent for her. Mother goes to work in harvest; she makes bands for father when father works by the great. Sometimes eight or nine boys and girls go to work together here. A foreman looks after them. I never heard them say whether they liked working that way. I can read a little but not write. I like to go to school better than to scare; I think it is better. Father wants me to learn. I get tired and wet scaring, and have to remain out all day in the rain.

[I found the boy scaring in a field of spring wheat, He was very small, but ready in his answers, and intelligent.—F. H. N.]

84. *The Rev. G. E. Maunsell*, of Thorpe Malsor.—Women and children are very little employed here. I object to all field work for women, except in hay time and harvest. The boys begin to work at 8; they generally scare all Sundays. After they begin to scare, they come very irregularly to school. From 11 they are employed regularly in the fields, and they don't attend even Sunday school after they are 15 or 16. What they have learnt before they begin to scare, they forget when they go to work. I should be very glad to get something done about education. At 15 or 16 boys have forgotten everything they ever knew, and are perfect savages. Many of the parents are indifferent. I think the suggestion that the children should not go to work unless they have learnt a certain amount is good. The root of the whole matter is the insufficient cottage accommodation; boys and girls herded together leads to great immorality. We clergy know of many things which others do not. There is no night school here, but I have the boys up to teach myself. We are in a good state in comparison with our neighbours as regards cottages. The rent varies from 25*s.* to 80*s.*, but chiefly about 40*s.* or 50*s.*, and usually with gardens. There are allotments for all who like to have them. That system works well. We let them grow what they like.

85. Extract from Return sent in by the Rev. G. E. Maunsell, of Thorpe Malsor.

Twitch or stone picking is bad physically for girls approaching the age of puberty; also the necessary exposure to bad weather. I would prohibit female labour in the fields altogether, except at hay or corn harvest. Twenty-five years' experience in a country parish has shown me that where the labourer has good cottage accommodation education is more appreciated, and *vice versâ*. The agricultural labourer's cottage must always be a charge and not a pecuniary advantage to a landed estate, unless an exorbitant rent is charged. The landlord must reap his profit from good cottage accommodation through his farm tenants, who will have superior labourers, and from his decrease in poor rates, above all in the decrease of petty crime, and in improved morality. I have no evening school. I find in my small parish that I can work more efficiently by having the children singly. In 12 boys about nine make fair writers. In 12 girls, about 11. The balance fail either from distaste or inability.

IRCHESTER.

Population - - 1,168.

86. *Mr. J. Cowper*, of Irchester.—I farm 408 acres, 80 of which are grass. I employ no women. I employ from 8 to 12 boys and girls, according to the season of the year, of ages varying from 7 to 13. They are employed from Februaryuntil July, in picking stones and weeding. The rest of the year I do not employ them. [I saw three boys at work weeding under an old man; they seemed quite healthy and

contented, and said they went to play in the village directly their work was over; therefore, not overtired.—F. H. N.] I invariably put about six boys and girls together, under the direction of a steady old man whom I can trust. They earn from 2*s.* to 3*s.* My regular staff of ploughboys is five; they earn from 4*s.* to 5*s.* They are with the team almost all the year. They are about 14 years old. Another boy goes with the shepherd; I pay him 3*s.* Some of the little boys are also employed in scaring, but only one or two. That should occupy them on Sundays, but we sometimes allow them to go. I have no difficulty in getting boys. I sometimes employ more than I want for the sake of the parents. There are a good many children in the parish, and they are employed more generally in field labour than in other places. My man engages the children; I do no work by the great with them. I do contract with a man to single turnips, and he brings a boy with him, whom he pays. All my men come under one mile to their work. I pay 12*s.* 6*d.*; the extra 6*d.* is in lieu of beer. The extra money they earn in harvest adds at least 1*s.* a week to their wages throughout the year. The education among the young is very defective, but is improving. One of my ploughboys left me to go to a situation on a railway, and has now been promoted, and gets 50*l.* a year. There is a desire for education among the agricultural class, if they had only an opportunity of improving themselves. I think an Act of Parliament compelling fathers to send their children to school instead of to work would be objectionable, because you could only enforce it by fining the father if he disobeyed; and if he could not pay he must go to prison; and it would never do that a man should be branded as a convict because he sent his sons to work.

The cottages here are sufficient in number, but the accommodation in many cases bad. The rent is about 60*s.* to 100*s.* [I found one in the village, small but clean and comfortable, let at 39*s.*, with a garden.—F. H. N.] I have no cottages on my farm; I wish I had. I am willing to pay interest on the necessary outlay. I feel satisfied that if I had men living on my farm I should see that they were educated, and that they behaved well; but now, as they live at the village, I have no hold over them. I should not be put to serious inconvenience if I employed no children until they were 10. The employment before that age is of more benefit to the families than to the farmers. We don't expect the children before 7 o'clock in the morning; and if it is wet, we send them home. I should not like to have labourers living in my house.

[This gentleman was good enough to show me round the village of Irchester, about three-quarters of a mile from his house. The school good and well attended. Some of the cottages good, but many very bad. He showed me one, the door of which opened into a narrow passage leading to a court-yard, in which a father, mother, and five children live. Only one room upstairs and one down, the latter used as a shoemaker's workshop.—F. H. N.]

87. *John Brudenell*, labourer.—I have worked here (Irchester) for eleven years. I have only one son, aged 30. There used to be no school here. I used to teach them in the winter. They did not know where to go, and they wanted some learning, so I said, "I'll "teach you." That was 28 years ago. About six came to my cottage to be taught. That went on for two winters. I took it up again about three years since, because there was no school. The boys' friends asked me. I let them come to my house. Seventeen was the most I had; I had no room for more. I might have had many more if I had had room. They paid me 1*d.* per week, and found their own lights. They each brought a candle in turn. I taught them to read, write, and spell. They came very regularly for about four months. They were all boys. I took it up like out of pity for them. Their friends wanted them to learn. They used to come from 7 to 8. They got on uncommon well some on 'em. Many of them did did not know how to make a stroke when they came, and could write their names fair when they left. There are a good many now who want to learn, but they don't like to go to the school, because there are not enough people to teach 'em. A man cannot manage more than a score; 30 or 40 go to the night school now. I think it would be a very good thing if a law said you shall not send your boy to work unless he can read and write. It would sometimes be a hardship on the families, but I think he could learn enough between the ages of 7 and 10. At the age of 6 or 7 a child can take care of the younger children, so that the mother can go about the housework. It would be rather inconvenient if the child were taken away at that age. I believe much of the children's time is wasted; that is because they ain't made to go to school. It looks as if the parents had no care about their children as they should have. I have an allotment of one rood, for which I pay 12*s.* 6*d.* I could not manage more than that without neglecting my regular work. I grow a little corn. It is expensive work growing corn with spade labour, but I don't mind that. I sell a few potatoes and wheat, but never anything else. There is nobody at home but my wife. I sometimes engage a man to dig for me. I pay him 3*d.* a pole; he can't do it under. It will take him all his time to earn half-a-crown a day. A great many cottages here have only one room above and one below, with man, wife, and five or six children. I go out to look after the boys and girls twitching, &c., with about six of them; they are ready and willing to work. We work from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., with half an hour for lunch and one for dinner. They don't appear tired. They are better when they have been out a fortnight or three weeks than when they begin. They had rather work than sit indoors. It does not hurt them a bit; but they wear out more clothes at work; but only put on old ones. If there were cottages on the farms, away from the public-houses, the men could not go there so much. I live in the village now, but I had sooner live near my work than in the village, even if I had three or four children. The children don't get any good from running about the village; and they are very handy to send for supplies if you live away from it.

[This man was a common farm labourer. His education, which was self-acquired, was very small; but he was evidently a thinking and very intelligent man, and answered my questions with great readiness. The demand for education in the village was evidently limited to a few, as appears from the preceding and following (schoolmaster's) evidence.—F. H. N.]

88. *J. P. Jones*, schoolmaster, Irchester.—The boys begin to leave this school when they are 8; they attend irregularly from that age until they are 10; a few continue until they are 12. There are 40 names on the book for night school, about 30 usually attend; they pay 2*d.* a week, and are generally very attentive. The night school lasts two hours every evening. None come from a distance. About half the children in the village who might come to the day school do come. I have as many as I can manage; more would come to the night school if I had somebody to help me teach. Children are not prevented coming to the day school by having to pay 1*d.* a week; but I think that the 2*d.* a week paid for the night school is an impediment.

PYTCHLEY.

Population - 536.

89. Extract from Return sent in by the Rev. C. Heycock, J.P., Pytchley.

In rural districts many young females are employed away from home in service, and continue so till they marry, generally with good effect to their moral characters, where they acquire a beneficial training for domestic duties far better than those who seek employment at home. Here the employment of females [in agriculture] is by no means regular They are almost solely employed in weeding, hay-getting, and harvest; and the quantity engaged and-

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the time of their employment is regulated by the season; whether wet or dry. By this their morals are not prejudicially affected. I would not prohibit field labour for women, as they prefer out of door labour which is suitable for them, and at times their aid is very essential in busy seasons. I should recommend no restriction on the labour of boys after 8 years. Children do not undertake work here at a long distance from home. It would be vexatious to the employer and to parents to have the distance defined. The every day evidence afforded in our streets, after the hours of labour are over, and the amusements so joyously carried on, are a convincing proof that the energies of the young have not been overtaxed. No compulsory restraint to enforce education would be attended with a good effect. Inducements to attend at school, such as rewards given for regularity, entertainments given during the summer at the houses of the squires or the chief farmers are great incentives to join the school. The industrious and obedient obtain in public the favour of their superiors to the great incitement of the rest. If at all seasons of the year children above 8 years old were confined at school, their parents would become paupers without the assistance of their children. From 5 years old to 8 this inconvenience would not affect them; above that age it seems a night school might succeed. A few years since the cottages were too confined for room either to preserve health or to prevent evils. Happily this state of things has been much remedied, with the prospect of still further amelioration. Every year develops a disposition to improve the comfort and accommodation of the cottages. All [young persons] both males and females can read, but out of this number a great proportion write imperfectly and know little of arithmetic. The evening schools are maintained by weekly payments from the scholars; the usual charge being a halfpenny a head per night. The want of pecuniary means among the class of persons who would attend [is the principal difficulty in the way of maintaining an efficient evening school]. The only objection being not the unwillingness of the young people to attend, but the inability alleged by their parents to make the requisite payments.

90. The following is an extract from a letter addressed to me by the Rev. C. Heycock.

"When you ask me how many weeks in the year children from 8 to 10 years old gain employment, I reply for 10 or 12 weeks, partly in bird scaring and weeding in the spring, and again in the hay season and harvest to drive carts, and to help their parents in gleaning during the autumn. Deprive the parents of their aid only for a few weeks, and the deficiency is sensibly felt. The wages given by farmers for children [boys] at these seasons are 2*s.* per week. So that each child above 8 will earn towards shoemaker's and tailor's bill from 20*s.* to 25*s.* during the year. Again, in reply your inquiry whether in food and clothing there is any perceptible difference when at work, rather than when at school, I am instructed to say that there is no apparent difference."

91. Extracts from Return sent in by J. B. Robinson, Esq., of Cranford [as to the state of education].

One boy aged 16 told the rector that *he had never heard of Jesus Christ;* this happened in 1868; the boy was not particularly dull. An evening school is only a question of money; a good master and books supplied, the lads and young men would attend readily, as they did some years ago when a night school existed here.

BOZEAT.

Population - - - 955.

92. *Rev. F. Pizey*, Bozeat.—I have occasionally seen girls working in the fields here in summer weeding wheat, and in winter twitching. They are usually 12 to 16 years old. For medical reasons girls should not be employed at that age. I object to the employment of little boys as carters; I have known them injured by the horses; they should not be so employed until 12 or 13. The sexes work together when at work in the field. There are many illegitimate children, but the lace work causes that, not the farm work. Too many that I marry have had one (or more) children; there is also a falling off in the number of marriages. Some of our cottages are awfully bad, not fit to house a pig; they are very old; usually one room downstairs and one or two up. The school is entirely dependent on the exertions of the parson. I can only pay an uncertificated mistress, and therefore it is not under inspection. Boys leave about 9, girls at 7 as a rule, but boys go bird keeping and twitching before that. There are as a rule no gardens to the cottages; there were allotments, but they have been taken away. Wages about 11*s.* Many men walk three or four miles a day to work elsewhere. I am in favour of an extension of the Factory Acts; I have lived in Lancashire and know how they work. I do not think a boy can do much good at school after he has been at work all day. Farmers sometimes insist on the boys going to work with the father. In my opinion families would lose nothing if children were restricted from going to work up to a certain age. On the whole I consider the boys are well treated and fairly paid, but they have no sufficient opportunities of becoming educated. Girls in these parts labour under great disadvantages; they are put to the "lace trade" at the early age of 6 or 7 years. The lace making is the prolific source of bad health and bad morals, and produces no pecuniary result worthy of the sacrifice. Lace makers as a rule are unfit for domestic service and for the duties of a wife and mother; hence the low condition of parishes in which such trades are carried on.

93. *Mr. W. Fancott.*—I have lived at Bozeat 38 years. I farm 145 acres (50 of which are grass). I never employ women; I employ two or three boys and four or five men. The lowest wages for men are 11*s.*, and for boys 2*s.* 6*d.* I sometimes employ young boys of 7 or 8 at twitching and picking stones in spring and summer, but not in winter. For these jobs I send out half a dozen boys with one of my men to look after them.

94. *William Dredge*, aged 17.—I have worked for Mr. Fancott [93] eight or nine years. I came for 4*d.* a day; I now get 7*s.* a week. I used to go to day school, and I go on Sundays now [read fairly].

95. *F. Dredge*, aged 12.—I have been at work six or seven years; I drive plough. I go to school on Sunday, but have not been much at day school since I have been at work. [Read a very little; could not write.]

96. *Mrs. Johnson*, schoolmistress, Bozeat.—I have only just come here. I was schoolmistress here formerly for three years, but I left seven years ago. There are now 60 names on the books; I have had 110 names formerly, and the population has rather increased during the last seven years; I intend to open a night school next week. The Sunday school is well attended; there are between 60 and 70 usually present.

97. Extract from letter written by Mrs. Johnson, schoolmistress, Bozeat.

"I find that from the age of 3 to 7 years they are tolerably regular; but from that age to the age of 10 they are very irregular, and generally consider they have finished school; some of them can scarcely read a word of two or three syllables correctly; few of them have so far advanced as to write in a book, and but few have gone beyond the third simple rule in arithmetic when they leave the school."

98. *Edwin Robinson*, age 6.—I have been out twitching once for Mr. ——. That was last week. I worked all the week; seven boys were at work. I have never been to work before. J. Surridge looked after us; we worked from 6 to 6. Mother sent me. Mr. —— paid me 1*s.* 1*d.* We had half an hour for lunch, and one hour for dinner, for which we came

home. It rained part of the time, and we came home then. J. Surridge did not beat the boys. [Read fairly.]

99. *Arthur Chambers*, age 7.—I went to work last Monday for a day and a half for Mr. Fancott; I went twitching. There were seven boys at work. Mr. F. gave me 5*d*. Mother sent me to ask Mr. F.. for work. We had half an hour for breakfast, and came home for one hour for dinner. G. H. looked after us; he cut a stick off the hedge, and gave it to some of them if they did not work; he gave it to me sometimes. [Could read a very little, but not write.]

[This boy and the previous one, No. 98, were examined in the school at Bozeat. They were both extremely small, but were the oldest boys in the school, and the only boys in the school on that day who had been to work.—F. H. N.]

100. *Mr. J. Harrison.*—I farm 460 acres at Bozeat. I employ three women and one girl twitching and stone picking. I have had them at work about a fortnight. None of the men go more than one mile to work from here. I come from Durham, and have only been here six months. I think the men here are very good labourers. It would do the boys good to have a bit more schooling. If any man has a bit more tact than the rest we all want him.

101. *John Dredge.*—I have nine children, eight at home (five boys and three girls). I have a good cottage with two good bed-rooms; I pay 60*s*. a year without a garden. Three of my sons are at work, aged 16, 14, and 11. There are also two young ones not at work; they go to a woman's school. I am no scholar, but I think it is a good thing to learn; none of my children can write, but they can read a little. I often hear people say they wish they could read and write. I send my boys out to work as soon as I can; they go out twitching when they are 7 or 8. I think they go to work half their time between the ages of 8 and 10. I have heard my wife say that they eat more when they are at play than at work.

SYWELL.

Population - - 241.

102. *Thomas Bands*, master of Sywell school.—I have been here five years. We have at present 35 scholars on our books. I have never known more than 42 on our books. The average number who attend now is 33 on week days, and from 45 to 50 on Sundays. We have 58 names on our Sunday school book; about the same number attend the Sunday school both in summer and winter. The children of eight years old can usually read and write pretty well, and understand the simple rules of arithmetic. There are only five children in the village who do not attend school at all. Between the ages of 8 and 10 the children attend the day school about six months in the year, and between 10 and 12 about three months in the year. After 12 they only attend on Sunday and the night school. There is a night school three nights a week, from the beginning of October until the end of March; it lasts one and a half hours each evening; 15 attend at present; they are chiefly boys. The girls are employed in making lace. Fifteen is a large proportion of all the young persons who live in the village. The scholars at the night school read write, and do arithmetic. They read instructive books for the purpose of getting information. I sometimes read to them.

103. Extract from Return sent by Mr. Bamber.

Morals are not more affected by employment in agriculture than by the same number of persons being collected for any other purpose unrestrained by the presence of superiors. With respect to the proper training of young persons for domestic duties, the absence of this is a manifest evil, and a distaste for the necessary restraint imposed upon in-door servants is acquired (?) by the liberty of obtaining a livelihood in the fields. It is objectionable for women having families to be taken too much from home; but as labourers are not plentiful, and the time that women work in the fields so short, viz., a few months in the year, it is not advisable to place any restriction upon the employment of women. In agricultural districts the parents are rarely so inhuman as to force their children to do more than is consistent with their age and strength. The picture of health that most children are who work in the fields sufficiently attests this. As much might be done by any well organized system of evening schools, any interference with attendance at work is less necessary; indeed, evening schools might be made a very important way of obtaining education, and some means should be adopted of making them as efficient as possible, and as encouraging to the scholars. I should recommend compulsory attendance at day schools (such schools to be supported by the State and voluntary contributions) whenever employment cannot be obtained; the parents being less able to bear any portion of the school expense when the children are unemployed, it is reasonable for this to be borne by others if compulsory attendance is required.

104. *Mr. George Robinson.*—I occupy Sywell Lodge Farm, 180 acres. I have been here seven years. I require four men, one lad (age 15), and three boys to cultivate my farm. I work myself besides. I pay 12*s*. per week to the men, 6*s*. to the lad, and about 2*s*. or 3*s*. to the boys. My men live either at Sywell (one mile distant) or at Holcot (one and a half miles). In consequence of the distance the men live from home, they come half an hour later and leave half an hour earlier than they otherwise would do. In harvest they sometimes knock up a place to sleep in. I contract to get my threshing done by machinery, otherwise I should have to keep more men. I allow all the men who do not go home to dinner one pint of small beer; that costs me 4*d*. per gallon. The boys have half a pint. I never employ a boy under 8, usually not under 10. I give 2*s*. per week at first, and raise it gradually; when they are at the plough they have 3*s*. They are usually the sons of my labourers. The parents wish me to employ them. The boys are employed as follows:—

In January and February, draining (the boys place the tile beside the furrow ready to be put in, and help to fill in the furrow after the tile has been placed).

March to end of July, ploughing (on heavy land, where three horses are required, the boys lead the horses).

August, harvest (boys make bands and tie up).

September, October, and November, ploughing.

December, draining.

My lad can direct a plough. I never employ women; they are very little employed in this neighbourhood; sometimes they work where there is a cottage on the farm. I always pay the boy's father if he works for me, otherwise I pay the boy. I allow one hour for dinner (1 to 2), and half an hour for lunch (9.30 to 10). The boys become stronger from the work they do; it is not injurious to them. My farm is managed in the same way as the other farms in the neighbourhood. If I did not employ any boys until they were 12 I should be short-handed; the expense of the cultivation of my farm would increase. Where the land is heavy (as here) the plough must be drawn by three horses in line, and a boy is wanted to drive them. On light land two horses may be driven abreast with reins. Before I came here I had a farm at Kettering. The boys I had there were better educated than those I now have. I did not find that the boys who were better educated did their work better than those I have at present. The parents of my boys never ask me to let them go to school. Some of my men have allotments; those who have generally stay away for a day or two to dig potatoes after harvest; they ask leave to go; I do not pay them wages when absent. I think a quarter of an acre is the proper quantity for an allotment. A man can attend to that without giving up his ordinary employment. They grow barley, wheat, and vegetables at Sywell. I sell them seed; I don't think they steal seed. They generally have their crops ground and use them themselves.

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105. *John Parker*, age 12.—I work for Mr. Robinson; I never worked anywhere else. I have three sisters and five brothers. My father and mother live at Holcot; I live with them. I have never been to school except on Sundays. There is no evening school at Holcot. I have been at work here about three years. I learnt to read a little at the Sunday school; can't write.

106. *Samuel Parker*, age 10, brother of last.—I have been at work here one year; used to come with father a year before that. Never been to school except on Sunday. I never learnt to write; can read a little. [Very badly.—F. H. N.]

[The father of these boys told me that he could not send his boys to school, because he wanted all the money they could earn for him.—F. H. N.]

107. *Joseph Barker*, age 15.—I work for Mr. Robinson. I live at Sywell. I have been at work six years. Went to school before I began work. I go to a night school now three times a week. I can read well, and write and sum a little.

108. *Mr. James Siddons*, Sywell Grange.—My farm is 409 acres in extent, 250 being grass. I have been here 17 years. I employ regularly five men at 12*s.*, four boys at 3*s.* 6*d.* to 8*s.* One or two of my sons also sometimes do a little work. I give no allowances as a general rule. I employ no females except in hay time, when I employ one or two women. Two of my boys come from Sywell, which is one mile distant; three men from Walgrave (three miles) [they were temporarily employed in draining.—F. H. N.]; the rest come from Holcot. I have had men occasionally from Moulton (four miles).

I employ my boys as follows:—

January and February, serving the cattle in the yard and the sheep in the field.
March to May, ploughing and seeding.
June to September, hay and harvest.
October, ploughing and seeding.
November and December, looking after stock.

The youngest boy I now have at work is 11. I have had them under 9. Parents are always anxious to get their boys employed. The hours of work now are half-past 6 to half-past 5. I allow them half an hour each way, on account of the distance they have to come. I pay the boy's father if he works for me, if not, the boy himself. I employ my boys all the year round, and increase their wages gradually. When the boys are at plough they go out from half-past 6 until 2; they then have half an hour for lunch, and do various little jobs about the yard after that. I could not spare them after they come in from plough without inconvenience. We are very short handed. The older boys of a family usually come to work for me here, because of the distance the farm is from their homes, and I can employ them all day long. My boys can usually read and write. I desire them to go to the Sunday school. I think boys ought to learn to read and write; they would be more useful as farm labourers if they could. Their moral training is not well attended to; they are not trustworthy; I attribute that to their not being well brought up. Formerly it was the practice for the younger labourers (*i.e.*, the labourers from 16 to 24 years old) to live at the farm houses; there they received a sort of training. That ceased some time ago, and the present generation had no such training as that. It is quite exceptional for the labourers to live at the farmhouse about here. I could spare the boys up to 9 years of age without serious inconvenience, but not up to 10. After they come to me I could not spare them at all without serious inconvenience. Young men don't like to live with the farmers now because of the restraint. The use of machinery rather increases than diminishes the demand for labour.

I should like to have all my labourers within about one mile of their work. I have one cottage which I rent with my farm. I would willingly pay at least four per cent. upon the sum necessary to build two more cottages, if I could have them. Mr. Beasley wishes some of the labourers to live in my house. I approve of that plan, but the labourers won't do it. I think one cottage to every 100 acres sufficient for my farm. My cottage has a garden of 20 poles. I approve of allotments; they should not be more than 30 poles. More than that would interfere with the labour which the employer requires, or if it does not the labourer must hire somebody to work on his allotment. As a general rule 20 poles would produce as much as a family would require.

Although I find a difficulty in procuring labour the vagrants are constantly increasing in number; they won't work. I am a guardian of the Wellingborough Union.

109. *Mrs. Deeley.*—I live at Mr. Siddons's cottage. I have five sons; three work for Mr. Siddons. [The two others were too young to work.—F. H. N.] I always send my boys to work as soon as I can; how are we to live if they don't work? I would sooner live here than at Sywell. [One mile.] The baker brings me my things. My husband is a scholar; he teaches the boys who don't go to work. Our garden is useful; I wish it was larger.

110. *Richard Deeley* (12 years old). [Son of last witness.]—I went to work when I was 7. I was at school before that; I have not been since. Don't go to the evening school. Father teaches us on a Sunday; we read the Testament. My brother writes rather better than me.

OVERSTONE.

Population - 206.

111. *John Lucas*, age 9.—I have been at work 2½ years. I work for Mr. Britten at Overstone. I have one brother and four sisters. We live at Moulton, nearly one mile off. I went to school before I went to work; go to a Sunday school now; can read a little.

112. *George Barber*, age 17.—I came to work seven or eight years ago. I went to school before I came to work. I have been to school one winter since I have been at work. Can read a little. Live at Moulton. I have two brothers and three sisters. Live with father. I have never been ill since I have been at work.

113. *Edward Horne*, age 11.—I live at Overstone; work for Mr. Britten; worked here four years; never worked anywhere else. I go to school on Sundays, and used to go to school before I came to work. I have never been away from work since I began.

114. *William Horne*, age 13. [Brother of last witness.]—I came to work here (Overstone farm) when I was 7 years old. I like work. I only go to school on Sundays.

115. *William Chown*, age 9.—I live at Moulton. I have been to work for two years. I have two sisters and one brother. I like going to work, but like going to school best; I go to school on Sundays, but on no other day. Can read a little; cannot write.

116. *Thomas Chown.* [Grandfather of last witness.]—I live at Moulton; I have worked on this farm (Overstone) for nine years. I contract to do work for Mr. Britten. I make as much as I can out of it. I work with boys of from 10 to 14 years old. [He was, when examined, at work in a field with about seven or eight boys under him. The above witnesses Edward and William Horne and W. Chown were at work with him. I may add that the boys appeared to me to be healthy and contented, and the gang in every respect well conducted.—F. H. N.] When I want more boys, I tell my boys that I want five or six, and they bring them next day. No difficulty about getting them. I pay each boy 6*d.* to 8*d.* a day. The boys are easy to manage. They are all ready to work. I never use a stick. I was asked by —— to use a whip; "I said no, you cannot drive an Englishman, much more a boy."

117. *Henry Lucas.*—I live at Moulton; I have worked on this farm [Overstone] near 20 years. I have two boys and five girls. I earn 12*s.* a week, and 1*s.* extra when I come on Sundays. I send my boy (111) to work, because I want money. My boy is not

strong; but he is better when at work than at other times. He does not wear out more clothes when at work than when at play. Two of my girls work at the lace pillow. I pay for my cottage and allotment (10 poles) 4*l.* 6*s.* a year. I grow vegetables on my allotment; use all the produce myself. I should like to have a quarter acre. I have enough time to work at my allotment after my regular work.

118. *John Stephenson.*—I live at Moulton; work at Overstone. I have six boys and one girl; eldest boy is 13. Two of my boys work at Overstone. I send them to work as soon as they can work; I cannot keep them unless they work. Some of my children have been to school regularly, some very little. That is because their mother is sometimes out, and the children are obliged to stay at home; "the big uns to keep the little uns company." I can read, but not write. I want my children to be taught. I know a man is a fool now if he cannot read and write. If I could read and write I could earn 2*l.* a week. My boys are in better health when at work than at school. I pay 1*d.* a week for them at school; I do not mind that, but I cannot afford to lose their earnings. If I had my choice, I would rather live on the land where my work is. I have lived in lone places; I then had to walk two or three times a week to the nearest village to get provisions; that is inconvenient; I think it best for my wife and children to live with company. I pay 4*l.* 10*s.* for my house. I have no allotment.

119. *George Britten*, of Overstone farm, 390 acres.—I have had this farm for two years. My father is a farmer, and I was brought up to it. My regular staff is 11 men, two lads, and five boys. I pay the men 12*s.*, the lads 7*s.* to 9*s.*, and the boys 3*s.* per week. When they come on Sunday they have 1*s.* extra. No allowances. The men live at Moulton [about a mile off.—F. H. N.] or Overstone [half a mile]. I allow them half an hour for breakfast, and one hour for dinner. The youngest boy I have ever employed was aged 8½ years; I should not like to employ boys younger than that. It is not usual to employ them under 10. I could do without boys' labour up to the age of 10 without increasing the expense of cultivating my farm. When they are set on under 10 it is usually at the wish of the parents. I never employ women or girls, except in hay time or harvest. If the boy's father works for me, I pay him the boys wages; if he does not, I pay the boy himself. Wages are usually paid weekly about here; I pay every Friday fortnight. I think I get turnips pulled, stones and twitch picked cheaper by Chown's gang than I otherwise could. The gang works from Michaelmas until spring. Boys are always ready to work in it. I think that the uneducated make better farm-labourers than the educated; they are more contented and better satisfied. There is no work to be done on a farm which cannot be done by uneducated men. No sort of machinery could be used to supply the place of the boys' work.

I think two cottages per 100 acres the desirable number on this farm, which is mixed land. My men live chiefly at Moulton (one mile); there are no cottages on the farm. I should like half my men to live on the farm; their having to walk from Moulton is loss to me; not on account of the walk, but because they would be more under my command here. If I had cottages I could give them to whom I liked, and so secure good men. I think an allotment is very convenient to labourers. I think 20 poles sufficient. Those of my men who have allotments ask my leave to go to work for themselves, and are not paid when they go away. Their system is to grow half white corn and half green vegetables, and change the crop each year. As a general rule they consume everything they grow. There are very few cottages on the farms in this neighbourhood; they are all let with the farms. The ordinary rent for cottages is from 1*s.* to 2*s.* per week.

120. *Rev. E. J. Birch*, rector of Overstone. Population about 200. Been here 10 years. I think there is no need of any legislative enactment to restrain the employment of women and children in field labour in this district, because there is very little of that work done by them here. Some boys are employed on every farm. I don't think that farm labour is physically injurious to them. Some boys are employed at limekilns and in brickmaking in the neighbourhood, but not in my parish; and I think that that work is physically injurious. The work is too severe; they have to carry heavy weights. I think it is desirable that the age at which children begin to work in the field should be fixed; I should say 9. As a general rule, the boys in this neighbourhood do not commence regular work until they are 9 years old; but they go out to occasional jobs before the age of 9, and that occasional employment is a great interruption to their education at the most critical time. I think that some restriction should be placed on the number of hours boys are permitted to work, so as to enable them to have some spare time to go to school. I am inclined to think that they should not continue at work after two o'clock between the ages of 9 and 13. That is on the supposition that the attendance at school is made compulsory. I think that the education of the boys is fair up to the time at which they first go out to occasional work but they are apt to deteriorate very soon; and at the age of 15 their education usually is defective. We have a night school in my parish three times a week about three months a year, chiefly in the autumn and winter; any boys may attend it who are out at work. The night school is difficult to work, and the attendance of the scholars cannot be depended upon for long together; I do not attribute the defective state of the education among boys to any indifference on the part of parents; I attribute it to the fact that the parents cannot do without the children's earnings, *i.e.*, they will not make the necessary sacrifice. I think that if the education were made compulsory, the expense should be borne by a Government grant, otherwise the ratepayers would have the control of the school.

I think three cottages per 100 acres desirable for the proper cultivation of the land. There is not that number in the parish, but more are being built. The rent of the cottages in this parish is extremely low, much lower than the neighbourhood. The best are 1*s.* 6*d.* per week, but only a few new ones. I think it desirable that the labourers should reside near their work; but the cottages should be so placed as to be easily accessible from the village. The cottages are not crowded here.

I think it a great advantage to a labourer to have a good garden of about 30 poles of land, a quarter of an acre is the extreme, not too far from his cottage. The produce of the allotment is generally consumed by the family, or by the pigs. One of the pigs is sometimes sold. Almost all the boys in my village attend school up to the age of 8, and fall off after that.

GREAT BILLING.

Population 425.

121. *William Perrott*, schoolmaster, Great Billing.—I have been here seven years. I find that the attendance of girls falls off about 6—7 years of age; they are then employed in lacemaking. The boys cease to attend at 8 or 9 years of age; some never come again after that; others (about one-fourth) come back for five or six months in the winter; rarely any attend after the age of 10. I do not think there are many boys under the age of 8 years who do not go to school at all. The evening school is badly attended; about nine attend only in the winter months.

122. *George Willet*, age 8.—It went to school regularly up to last autumn [at school when I saw him, Feb. 11th.—F. H. N.], then went to work. I like going to school better that to work. Mr. Britten wanted me to go to work; father worked for him last year. I worked at the harvest, and minded the pigs afterwards. I worked up to November; worked sometimes from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Made the bands to tie up the corn. When I was with the pigs I shut

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them up to go to breakfast and dinner. I have only one sister. [Read well.—F. H. N.]

123. *Philip Pilbrow.*—I worked for Mr. Britten last harvest; I kept the pigs. Father is a shoemaker. I have two brothers and two sisters. I like going to work best. The boys tell me there is work to be had, and then I go. I like work best, because I get money. I have 2*d.* a week out of my wages. The farmer gives me the wages; I give all to mother, except 2*d.* [At the school when I examined him. Read well. Feb. 11th.—F. H. N.]

124. *James Dunn.*—I farm the glebe, 290 acres. I could spare the boys up to 9 years old; not at all after that. We are badly off for cottages. There are plenty, but they are not good. There are allotments to all the cottages of about 20 poles. That is a good arrangement. The squire does not allow corn to be grown on the allotments. The cottagers usually consume all they grow. They sometimes require a few days to dig potatoes, but their ordinary labour is not otherwise interrupted.

125. *Mrs. Somerfield.*—I have five children (three boys). The eldest boy went to school regularly until he was 9; he is now at work. He earns half-a-crown a week. My husband is a shepherd; he earns 13*s.* 6*d.* a week. My boy either works with the plough, or looks after the sheep. Mr. Dunn was willing to take him, and I wanted a little money. He reads and writes every night when he comes home. I think it is a good thing to learn to read and write, but it sometimes brings people into bad habits.

LITTLE BILLING.

Population - - 76.

126. *Mr. William Pell,* of Little Billing.—My farm is 300 acres; my family have occupied it more than 100 years; one-third of it is pasture. My regular staff is about eight men and three boys; the boys plough and do odd jobs; I contract with a man to pull turnips for me at 10*s.* per acre; I have always got these sort of jobs done by the piece; I could not get turnips pulled unless I did that; he gets boys to do the job for him. All the farmers in the neighbourhood get these jobs done in that way. The worst class of labourers do that job; perhaps they do not always pay the boys. Only employ boys for that purpose from about October to February; I do not think that the boys who work in that way are under 8 years old. In hay and harvest the number of boys I employ regularly is not increased. I do not usually take my labourers' boys; the fathers no not look after them as well as other men. The boys usually come to ask for work. My men have 12*s.* and boys 3*s.* 6*d.* or 4*s.* a week. I very rarely employ women and girls. My boys average about 12 years of age; I don't think we ever have them under 10; I don't know whether they go to school in the evening; they are all quite healthy. The hours of work for men and boys are from 6 to 6 in summer and 7 to 5 in winter; they usually come from Moulton [1½ miles]; I make no allowance on account of the distance, but am obliged to give way a little. I have two cottages now on my farm; I should like to have two more, I should have a greater control over my men. I am not sure whether I should be willing to pay interest on the outlay necessary to build them. There is no difficulty about getting provisions; the bread is brought by the baker, and the wife goes to market once or twice a week. The cottages have gardens of 30 poles; there they grow vegetables; they consume all they grow. I do not allow them to grow corn, they are not honest over it, and it takes too much of their time. I think the Union Chargeability Act will have the effect of encouraging building.

MOULTON.

Population - - 1,840.

127. *William Barker,* Moulton.—I farm 160 acres, one-third pasture, of my own land. Until the last three years I farmed 400 acres. As a general rule I do not employ females. I employ six men and three boys all the year round. The men's wages are 12*s.* a week, besides one quart of small beer in winter, and three pints of small beer and one of ale a day in summer; the boys have 5*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* a week, and one pint of small beer a day. Then they never go away for their dinner, and I never allow them to buy beer and drink it here. I do not often employ a boy under 12 years of age, I can do without them up to that age. They are employed chiefly at plough or in attending to the sheep; [they dress the turnips before they are put into the machine to be cut.—F. H. N.]. When they go to plough they come in at two o'clock, and they then help to clean the horses or cut chaff; they are at work all the day long, I could not spare them in the afternoon. We want a night school in this village, there would be plenty of scholars; many lads from 10 to 14 don't go home after their work is done, but stay about the village and demoralize one another; they do that from 6 to 8 p.m. They might attend school from November until the end of January. They then get home early enough to wash, &c. before school. This month [February] they work on their allotment after they get home; they would be much more useful to me if they were a little educated; I could send them to Northampton on errands. They should be able to read, write, and know the first three rules of arithmetic. My boys usually are educated to that extent; I know how they have been brought up before I take them. I arrange my work so that they may go to school on Sunday; my only law is that they go to some place of worship on Sunday, I don't ask where; but if they don't go there, they don't stop here. The best school is a good home.

All cottages should have allotments, not more than a quarter of an acre. They employ the minds and bodies of the labourers when they would otherwise be idle; if the allotment is more than a quarter of an acre the labourer is apt to get away from his master. There are a great many cottages in this village without any allotment; there should be none. They sometimes sell part of the produce; I don't approve of that. There are 2,000 inhabitants in the village; not more than one-third are shoemakers. If the labourers have cheap and good cottages they behave properly, so that they may keep their cottages. Many cottages here are not fit to live in; it is impossible to live decently in them, and the rent for many is 4*l.* 10*s.* or 5*l.* The cottages are built by speculators, who don't care what inhabitants they bring provided they get their rent; thus all sorts of characters are introduced into Moulton; I don't think the want of good cottages is due to any defect in the law. The Union Rating Bill is a good change. The speculators get six or seven per cent. for the money they spend on cottages. The labourers ought to grow on the allotments just as much as they can consume. I think they might grow a little corn, so as to have straw for their pigs, and thus they get manure. It is difficult to buy straw. Speculators let land for allotments at as much as 5*l.* per acre; that is very hard on the poor, but they would sooner pay it than have no allotment. I never have heard an oath on my farm except once last harvest when one man swore before me and the other men; I never said anything, but turned and walked away; he stood condemned, and came and begged my pardon afterwards; if he had not, he knew what would have happened. The poor about here are generally very comfortably off, although provisions are dear. I think that a good and comfortable house is essential as an inducement to a man to be respectable. A benefit club is very desirable; after they have paid some subscriptions they don't like to forfeit all, which they do if they are convicted. The more we can get men to depend on themselves the better.

128. *Rev. Thomas Sanders,* vicar of Moulton.—I have resided here since 1840. Women are very seldom employed in the field here, they are in lacemaking, which is very sad; girls work at lacemaking very long hours, and cannot go to school, and when they go to service their hands are sometimes so cramped that they cannot

use them properly. There are several schools for lacemaking here. There are many small proprietors here who run up cottages as a speculation; they don't mind what tenants they get, and they often get men who have been turned out from other villages. The boys in the village attend the school well, I don't think they could attend better if there was compulsion. As a rule none but the children of respectable parents come; if all other children were compelled to come, the respectable ones would leave. Boys attend from about 4 until the age of 8 years; at about 8 the attendance becomes irregular, and at about 10 they cease to come at all. The corn on the allotments is often sown "by dibbling." Farmers could not do without little boys at certain times of the year. Education is progressing rapidly; men see the necessity of it. When I came here there was nothing but a Sunday school. I do not think that any legislation is is necessary. I am very anxious to get the labourers on. I have assisted eight or nine in fitting themselves for various situations in the police and elsewhere. I think it would be a good plan if the boys of the best character and attainments in the different schools were to meet in the county or large towns at stated times, and compete by examination for Government appointments, such as excise, &c. The prospect of obtaining places of that kind would be an inducement to them to attend school, and would prevent their being discontented. The half day and alternate day systems are bad for agricultural labourers; it may be fine when a boy goes to school and rain when he goes to work. The principle of the Print Works Act would be more convenient. I don't think it would be any hardship to require boys to pass an easy examination before they went out to work at all. When the boys leave school they can read and write fairly, and know the common rules of arithmetic. There is no night school here; I cannot attend to it, because from ill health I am unable to go out at night, and the Government inspector will not allow the master to attend to it.

The cottages here are not much crowded; those built by the proprietors are good, those built by the speculators are bad. There are at present [Feb. 12] about 40 empty cottages in this village; the people have left them to go where they can get better wages. The rent of each is about 4*l.* or 4*l.* 10*s.* The cottages belonging to the neighbouring proprietors are not so dear. None of the labourers go inconveniently far to work, or if they do they have time allowed them for it.

I let nearly 20 acres in allotments to four men, who sublet to the cottagers. I make no stipulations, except that they shall not work or bring produce home on Sunday. Each allotment is about 20 poles. The cottagers usually sell a few of their potatoes. They grow corn; I don't object to that. My tenants pay me 75*l.* for the 20 acres; I pay all the rates and taxes. My tenants reserve a portion of the land which they cultivate themselves, and sometimes work for the other men to whom they let portions of it. I would not place any restriction upon the extent of allotment, I would let the cottagers have as much as they like. I attribute great importance to a man's having a good cottage; I think each ought to have a cellar. Some of the cottagers (the best) usually buy a nine gallon cask of beer; that pays them very well, better than going to a public house for their daily wants; the publican's beer is very generally adulterated, and produces a fictitious thirst.

[I may mention incidentally that I visited one of the lacemaking schools referred to above. It was kept by an old woman, who lived in a tolerably good cottage in the middle of the village. There were 13 girls at work when I saw it, about 8 to 14 years old, all except one sitting so close together as scarcely to be able to move. The schoolmistress told me she had kept it for 46 years, that each girl paid her ½*d.* a day and earned 3*d.* or 4*d.*, or rarely as much as 6*d.*, a day by her work; they had to provide the materials themselves; this money the girls or their parents kept. They worked from 7 a.m. to 5 p. m., and were absent half an hour for dinner. I observed a hazel stick, about as thick as my first finger, within easy reach of the mistress.—F. H. N.]

129. Extract from Return sent in by the Rev. T. Sanders, Moulton.

The boys who work in the fields from 6 to 10 years old do so at stated busy times and come to school when these times are over. Hence left alone by the legislature their voluntary attendance is perhaps equal to what the compulsory might be. Compulsion would be very unpopular with the labouring poor of this parish.

130. Extract from Return sent in by Mr. H. J. Little, Moulton.

Half days alternately at school and work would simply be impossible; alternate whole days at school would be very distasteful to farmers, and I think they would sooner do without the children than employ them under such restrictions; some certain amount of school attendance during the winter months up to a certain age appears to me the preferable plan. If you restrict the age at which children should be employed, education must be compulsory. For this purpose encourage night schools, make a lower standard of education to make schools eligible for grants from the Privy Council, and be satisfied to make every child read, write, and do a simple arithmetical sum well.

131. *George Tanner*, age 8.—I went to work last summer with Chown (No. 116). We were picking carrots. We worked from 6 to 6. I took my dinner with me. I earned 4*d.* a day. I have five brothers and sisters at home. My mother sent me to work. I come to school now because there is no work to be done. [Read well.—F. H. N.]

132. *John Burditt*, age 8.—I went to work for Mr. Jones; I trimmed the turnips ready for the machine. There is no work to do now, and therefore I go to school. Mother sent me to work. [Read well.—F. H. N.]

BUGBROOKE.

Population - 935.

133. *Rev. Harwood Harrison*, rector of Bugbrooke.—The supply of cottages here is sufficient; some cottages are built by speculators and let for 3*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* a year, without any land; other cottages belong to the neighbouring proprietors, and are good. I say every cottage ought to have three sleeping rooms, most cottages have only two; they all take in lodgers if they can get them. It is difficult to prevent them taking in lodgers; I built a cottage, but I felt that I could not interfere with my tenant's liberty. Allotments are very beneficial. Several cottages in the village are empty now. There are some iron works in the village; trade was slack, and therefore people left. Trade has now become more active again.

If a boy leaves school to go to work, and then comes back to school, we always charge him 1*s.* before we allow him to be re-admitted. We get a good many shillings that way. If a boy can only return for a few weeks, his parents will not pay 1*s.* in order that he may be re-admitted. There is a night school; only about 16 have attended this winter; last year there were at one time 24, and I have had 30. They pay 1*d.* a week. I attribute the falling off this year to the high price of bread. One man told me his bread bill was 9*s.* a week; he had five or six children, all young. His wages were about 1*l.* per week. Four cottages stood together in this village, near a malt-kiln. They had gardens. A speculator bought them. He turned the kiln into six cottages, and built five others on the ground which had been used for gardens.

134. *Mrs. Davies* [this witness lived in one of the cottages which had formerly formed part of the malt kiln referred to by the last witness.—F. H. N.] I have lived here a few months, my husband is a labourer. I have six children, the eldest son 19, second son 16, and third son 14, besides three little children. The three eldest go to work at Cold Higham [three miles]. We

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used to live there, but the cottage is now pulled down, and my boys go to work where they did before; they leave at 5 a.m. and come back at 7 p.m. My husband earns 12*s.*, and my sons 5*s.*, 3*s.* 6*d.*, and 2*s.* 6*d.* We all sleep upstairs, there is only one room. [I was told that this was an exceptional case. The cottage was a very bad one, only one room besides wash-house downstairs and one room upstairs. Children very dirty; did not go to school.—F. H. N.]

KISLINGBURY.

Population 723.

135. *Charles H. Watts*, Kislingbury.—I farm 360 acres, chiefly my own and brother's land; two-thirds are pasture. They work from 6 to 6 in summer, and from 7 to 4.30 in winter, and they have half an hour for breakfast, one hour for dinner, and half an hour in the afternoon. When at plough they go out at 7, they stop to bait the horses in the field at 11 for half an hour with nosebags, and come in at 3, then the boys have dinner, and after that do odd jobs. I think it would be inconvenient to spare them in the afternoon. There is always plenty for them to do. I always hire my boys in the village, and know whether they have been to school; they are more serviceable to me when they have been to school than when they have not, although I very seldom have a job for them to do which it is necessary that they should be able to read. I have between 60 and 70 cottages; the rent is from 52*s.* to 70*s.* a year, with gardens. I have three better cottages at 80*s.* They have allotments besides; they pay 12*s.* a rood. All the people belonging to the village who apply for them have them. They may grow what they like, but they may not plough. They grow corn; that is a mistake, because you cannot tell whether it comes out of your own barn; it is a temptation to them. My private opinion is that 20 poles close at home is better than a rood a mile away. I think that in summer I don't get as much work out of my men as I should, because they go to work for themselves. There are generally a few idle men about who do jobs on the allotments in the winter; they dig by the pole. I don't think any legislation is wanted in the district. Progress is being made. There are sufficient cottages, except in the close parishes. I expect the Union Rating Act will have a good effect.

136. *James Killingbeck*, schoolmaster at Kislingbury since 1857.—Almost all the boys in the village attend school up to the age of 8. They then fall off in the summer months. Almost all who have attended regularly up to the age of 8 attend subsequently from November to March. In the year 1867 13 boys left the school altogether; their average age was 10 years 10 months. The girls go to the lace school; 17 left last year; their average age was 8 years 11 months.

HARPOLE.

Population - - 833.

137. *Rev. R. B. Dundas.* — I have held this living for 20 years. Attempts have been made in this village to set up a training school for girls; that died away, because the girls found they could get places among the farmers and tradespeople without any training, and so it was not worth their while to go to school. They get very little when they first go out, 50*s.* or 60*s.* a year, but they are kept. This is an open village, and the cottages are very dear and very bad; they are built as a speculation; the supply is sufficient. Most of the work is near at hand, though some of the men go two miles to a place where the supply of labour is deficent. There is not much lacemaking. I let 30 acres in allotments; I could let 20 more if I had them. Half an acre is what the men like; I think that is too much for a labouring man; I am obliged to give way, because if I don't others will. Farmers dislike allotments, because they say that they take the labour out of the men. My only rules are, that the allotments must be dug up by December 31 in each year, and that the allotment must be divided into two equal parts, one part to bear a grain crop and the other a green crop. I don't think a grain crop is likely to make a man dishonest; if he wants to take corn he will take it whether he has an allotment or not; if they are not to have an allotment for that reason, they should not be allowed to feed a horse or a pig. Some of the labourers sell the produce of the allotments; that is because they want the money, not because they grow more than they can consume. The allotments should be placed close to the cottages; they are only placed in a field because there is not room near the cottages in this village. The village is crowded, and there was a fever here last year. I think people go too far about compulsory education; it will be the end of the voluntary system.

WOOTTON.

Population - - 837.

138. *John James.* — I am a labourer, but am ill now and cannot work. I have four sons at home, aged 16, 14, 11, and 8. None go to school, but they used to go before we came to live here; I cannot send them, because I cannot afford it; I think it best for them to learn. My two eldest sons go to work; they earn 4*s.* and 3*s.* a week. They work from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., and are strong and healthy. We pay 1*s.* 6*d.* a week for this cottage, with a small garden and no allotment.

[This was a very bad and dirty cottage, only two rooms, one up and one down stairs; in the former the whole of the family slept. I calculated the size of the rooms was 8 feet by 14.—F. H. N.]

139. *Thomas Williams.*—I farm 150 acres; one-third grass. I am also a maltster, and have a brickyard. I never employ females. I employ two boys generally all the year round; they are about 13 years old; I pay them 4*s.* a week. I occasionally employ boys about the age of 10 for bird-keeping, stone-picking, &c.; I pay them 2*s.* a week. I could do without boys up to the age of 10 without serious inconvenience. I can always find something for my boys to do, unless the weather is very bad; but I could spare them a little in winter until they are 12 years old. When they go out to plough they come in at 2 p.m., and do simply nothing after that; I could spare them to go to school if it was wanted. I think if they have nothing to do they ought to be made to go to school; I think they would be more useful as labourers if they were a little educated.

LITTLE HOUGHTON.

Population - - 578.

140. *W. Smyth, Esq.*, J.P., Little Houghton.—I farm 700 acres of my own land; one-third grass. I employ no women or girls as a rule.

The cottages are sufficient in number; they belong to me; many are old-fashioned, but they are good; the rents range from 1*s.* to 2*s.*; very few at the latter price. I take care to have a certain number of cottages with two, three, and four rooms. I have a few small cottages let as low as 9*d.* a week. All the cottages in the parish are in the village, except a few which I have built on my own land at a distance. Sometimes wives will not let their husbands go away from the village, because it is melancholy work living away from the village. I know of no changes in the law which I think it desirable to make as to the building of cottages, it is so palpably every one's interest to build cottages on his own land. It is rather difficult to get the labourers to live away from the village, but it gives the employer a moral control over them to have them near him. I make no allowance in point of time for the distance my men have to come to work. Most of my cottages have gardens attached to them, and allotments besides. I think allotments desirable; about 20 poles is sufficient for a herb garden, a man can dig that. I gave one man 40 poles, and saw a plough and pony at work on it. The employer loses nothing if the man has only 20 poles.

Corn is not grown on the allotments here. It would be impossible to send the boys engaged at work to school here; they are so scattered that you could not collect them until the day's work is over. There is no great want of education about there; there has been a great improvement in that respect, but there is a want of a moral tone among the young men. I think it would be a good thing to restrain them from going to work until 10 or 11 years of age; I don't think you could compel boys to go to an evening school after they once begin to work, you must induce them to go. An examination before going to work would be of no use, as some boys are quite incapable of reading and writing. There are usually benefit, clothing, and coal clubs in all the villages about here. I think as much is done here without legislation as could be done with it.

COURTEEN HALL.

Population - - 162.

141. *William Thomas Haskins*, schoolmaster of Courteen Hall Grammar School.—Been there 12 years. There are 41 boys at school, two-fifths are sons of labourers. I do not take them until they can read an easy book (monosyllables). I have had sons of labourers who can do that at 6, and some not till they are 9 or 10. They pay 2*s*. a quarter; that provides all materials; the instruction is really free. I have had them from 15 parishes, but since certificated masters have been appointed in some of the parishes, many have ceased to come from those parishes. They attend regularly up to 9; then they attend about six to nine months in the year up to the age of 12. At 12 they cease to attend altogether. When they leave me they can write a letter, read the newspapers, know enough of figures to understand a bill. They come long distances to my school, from two to four miles. One boy I have now who came from an infant school; he is 9, and has been with me going on for six months. After giving him a lesson on the map of England, I asked him what county he lived in; he said "February;" being told he was wrong, he said "1868." The boys are attracted away from my school to go to work. The boys who go to work are very healthy; it is a wonder we get them to school at all, they are never so happy as when they are in the fields.

BRAFIELD.

Population - - 494.

142. *Rev. W. L. Collins*, of Brafield.—I have been five years in this parish and 15 in the neighbourhood. Almost all the boys in the parish are either at school or at work, all except three or four. The boys leave at about the age of 9 years to go to work; at the present time there are only two or three in the school out of a total of 45 boys, who are over 9 years of age. Now and then, when a boy gets a job at pig keeping or bird minding, he comes back to school again when it is over; but as a general rule, when they have once left school they do not come back. When they leave finally, they can usually read fairly and write imperfectly. I should not wish them to stay at school after they are 11; *i.e.*, I do not think it would be practicable with reference to the fact that they are the children of poor parents; besides which, I think we could teach them all they would require by the time they arrived at that age, if their attendance was regular. It might be sufficient if they devoted their time exclusively up to the age of 10, and a portion of their time up to the age of 11 to education. The only plan which I think practicable for the education of boys after they go to work is by night schools. I don't like the notion of cumpulsory education, but I think you might prevent them from being employed up to a certain age. I don't think it necessary. I think things will right themselves with a little management. I think it would be very desirable and very practicable to enact that no boy should be employed in the fields until he is 9 (I should prefer 10), unless he has obtained a certificate of proficiency before that age. I should like to have a night school every night in the week, three times for boys between the ages of 10 and 15, and three times for lads over 15. I used to have a night school for four months in the year for two hours a night; I had it last year, but the attendance became irregular and I gave it up. We have only a schoolmistress, and she cannot teach big boys. At one time 30 boys used to attend the night school (the population of the parish is 500); but they became irregular, and I said I would not have a school unless 12 attended, and I had to give it up, but if I remain here I shall resume it next year.

The cottages here are very bad as regards accommodation, although they are not deficient in number, nor inconveniently situated as regards the land to be cultivated; few have more than two bed-rooms; some of them belong to small proprietors. The people are healthy. I am not aware that the crowded state of the cottages leads to actual immorality, although it produces an immoral tone; the rent varies from 50*s*. to 80*s*. a year. There are some cottages which belong to small proprietors, and have been built as a speculation; they are not worse than others, but are rented higher, and usually have no garden. I do not think that the present state of cottages is due to any defect in the law; perhaps a law might be introduced enacting that no new cottage should be built without two bed-rooms. The accommodation here is growing worse, because the population is becoming more numerous. I do not think that the Union Rating Act has had any effect, and no advantage has been taken of the Labouring Classes Dwelling-house Act. I do not think that the poor are at all indifferent to education; the only reason they do not send their sons to school more regularly is, that they want the earnings of the children, and while they are at school they do not see the advantage of regular attendance. I highly approve of allotments; about half of the cottagers here have them—more than half; they answer extremely well. We make it rather a a favour to the cottagers to let them to them; they usually have from 40 to 10 poles, and they pay rent at the rate of 3*l*. per acre; they may grow what they like, and many of them grow corn, which they usually sell. I think it best to let the men manage their allotments as they like, although I used to think differently. I think they can manage 25 poles without depriving their employer of the best of their labour; their boys and their wives work for them. There are many shoemakers here who have allotments, and the work is very good for them.

143. Extract from a letter written by the Rev. W. L. Collins of Brafield.

"I have tried to make out for you as you wished the average age at which children leave school in the agricultural villages in this county. Judging from my experience as diocesan inspector, I should say that the great majority of the children leave the school before they reach the highest class. I have taken the returns of 85 village schools which are under inspection in this county, and I find that the average age in the second class, taking the first as the highest, is 8 years and 9 months. This would coincide with my own impression as to the age at which boys commonly leave for field labour. The girls might fairly be put a year higher. They, in the majority of cases do reach the highest class in the school."

144. *William Bailey*, age 10. I live in the village and work for Mr. ——. I have been at work two years; I drive the plough and clean the stable; I go to work at 6.30 and get home at 6. I have four brothers and three sisters, all at home except me; Father works with the engine. I earn 3*s*. a week. I go to school on a Sunday; I can't read much, and never learnt to write. Only one of my brothers goes to school; he is older than me. We sleep three in each room at home. I like going to work better than to school; father is not much of a scholar.

[I was told that this was the most "unlicked cub" in the parish; none of his family can read. The case was quite an exceptional one.—F. H. N.]

Northamptonshire.

Mr. Norman.

e.

SPRATTON.

Population - - 1,086.

145. *Rev. J. L. Roberts*, vicar of Spratton.—There is no trace of private gangs in this district. I never heard of such a thing about here, and it could not exist in the neighbourhood without my knowledge. As a general rule women and girls are not employed in agricultural labour. Agricultural labour interferes with boys' education by making them leave school early. I think the education is insufficient in quality when they leave, and apt to be forgotten. They forget how to read and write when they go to work, but they pick up practical knowledge and shrewdness. There is no more intelligent class than the better class of agricultural labourers. I think the deficiences I have mentioned might be supplied by the attendance at day school of children under 10 years of age during the winter months, and by attendance at night school after that age. I object altogether to compulsion; I think the remedy will come of itself. People gradually begin to see the necessity of education. Some time ago people emigrated from this place, and then arose the necessity of letter writing; now every boy wants to write. So stores have been established, which necessitate calculation, and they wish to learn arithmetic. Resistance would follow compulsion. The labourers too are becoming more ambitious than they were, and they know they cannot get on without education. The school here was formerly inefficiently conducted, it was then neglected by the poor; it is now better managed and is proportionately valued. A night school is the only mode of educating boys after they go to work; the early education must be supplemented by night schools, and the Government should make provisions which would give support to them. It should be so arranged that the certificated teacher can conduct the night school efficiently without a feeling of oppression; probably this would involve an alteration of the work to be done in the day school, and greater liberality in the grants. There are a few children in the village who don't go either to school or to work; that is due to the immoral character of the parents. The Government grant should be given to boys who attend the night school over 10 years of age, and not over 12. All the boys go to work at 10. Cottages in number are more than sufficient; that is because the people have gone to the manufacturing districts, on account of the long distances they had to go from here to get work. In accommodation the cottages were formerly infamous, but are gradually improving because the worst are uninhabited. The cottages are well situated as regards the work to be done in this parish, but this is an open village and supplies labour to the neighbouring parishes where there is a scarcity of cottages, and some of the labourers have long distances to walk to their work in those parishes, from 2½ to 5 miles. Many cottages are built upon the waste, and the cottagers have enclosed portions of the land. These cottages are beyond all control. Those of them which belong to respectable men are good, the others bad. Rent is from 1*s.* to 2*s.* a week without gardens. Most of the agricultural labourers have allotments. I think I approve of allotments, but gardens are preferable; each allotment should not be more than a quarter of an acre, and there should be no restriction as to cultivation. There is a store in the village; it works well and respectably. I never ask the people to support it, they support it of themselves. The villages about here are large and the people independent. The agricultural labour is not physically injurious within reasonable limits as to distance; but I have known men who were insufficiently fed break down under it, or diseases developed.

146. Extract from Return sent in by the Rev. J. L. Roberts.

The third mode (Print Works) is the only practicable mode of enforcing school attendance; but even in this case compulsory action is undesirable. The school attendance is importantly affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents. The question resolves itself really into the provision of the school on the one hand and the rate of wages on the other. The effect of cottage accommodation upon morality is direct and extreme; upon education indirect and powerful through morality. Controlling powers similar to those in corporate towns are needed grievously in villages. The present sanitary Acts are tolerably effectual as to external arrangements, but wholly fail as to the interior. There ought to be some limit as to the tenement which a speculator or pauper proprietors can offer for human habitation; poor people literally convert pigsties and out-hovels into cottages and let them to each other to the great detriment of their neighbours' property and persons. The course of events points clearly to a rise in agricultural wages, and cottage accommodation will form a proper item in these wages, enhancing, of course, the cost of production. The thing will work itself out.

147. Extract from a letter written by the Rev. J. L. Roberts in explanation of his oral evidence.

1. My opinion is founded primarily upon my own experience, and this experience is not derived from villages purely agricultural.

2. But in my own parish, and others similarly situated, the development has been gradual and is progressive, and I am of opinion that, owing to the vastly increasing habits of communication amongst all classes of the poor, the wave will spread eventually over the whole country, reaching the most neglected districts at the latest period.

3. The external circumstances of this parish have not greatly altered in 20 years. The character of the people has altered most perceptibly in 10, and notably in this respect.

4. There is indifference in a certain class of parents arising, as I stated in conversation, from demoralization and utter absence of affection beyond the mere στοργή which really subsides after the infancy of the child; with reference to this indifference I would say, (1) compulsion will raise it into hostility; (2) it will baffle all legislative measures; (3) the compulsory attendance of such unfed, unclothed, uncared for children at school will produce very small and valueless results in their case; and (4) will tend to lower appreciably the results of voluntary attendance in others.

5. I would call your attention to a difficulty in management arising out of exclusion from labour at a proper age on account of non-attendance. Practically it will remove from the managers the power of expulsion. There would be in this place, and in others, instances of positive uncleanliness of person and utter indecency of conduct which ought I think, in justice to the children, to bar attendance; I have felt the difficulty very seriously in the case of Sunday schools.

6. I would draw a clear distinction between restraint from labour on the ground of age (which I would look upon as protective), and restraint of children capable of labour on the ground of non-attendance at school, which I should look upon as penal.

7. I think that if Government are to interfere by direct legislation with education, they must control three elements in social life simultaneously to produce any result of real value, viz., education, cottage accommodation, and beer shops, &c.; and that the single treatment of every one of these will be nugatory; and of the three I believe beer shops and the public house question to be the master one controlling the other two.

8. The other two I believe to resolve themselves really and ultimately into that of wages; and that the wages question will settle itself, especially as it shall become more customary to pay different labourers at varying rates, and so to encourage superiority of work, which implies superiority of intelligence.

The real reason for indifference to education among the agricultural poor is to be found, first, in their

poverty, secondly, in their want (to use a somewhat cant expression) of a "career;" the moment that they see the world open to them, that moment they will appreciate the education which enables them to avail themselves of the opening, and this will be the case as soon as the intelligent farmer sees the superior value of an intelligent labourer, and the intelligent (*i.e.* the educated) labourer commands a better rate of wages.

The effect of direct Government interference is to reduce everything to a uniform level, to raise perhaps the lower line but proportionately at least to depress the higher, and to discourage all higher culture and the development of individual talent. The effect of the Revised Code eminently illustrates this. I apprehend a great deterioration in the tone and interest of school education under direct Government management or direct compulsory system.

148. *J. Griffiths*, schoolmaster, Spratton. — I have been here two years. The boys may enter the school after the age of 6. Some never attend regularly, *i.e.*, they only attend during three of the 12 months of the year; that is owing to the demand for field work. Those who attend regularly attend until they are 12 years old. When they leave, they can read so as to amuse themselves; they can write fairly, and know enough arithmetic to understand a bill. About one-third of the whole number of boys who come here attend regularly; but they are not of the agricultural classes. The attendance had increased last year 25 per cent. as compared with previous years. I think the increase is likely to continue at the same rate, because the school is better managed than it was. We have not enough money to keep up the night school well. I have to be in the day school five hours and a half five days a week; and in the night school two hours two or three days a week. I could not even pay the expenses of the night school from the money I get from the night school, aided by the grant. Every boy who gets anything gets on an average, 2*s.* That would not pay the ordinary expense of keeping up the school, *i.e.*, lights, &c.

149. *Mrs. Balderson.* — I have five children:—1, boy (age 11); 2, a girl (age 10); 3, a boy (age 6); and two other girls. My husband works for —— [within one mile]. My husband has been at work for three weeks, but he was out of work for five or six weeks before that. My eldest boy goes to work; he earns 2s. 6*d.* a week. I wish my children to go to school. My husband can read and write. There is more schooling now than there used to be. My second boy, who is 6, goes to school.

150. *Richard White*, age 10.—I used to go to work for Mr. ——, who lives close by. I used to work from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. I had one hour for dinner, which I took with me; half an hour for lunch, and half an hour at 4 p.m. I earned 2*s.* a week. I was not very tired in the evening when I came home. I first went to work two years ago. My father is a postman at Northampton.

[Read well; an exceptional case; few so good.—F. H. N.]

151. *Henry Martin*, 8.—I go out to frighten birds for Mr. ——. I go out at 7, and return home at 7. My father is a labourer. I have four brothers and two sisters at home; we all sleep in one room with father and mother. I went to work because Mr. —— came to fetch me. I like coming to school better than going to work. [Read fairly.]

RAVENSTHORPE.

Population - - 701.

152. *Mr. Edward Lantsbery.*—I live at Ravensthorpe, and farm 400 acres (half pasture) of my own land. I don't employ women; they are very seldom employed about here, except in spudding thistles, turning hay, taking in harvest, shocking barley, &c. I don't think anybody employs above two or three of them, and they are the lowest of the low. My regular staff is eight men and five or six boys (aged from 14 to 18.) Besides them I employ little boys to keep off birds. I pay the men 12*s.*, and boys 4*s.* to 8*s.*. besides beer every day (that is not usually allowed about here). All my labourers live close to my land. I have no difficulty in getting boys; they are generally my labourers' boys. I never employ a boy under 10 years old. Their chief work is driving the team. In December and January they attend to my beasts, and one of them is always with the shepherd. They are always healthy. Ploughing lasts until the middle of July, and then they hoe turnips. I think all my boys have been to school. I think everybody ought to be able to read and write. I find all my boys trustworthy. When they go to plough they return home at three; then they have their dinner, clean the horses, and do odd jobs. It would be inconvenient to me to let them go away early in the afternoon. I should prefer my men living in the village, if sufficiently accessible from their work. In my parish the cottages are sufficient in number, and good. The parish is special in that respect. I have seven or eight cottages let with gardens and allotments; the rent is usually 1*s.* a week. We have allotments in this parish. The land was left as a charity to be so used. Some men have as much as an acre. If they have that quantity, they will go to work for themselves two or three weeks together. Allotments are a great help to them. I don't object to their growing corn. I think half an acre is ample. I do not think it would be a hardship to say that nobody should go to work unless he could read and write; but I object to coercion.

153. *Rev. W. A. Strong*, Ravensthorpe.—Almost every family in this parish has an allotment; they are one or two roods each; there are in the parish 47 or 48 acres let under 2*l.* an acre; we make no stipulation as to cultivation; we make them cultivate with spade, but they don't dig deep, and they grow wheat and vegetables; they seldom employ men to assist them, and seldom send their wives and children to work; they all wish to have as much land as we will let to them. The education here is decidedly defective; I think a compulsory scheme would be desirable if practicable, and that the expense should be met by a rate charged on all ratepayers. All the children, boys and girls, go to work in the fields from 7 upwards; some of them come to school at certain times of the year after that age, and go to work at other times. I have reason to believe that the field labour is very injurious to the health; a girl died here lately in consequence of a cold caught while bird scaring. There are no resident gentlemen here, but there are 16 farmers. I have been here three years and have never received any pecuniary assistance from the farmers for the school.

154. Extract from the Return sent in by the Rev. William A. Strong, of Ravensthorpe.

1. I believe that the allotment system has the effect of preventing wages from rising, for the land which the allotees work is let at a low rent, and this with the produce is evidently supposed to make up for low wages.

2. I have known farmers say that a man cannot throw his best strength into his master's work, for he naturally keeps himself more or less for the evening hours of the work, or perhaps before going to his regular employment he has had an hour on his allotment.

THORNBY.

Population - - 252.

155. *I. S. Lovell, Esq.*—I farm 240 acres (160 being grass). It is chiefly my own property. I employ one woman pretty constantly; she is an old friend and comes for her own sake, not for mine. I employ a few women and girls (aged about 10) in haymaking, and sometimes one or two more in spudding thistles. The women are not generally employed about here; they are employed a little in haymaking, and they glean in harvest for themselves. The boy I employ

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is almost always with the team. There are no gangs, either public or private. I think that in this neighbourhood the education of the labourers is sufficient; it is gradually improving. The children are better educated than their fathers were, and they know enough for all the duties they will have to perform. I don't think they would do the work better for me as an employer, if they knew more. There is a night school here; there was a difficulty in obtaining a regular attendance, but that difficulty has been met by refusing to receive the scholars at all unless they come regularly. There is neither club nor store here; the parish is too small to maintain them, but most of our men belong to clubs in the adjoining parishes. The population is purely agricultural. I object to women going to field work; but it is better than lace work, it is more healthy, and when they return home in the evening, they remain at home. We are well off for cottages, none of my men come more than one mile; most of the cottages have gardens. There are 24 acres of land here left in the hands of trustees to be allotted at their discretion to the most deserving of the poor, at the rate of 2*s.* 6*d.* an acre; that works well. Each family (married couple) has half an acre, and six of the most deserving families have a portion of the land together, on which they can keep six cows. They can manage half an acre a piece if conveniently situated, without seriously interfering with their ordinary labour. Some of the farmers do object to their having that amount. They have to leave their work (for their employers) occasionally, chiefly in spring and autumn, and they ask leave to be absent. There are a few young and idle men about, who are employed on the allotments. We make no stipulation as to what they may grow, most of them grow corn. I think it would be a good thing if boys did not work until they were 10; but I object to State interference.

COTON (Hamlet of Ravensthorpe).

156. *Mr. W. Biggs*, Coton, near Guildsborough.—I farm about 950 acres. I have 400 here (mixed), 330 at Stanford Hall (all grass), and 200 at Cold Ashby. I never employ women or boys if I can avoid it; I never do it except at Stanford for a few days among the hay. I would not do it if I could get men. Women's labour is very expensive. I employ six or seven boys; I cannot do without them. I seldom employ a boy under 11 or 12 years of age; they cannot drive a team younger than that, and most of them are older. My ploughs are always double, and a boy of 14 or 15 can direct a plough with two horses. Ploughing and harrowing occupies the boys in spring, summer, and autumn, and they clean turnips in winter. There is rather a scarcity of boys here, but I don't have to hunt about after them; they come to me if they want work. I employ little boys of 7 or 8 to frighten birds, but for no other job; they are obliged to go out on Sundays. That occupies them from about 20th February to first week in May, for about three weeks before harvest, and also for three weeks after the wheat is sown in October. I have a difficulty in getting boys for that; I sometimes want seven or eight. If we had no boys we might as well not sow the corn, and I am obliged to send about the villages to get the boys. I never employ little boys in any other ways. I employ one man always in winter with two or three boys cleaning and cutting turnips in the field with the flock, but I engage the boys. Most of my men go about one mile to their work. The cottages are some good and some bad; the rent without a garden is 1*s.*, and with a garden 60*s.* or 70*s.* There are no cottages at Stanford. In every village empty cottages are to be found now; they are generally the worst. The supply of labour is diminishing; the worst is that only the old and useless men remain. I don't want boys under 10 except at the times I have mentioned. At Ashby some of the best educated men were the worst for us; but they have a better chance of getting on if they are educated. I think it right to make boys learn, but I don't think there are enough schools about the country now to compel them to go; that is the only objection I see to it. Allotments are very good for gardens, but growing corn is a bad system; a man cannot cultivate corn with spade labour so as to get a profit. At Ravensthorpe, where there are above 50 acres of allotments, the labourers sometimes want to leave their work for a fortnight together to work for themselves. I think an allotment should be one rood in extent, and confined to vegetables. Growing corn encourages dishonesty, and even if honestly worked it is no advantage, because no profit can be made from small farming like that. They don't work for us as they do for themselves; they go home as soon and as fast as they can to work on their allotments.

157. *R. Ward*, age 9.—I frightened crows for Mr. Biggs (56) last Michaelmas, and frightened one spring before. I have been at work regularly since last Michaelmas. I went to school at Guildsborough before I came to work. My father is waggoner for Mr. Biggs. I have two brothers and one sister, all younger than me. I like frightening crows better than regular work, because it is not so hard. I had as soon go to school as to work. I live at Coton [close by]. I go to the Sunday school at Guildsborough. [Read a little.—F. H. N.]

HOLDENBY.

Population - - 184.

158. *W. Painter*, of Holdenby.—I farm 95 acres arable, and nearly 300 pasture. I employ women and girls in weeding corn in May and June, and in hay time; they sometimes spud thistles or cock barley when people are busy, but I do not employ them at other times of the year, and never under 17 or 18 years of age. That sort of work is occasionally valuable to me at a pinch. I generally employ four boys from 10 to 16, chiefly with the team. There are no private gangs about here. I have no employment for boys until they are 10, except to frighten crows and keep pigs, &c. This is a close parish, and there are no cottages in it. There is a prospect of having cottages built since the change in the law. My men come from Spratton or East Hatton [2 miles each]. My men have to be here punctually, notwithstanding the distance they come. I would not pay my landlord a per-centage on the outlay necessary for building cottages. There is only a dame's school here, but the boys are as well educated as they can be under the circumstances. They leave work at 5.30 this time of the year. I don't think they would be more useful to me if they knew more.

159. *George Page*, age 10.—I live at Holdenby. My father is a labourer. I have only one sister. I live with grandfather. I go to night school four months in the year; I went to day school before I came to work. I went one year to frighten birds for Mr. ——; the crop was beans. I used to get cold and wet, but not tired, frightening birds. [Read fairly. —F. H. N.]

LAMPORT.

Population - - 350.

160. Extract from Return sent in by the Rev. R. Isham, of Lamport.

There is not a person above 8 years old who cannot read and write in either Lamport or Hanging Houghton.

161. *Charles Howard.*—I live at Hanging Houghton. I am 13 years old. I work for Sir C. Isham. I have been at work off and on since I was 6. I have been to night school, and occasionally to day school during that time. I could read and write a little when I came here a year ago, but have learnt nearly all since.

[Read well.—F. H. N.]

HASELBEECH.

Population - - 180.

162. *Mrs. Griffin*, labourer's wife.—I think no boy should go to work under 10. I have a son, aged 8.

who scares for Mr. Pell; he earns 3*s.* a week, and has been scaring seven weeks now; he was so employed six weeks last autumn, and about seven weeks last July and August with the peas. He helps in harvest with me, and earns about 6*s.* at it altogether. My family (four in number) obtained 17 stone of flour by gleaning last year. My son of 8 is a very sharp boy, and lives close to his work, and he may earn 80*s.* a year. [The cottage was in the centre of the farm where the boy worked.—F. H. N.] Most boys under 10 would never be able to earn more than 40*s.* a year. It would cost me more to keep him than it does if he had his meals in the field, but living near his work he can come home and get a warm comfortable meal, so that there is no waste. I keep beer in the house. We have a nine gallon cask every six weeks, it costs 13*d.* a gallon; and I find it answer better than spending all that money in meat. My eldest son pays me 8*s.* a week for his board and washing. My two biggest boys go to night school, and I have two girls at the day school, and my youngest son goes to the day school when he is not at work; and when he is at work we give him a lesson to do when he comes home in the evening. If he earned only 40*s.* a year, I would send him to school regularly, and sacrifice his wages. If he were to get a good education he might get on the railway, or get a foreman's place, or some work other than that of a farm labourer. I think it is the duty of every man to educate his children, both for this world and the next. We hope both our boys will get something better than mere labourer's work soon. We had an offer from a blacksmith yesterday, to take my boy Dan (age 16) as apprentice without any premium, but we refused it because we did not like the man who made the offer, and Dan was not anxious for it. I think no boy ought to go to work until he is 10 years old, or can read and write. I think it costs 20*s.* a year more to keep a boy when he goes to work than when he goes to school.

CLIPSTON.

Population - - 877.

163. *Mr. J. R. Wartnaby.*—I farm 460 acres (120 arable), chiefly my own land. I employ females in hay time only. I employ about 10 boys; about three go with the teams; the other seven scare birds, clean turnips, pick stones and twitch, &c.; two or three of them together do that sort of work. I had rather not have any boy to work for me under 9 years of age, and they are only useful at that age to scare. My teams usually come in to be fed at dinner time, and then go out again and remain out until 4 o'clock. That is the usual plan in the Midland counties. There are plenty of men and boys here; we supply a few to other parishes, such as Kelmarsh and Oxenden [two miles each]. We have an old grammar school here, where a free education is given to the boys belonging to six surrounding parishes; there are only 10 boys belonging to those parishes now at the school. [I was subsequently told that two of these 10 boys were the sons of the schoolmaster.—F. H. N.] Boys belonging to other parishes are taken in, but have to pay for their education. The master receives 100*l.* a year and a house; he must be a clergyman, and is bound to teach reading, grammar, and Latin. I attribute the small attendance entirely to the indifference of the parents. Dissenters may and do attend, and most of the labourers here are dissenters. I am so amazed at this state of things that I think some measure is necessary. I should not object to the children being compelled to go to school up to the age of 10, except during the time when they are wanted for scaring. We are well off for cottages; the usual rent is about 1*s.* There are about 80 acres of allotments in this parish; that is too much by half. [I ascertained that the amount was 82 acres.—F. H. N.] I think they tempt the men to rob us of our time night and morning, and perhaps of other things. They come to work for us when they are tired, and don't give us their full strength. The women and children help to work on the allotments. The wages are usually 12*s.*; no allowances except in harvest. I can recollect wages at 9*s.* about 20 years ago; and there were very few allotments at that time. When the enclosure took place here, 10 acres of land were set apart for the church, and 13 for the poor. That land is let in allotments of one rood each. The churchwardens are bound to spend the rent coming from the poor land for the benefit of the poor, but need not let the land in allotments. It is often extremely inconvenient to me to allow my men to go and work for themselves; but I cannot refuse. I don't know how many men I can depend upon for a particular day. I do not object to allotments, if near home, and not exceeding one rood for a family. I would not restrict them as to the mode of cultivation. This village is almost purely agricultural.

164. *Mr. Smeaton,* Clipston.—I am a dissenter; we maintain an open school here, about 40 or 50 children attend throughout the year. They are principally the children of dissenters, but other children attend as well. The boys stay at school up to 7 or 8, and the girls up to about 12. There are only the grammar school and an infant school besides ours. I don't think dissenters object to send their children to the grammar school. I am most decidedly opposed to compulsory education, because I think that no measure would be introduced which did not make religious instruction, which dissenters object to, compulsory. I should approve of restricting the children from going to work until they are a certain age. I don't think you would find any village about here where the people are better off than they are here; there is a store which is well supported, and which injures my custom as a grocer.

165. *Rev. E. Thompson.*—I have about 45 acres of land let in allotments. I have one allotment over three acres, three between two and three acres, 18 between one and two acres, six between half and one acre; the remainder under half an acre.

The allotments are in three pieces of land; one piece is let at 3*l.* an acre; that is under half a mile from the village. Another piece is let at 2*l.* an acre; that is $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles from the village; the third piece is let at 1*l.* 15*s.* an acre; that is $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the village. The labourers like the allotments very much; when one is vacant there are many applications for it. Many of my allotments are cultivated by hired labour.

166. Extract from the Return, sent in by the Rev. Edmund Thompson, of Clipston.

About March 20th, in fine weather I found 15 men without any work. This would be an intolerable state of things if there were no allotments.

The allotment system certainly has the effect of raising wages; the farmers think too much so in harvest time. I know it keeps many of our labouring men from idleness and poverty, and I think fosters a desirable spirit of independence. It works well here.

GUISBOROUGH.

Population - - 730.

167. Extract from Return sent in by Mr. T. E. Lovell.

Any restriction would be useless; the mutual interests of employer and employed are the best for both parties. I think young boys are very much pleased when they can begin to work on the farms.

The competition for labour by farmers prevents any young persons being overworked, but I would make it illegal to have boys at work under 10 years of age.

After boys begin to work they seldom go to school except on Sundays, nor do I see how their parents or guardians can afford to maintain them without work after 10 years old.

In many or most villages the cottage accommodation is very bad, it is bad for the moral as it is for the

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health. There is a general improvement in the last 20 years.

Close parishes are those in which the cottages belong to the owners of the land; these are the best for this reason, the worst labourers are sent to live in open parishes (or those belonging to small proprietors), in these the cottage accommodation is very bad indeed; labourers ought to live as near to their work as possible. Time, interest, and the union rating will remedy that evil.

I occupy land in five parishes; in four of these every possible exertion is made for the instruction of children, in the other I am sorry to say the children are sadly neglected.

CHAPEL BROMPTON.

168. Extract from Return sent in by Mr. J. N. Beasley, of Chapel Brampton.

In some parishes near this I have observed that where women are constantly employed in field labour the cottages are invariably dirty, the children run half wild, and the money which they earn seems to do no good; in fact they are generally the poorest families in the place. No farmer will ever employ a child spending any portion of his time at school out of the usual 12 hours.

BRINGTON.

Population - - 806.

169. *James Bramley, Thomas Haynes, Bernard Dunkley,* and *Richard Judge.*—[These were four labourers whom I examined at Althorp; I recorded no answer which was not assented to by all.—F. H. N.] A labourer can manage a rood of land without interfering with his ordinary work, but he cannot manage more. We all have allotments. A man and his wife would consume what comes from one rood of land, but if they have no family they would grow a little more corn than if they had a family. Twenty or thirty years ago wages were 9*s.*, but then the women and children worked and earned money, now they earn nothing, but it is much better for them to stay at home; besides which, formerly, they had parish allowances. There were no allotments then, or very few. As a general rule the women and children do not work on the allotments, and it is best they should not. The net profits of a rood of land would be about 50*s.*, but that depends so much on the season and on the land. If the allotment is conveniently situated a man can cultivate a rood without losing more than two days in the year. We should like to have an acre, and would be glad to lose time for the purpose of cultivating it, besides which there are always men out of work to help. Some men won't cultivate half a rood, they don't care about it and don't deserve to have it. I don't think there is any desire among labourers to hold land except for the sake of what they got from it. They do not think they rise in position from holding land. If we had a little more land our boys might go to school usually, and to work at their leisure time; at present if they go out to work they cannot go to school at all; work must occupy them all day. Wages here at 12*s.* No labourer can afford to pay more than 1*s.* a week for rent. A good cottage is essential for the health and comfort of a man and his family. Boys about here usually go to work at the age of 9, and as a general rule they don't go to school after they have once been to work, although they may be out of work a good many weeks in every year. They get at most 2*s.* a week when they first go out. They may want a little more food when they are at work than at school, but not much, and it saves a great deal in clothes. A boy may perhaps be at work six months in the year before he is 10. We don't think that a boy who is regularly at work could attend a day school without interfering with the labour due to his master. As a rule the parents do like to have their children educated, but some don't care at all about it. We think it would be best to compel boys to go to school until they are 10; some parents would never send their children without compulsion.

WATFORD.

Population - - 450.

170. Extracts from Return sent in by Lord Henley.

There are probably about 30 boys employed in agriculture in this parish.

There are very few women so employed; not more than six regularly.

The boys are between the ages of 10 and 14. There are no young girls employed in agricultural labour.

There are so few females employed in this neighbourhood that it is not possible to form an opinion as to the effects of such employment on their morals; the employment of females with machines, which is occasionally seen, may be considered objectionable.

Boys should not be employed under 10 years of age.

I should consider it rather hard upon the agricultural labourers (none of whom have any voice in making the laws or choosing representatives) to be forced to send their children (especially those who are earning something) to school. It must be a difficult matter for a labourer to maintain a family upon the wages which are given here (about 12*s.* weekly), and it would be hard to interfere with the weekly receipts of the family.

The school is in the village, and the children are not generally kept away by distance. There are some outlying cottages in the parish, at a distance of a mile or so from the school, the attendance of the children belonging to which is sometimes affected by the weather.

There are about 56 cottages for about 3,400 acres of land—that is insufficient; we have to hire labourers for the farm and from neighbouring parishes.

A considerable number of cottages here belong to myself; many of them are newly built, and are, I trust, healthy and commodious. The rent of the best is 3*l.* a year; I have, however, some very bad ones, which I hope to be able to pull down and replace.

There are some belonging to small proprietors which are let I believe at 4*l.* or 5*l.* yearly. There are a few small freeholds. I do not know any case in which tradesmen are the owners who oblige tenants to deal with them.

I think it very difficult, almost impossible, to build good cottages for labourers which shall pay anything but a very low interest on the money expended; the simplest cottage can hardly be built under 100*l.*, and the rent of this, if taken at 3*l.*, would produce but a very low interest upon the capital outlay. But if a good sized piece of ground, say from a quarter to half an acre, could be let with the cottage and immediately adjoining it, I believe that the labourer could afford to pay a very much higher rent, because his wife and elder children could assist in cultivating it, which they have difficulty in doing with allotments a mile from their home. If a labourer were to pay 7*l.* a year for a cottage with a quarter of an acre of land, worth ordinarily 10*s.* a year, this would almost make the original outlay upon the cottage remunerative.

The young persons are unable to read or write tolerably.

The older children are the principal attendants at the night school, some adults attend, the younger children do not attend.

There are no special difficulties in maintaining the night school; of course it would be satisfactory if the attendance were larger, but as this entirely voluntary on the part of the pupils, it is a difficulty which hardly admits of a remedy.

FLOORE.

Population - - 1,138.

170 (*b*). *The Rev. J. P. Johnson,* Floore.—I think that the state of education here is defective, but I don't think that there is any such a substantial evil existing as to require an Act of Parliament to remedy it. The

school here has been endowed for 20 boys who pay nothing; the rest pay 3*d.*, or if more than one of a family attend the others pay 2*d.* and 1*d.* each. If you had compulsion you must admit all the worst children, and it would be impossible to maintain discipline if you could not turn out the black sheep. There are particular families who invariably go wrong. There is no school or labourers' cottages at Brockhall, which is 2½ miles from here. The population of this parish supplies Brockhall and in part other parishes with labour. Some of our men may go two or three miles to work. The rent of the cottages here is about three or four guineas a year without gardens; about 19 cottages have been built upon the waste, they pay nothing; and the cottages are always kept in one family. I have examined the register of our school, and I find that the 20 children who are educated free attend only half as many times as 20 other children chosen at random who pay. Almost all the labourers who wish for allotments have them. They are some 1 mile and some 1½ miles from the cottages. The men grumble at the distance, but would rather have the land there than not have it at all. They are let at the ordinary rent. I think the allotments take the children away from school a great deal, though the main work is done by the men. The people who live in the bad cottages on the waste are not as a rule worse than other people in the parish, but as a rule the worst of them live in the worst cottages.

71. *Mrs. Rogers.*—[This witness, the wife of a shepherd, was living in one of the best cottages on the waste mentioned by Mr. Johnson in his evidence.—F. H. N.]—My husband built this house 14 years ago; it cost 70*l.* We had to borrow part of the money, but it is all paid off now. The repairs last year cost 3*l.*, but they don't often come to that. Our rates are 4*s.* 6*d.* a year. We have two bedrooms, that is enough for us with three children. My husband is a shepherd; he earns nearly 1*l.* a week. My eldest son is a clerk in an office at Liverpool; he was educated partly here and partly at Weedon. My second son is aged 16, and he is at work with my husband. My husband has an allotment of half an acre; it is one mile from here; he could not manage it if it were not on the road home from his work. Mr. ——, his master, ploughs it for him. We consume everything we grow, and pay 2*l.* a year for the half acre. My husband has always earned as much as he does now, or we could not have built this house. He is no scholar himself, but he tried to give his son a good education.

LONG BUCKBY.

Population - - 2,500.

172. *Rev. C. A. Yate.*—I have been here 12 years; the population of the parish is 2,500; they are principally shoemakers. Girls don't work in the fields at all, and women very rarely. Most of the boys stay at school up to 11 years of age. [The schoolmaster placed the age at 10, saying it was chiefly a town population.—F. H. N.] There is a National school for boys and another for girls, besides several dames' and private schools; the latter are chiefly for infants, but there are one or two for children who might go to the National school. Most of the boys who leave can read and write fairly, and do a little arithmetic. I think that the education has been defective up to the last three or four months, owing to our having a superannuated master, but he no longer has the management of the school, and at present I don't think the education is defective. Since the present master has been here the attendance has increased 50 per cent. I have never been able to put my school under inspection; the master and mistress are not certificated; and there is an endowment of 20*l.* a year for the master which would have to be deducted.

I am not in favour of compulsion. I think it would be impracticable; you would require an army of police to carry it out, and it is contrary to the existing love of independence. Knowing what I do of the nature of the place, and of the independent character of the people, I think that any pressure would be strongly resisted. I am not opposed to restricting the age at which children should be permitted to go to work. There used to be a night school here, but it has not been carried on for two years. It is about to be resuscitated, as some of the younger men want to learn to read and write. They are shoemakers. A store has been established here during the last nine years. The sales now amount to about 9,000*l.* a year; they have not materially increased during the last three or four years. A class has been formed for the education of adults in a room which has been built for the purposes of the store. We have more than sufficient labourers for the work to be done in this parish. The cottages are insufficient in accommodation; I think there are none with three bedrooms, and some have only one. The rent is 1*s.* 4*d.*, in some cases with a garden. A few have allotments. I have 31 acres of land which I let in allotments of from a quarter to one acre; half an acre is the usual amount. The cottagers plough their allotments; they either hire a plough or in some cases their employers plough it for them. I let them grow what they like. They pay 3*l.* or in some cases 3*l.* 10*s.* per acre, and pay tolerably punctually. I have a great many applications for my allotments whenever any are vacant. The farmers have not complained to me about the allotments. I have forbidden boys working on the allotments lately; they only get into mischief. The men's wives work a little. I think the allotment system has a very good moral effect on the men, and I don't think it tends to keep down wages. I think the Government aid should be extended to all schools, whether the master and mistress are certificated or not.

173. Extract from a Letter written by Mr. J. Howe, Secretary to the Self-assistance Industrial Society of Long Buckby, established 1858, showing the progress of the society since its commencement.

	£	s.	d.
Amount of business the first year -	2,809	11	8
Profit on same - - -	194	5	3
Amount of business the sixth year	7,655	17	2
Profit on the same - -	657	14	1
Amount of business in 1867 -	8,845	0	3¾
Profit on the same - -	856	19	6½

We started with 70 members, and have now 283; have paid the sum of 4,233*l.* 0*s.* 5*d.* in interest and dividend on members' purchases; we have spent in building 837*l.*, and in other fixtures 506*l.*

COLD HIGHAM.

Population - - 349.

174. *Smith.*—I live at Cold Higham. I don't know what my Christian name is. I have never been baptized. I live with my mother. My father is dead. I am 12. I don't know whether I was 12 last year or this. I don't know when my birthday is. I have never been to school or to any place of worship. I have five brothers and sisters at home; one of them can read. There is one bedroom in the cottage.

[This boy was at work with a horse hoe when I saw him. There was no school at Cold Higham, where he lived, but there was one at Pattishall, about three-quarters of a mile off.—F. H. N.]

EYDON.

Population - - 576.

175. Extract from the Return sent in by the Rev. A. J. Empson.

No child under 8 years of age should be employed at all.

All boys over 8 years of age and up to 13 years of age should be compelled to attend an evening school at least 40 nights every year, and produce a certificate

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of such attendance every spring before they are allowed to be employed for the ensuing year.

The number and average of boys [at school] is the same in winter and summer, as the few boys who return in winter are balanced by extra infants in summer.

All boys, immediately on leaving the day school, should be admitted to the night school, and be allowed to be presented for examination in the various standards as fast as they can be prepared. If a boy attended only the minimum of 40 nights [mentioned above] he would possibly require two years preparation to pass from one standard to another.

Assuming him to have passed three standards before going to work he would have reached the fifth standard by the time his compulsory attendance at night school was ended.

WELFORD.

Population - - 1,099.

176. Extracts from Return sent in by Mr. John Gee.

The women are not employed in the winter, except in stone picking, which is done by the load. The girls work at the bead trimming for Coventry.

The demand upon the physical powers does not injuriously affect their health or constitution, but the old men are subject to rheumatism.

Neither females or the young are subject to ill-treatment.

I believe scaring the crows has a bad effect on the boys, more particularly on Sundays.

I believe it would be better for the boys to be at school until 10 years old.

The work done by young persons is not laborious, and I do not think they are at all injured by it, and I believe legislative restriction would be very unpopular.

If the boys attended the day school regularly until they were 10 years old and then had an opportunity of going to a night school four or five nights a week at a cheaper rate than a penny each night for an hour and a half I think they might receive education enough for their position.

The girls are taught to sew and knit by the schoolmaster's wife, who is paid for doing it by the clergyman's family.

I believe in many cases two cottages could be built for 200*l.*, and by putting half of an acre of land to the two cottages, say worth 30*l.*, these might be advantageously let for 5*l.* 10*s.* each, which would pay nearly five per cent., but the land should be adjoining the cottage.

The principal difficulties in the way of maintaining an evening school are want of good teachers to assist the certificated master, want of attention on the part of the boys, and when they almost all leave the day school at 10 years old they are not allowed by the Privy Council to attend a night school until after they are 12, when many become ashamed of their ignorance, and they will not come; and 3*d.* a week is too much for them to pay besides buying books.

WHITFIELD.

Population - - 265.

177. *Mr. J. Bartlett.*—I have lived here 33 years. I farm about 900 acres, about 620 of which are arable; I employ about 40 men and boys in winter, and about 50 in summer. My wages amount to from 25*l.* to 28*l.* per week. Boys are sometimes handy at the age of 9, but of no real value until the age of 10; they give so much trouble before that age. I employ an old man with a gun to scare at 10*s.* a week; I am sure that is economical on large farms. Young boys do more harm than birds do. My land requires three horses to plough, and therefore I want boys to drive. I have been a guardian of the Brackley union for 20 years and I find that the greatest number of cases of bastardy occur in those parishes where the cottages are most crowded. There are none from this parish, where the cottages are good. I think that the state of education is defective. I attribute the defect here to the fact that the the schoolmistress is inefficient. I am opposed to compulsion; I feel certain that the parents would take advantage of the opportunity if they could send their children to a good school.

FARTHINGHOE.

Population - - 392.

178. *The Rev. F. Litchfield.*—I have been of this parish for 51 years. I think that the education would be sufficient if the conditions upon which the Privy Council would grant money were less exacting. We have only an uncertificated mistress here, and therefore are not under inspection. I think that no provision should be made for educating children after they begin to work. As far as this place is concerned, I am opposed to restricting the age at which they may go to work. I am opposed to night schools, because I object to everything which brings people out of their houses at night. The nuisances in cottages and streets require compulsory inspection; it should be in the power of any person to make complaints to the magistrates in cases of nuisances. Inspectors of nuisances should have direct communication with the magistrates without the intervention of the boards of guardians, and should be fined if they neglect their duty. Guardians have so much interest in cottage property that they are not likely to enforce efficient inspection. I also think the construction of cottages should be put under superintendence; preventive measures are better than remedies. I would never have more than two bed-rooms in cottages, because more than that offers an encouragement to the sons and daughters when married to remain living in their parents' cottage, and it is impossible to have sufficient superintendence by land agents. I introduced the allotment system here in 1826, and have been satisfied with it ever since. I give 20 poles to each family. I also established a clothing club in 1826; and no person who misbehaves is allowed to share in either the allotments or clothing club. Wages about here are 11*s.* per week.

WICKEN.

Population - - 529.

179. Extract from a letter written by the Rev. H. J. Barton, rector.

On my coming here 30 years ago there was no girls' school, and the parents being appealed to said they could not afford to lose the lace money, and therefore could not send their children (girls) to school. Finding that the so-called lace schools were little dens of iniquity, in which not only vile talking was heard, but vile books were read aloud (and such they are still), we determined (1840) to set up a lace school, which so far succeeded by the help of a first-rate lace mistress and reduced payments, that by degrees the old dens were broken up and all the girls came to us, and have continued with us ever since. This, of course, implies the necessity of two mistresses, but it has proved much more, I hope, than worth the money. Only one school in the deanery (Easton Neston) followed the example, but it is now given up. We began with two days in the fortnight for regular school, now increased to three days, the remainder of the fortnight being given to lace, except for children from 5 to 6 or 7, who are always in regular school. The lacemakers whilst at their pillows say their hymns, sing, say their tables, and receive religious instruction from the schoolmistress, besides writing three times a week. The result has been not only a very much improved state of morals, ... but the girls now get out to service, many of them into good places.

Before referring to the school farm or school gardens, I will only express once more my own strong conviction, that if in legislating for agricultural

schools you omit the agricultural element you will do but little good. . . . . When we began in 1854 we had only four acres, on which we employed 12 boys from 8 to 10 off and on for seven months in the year; the other five months were entirely given to the school. The net profit upon the land was about 15*l.*, the value of the produce being about 53*l.*, and the cost of labour, tools, seeds, &c. about 38*l.* This may serve as an approximation. The method of cultivation of the grain crops was upon the Lois Weedon plan; but this, though perfect in theory, was found not to answer. Of late years we have added one more acre, and adopted a modification of the Lois Weedon plan, which answers well. But instead of 12 boys we can only keep six or seven, the farmers running away with the rest. The profits, however, are greater than when we had less land and more boys, the value of the crops varying from 50*l.* to 60*l.*, and the cost of the cultivation from 30*l.* to 35*l.* This is a very rough statement, but it will, I hope, give you some idea of the plan. As far as it goes it answers; and I believe it might be so modified with the two masters as to provide for the teaching of the night school, if Government assistance were given so as to fill up the gap between 12 and 16 years of age. I must remark that instead of causing the boys' attendance at the school to be lengthened, it has, it fact, shortened it, as they become handy lads at an earlier age, and though they get 4*d.* a day with me for four hours' work, many go to the farmers for 3*d.* a day for 10 hours, which means that the parents dare not refuse the farmers when their children are required.

[Note.—There is a more detailed account of the working of this school farm in the Journal of the Bath and West of England Society for the Encouragement of Agriculture, &c., Vol. V., p. 307.]

HARDINGSTONE.

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Population - - 1,915.

180. EXTRACT from Return sent in by Mr. W. SHAW, of Far Coton.

I always employ all the boys belonging to the labourers who live in my cottages, of which I have eight, placed by my landlord at my control, in which my labourers live rent free.

The field labour is the making of the boys. They are the picture of health, and eat and drink enormously; too much, I often think.

They have all been to school except one, who positively refuses, and I think he is the steadiest working boy of the lot. All the family have always refused to go to school, but I think it is to their disadvantage, not mine.

I lived in Cambridgeshire, where 100 children at least where employed in two gangs; they were very young. I saw no immorality nor impropriety, beyond the fact of the poor children walking so far to and from their work. I often thought, as they were only wanted at special seasons, it would have paid the employer to have sent some one-horse light vans or waggons for that purpose.

The shoe trade absorbs all female labour, so much so as to make domestic servants scarcely obtainable. If education is to be made compulsory, I should say 10 years is the age to limit it to.

In my opinion cottage accommodation is the most important question of the day, both morally and pecuniarily. Situate as I am, if I had not the full control of my cottages, I could not carry on my farming with any degree of comfort or satisfaction, and now, night or day or on Sundays, my labourers serve me with satisfaction and willingness.

Bedfordshire.

Mr. Culley.

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EVIDENCE ACCOMPANYING MR. CULLEY'S REPORT.

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„ John S. Crawley, Esq., J.P.	„
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„ E. R. Baynes, Esq.	„

THE following answers are collected from 90 circulars returned from 55 parishes in the county of Bedford.

26 circulars from 16 (*i.e.* all the parishes in Woburn union).
39 circulars from 19 parishes in Bedford union.
12 circulars from 10 parishes in Ampthill union.
7 circulars from 5 parishes in Biggleswade union.
6 circulars from 5 parishes in Luton union.
36 circulars being returned by clergymen of parishes, and 54 by owners and occupiers of land.

I. AS TO EMPLOYMENT IN PRIVATE GANGS.

The system of employing persons in agriculture in private gangs scarcely exists in the county of Bedford, and where it does exist, is confined to the employment of children under a foreman, who is the servant of the employer. Only five returns under the head of private gangs were given in answer to the circulars of inquiry. In only one of these cases are the children employed throughout the year, viz., in the Woburn Park gang composed of children between 10 and 13 years of age, of whom there are 16.

The Melchbourne Park gang consists of 10 children employed from March till October; these children were all between 8 and 10 years of age at the time the return was made.

The other returns under this head apply to the occasional employment of children in spring, chiefly in picking up twitch or stones.

In answer to the questions under this head,—*Mr. C. Stephenson*, assistant agent, Woburn Park farm, says, "There are 16 boys employed throughout the "year in this gang. They are employed in spring, "in assisting shepherd and feeding cattle, picking "stones and spreading soil, cleaning roots, &c. In

" summer, in cleaning fallows, hoeing roots, destroy-
" ing thistles, &c. In autumn, in picking and forking
" twitch, pulling and storing roots, &c. In winter, the
" same as in spring. They go from one to two miles
" to their daily work. Their usual hours of work
" upon the land are 9 hours in winter, and 11 in
" summer; out of which half an hour for breakfast,
" and one hour for dinner is allowed. I am inclined
" to think that where boys have been employed under
" 10 years of age the demand on their physical powers
" may have injured their health. Females are not
" employed here in farm labour, though I should
" advocate such employment as decidedly preferable
" to straw plaiting or lace making, *i.e.* viewed in a
" physical and moral light. It is a condition that all
" boys must be able to read and write before joining
" this gang (every facility is afforded in this and the
" neighbouring parishes towards this end), this con-
" dition and the example set here must have a good
" effect elsewhere. The man having charge of the
" gang is a skilled labourer, able to read and write
" and keep a daily journal, detailing the nature of the
" work and the amount due to each boy for his work;
" he is chosen not only for his manual but for his in-
" tellectual fitness."

In answer to the question "Have you any observa-
" tions to make as to its being desirable or practicable
" to subject 'private gangs' to legislative regulations,
" together with 'public gangs,'"

Mr. Stephenson says, "This is a difficult matter to
" express an opinion upon, but I should be inclined
" to recommend that boys be able to read and write
" before being employed; that they should not be em-
" ployed under 10 years of age, nor girls under 12;
" that the working time for children under 13 years
" of age be restricted to nine hours per day. It would
" not be proper to lay down any harsh line as to
" distance to travel, *e.g.* a village might furnish more
" workers than the land required within a certain
" radius. Rather compel landowners to build cot-
" tages within an easy distance than visit the labourer
" with restrictions which it is not in his power to
" remove."

Mr. Edward Campion, agent to Lord St. John, and manager of Melchbourne Park farm, says:—"A gang
" of 10 boys between 8 and 10 years of age is em-
" ployed on this farm, during spring, summer, and
" autumn, they work under a foreman, and are
" employed in our pasture land, in twitching, weeding,
" singling turnips, and cutting thistles, &c., they go
" from ½ to 1½ miles to their work, the hours of
" work are 11 hours, including 1½ hours for meals,
" the demand upon their physical powers does not
" affect their health injuriously, nor are they subject
" to any ill-treatment; some of the boys can read
" and write, others only read. Children under
" 10 years of age ought not to work in the cold
" wet winter months, and it is during that time that
" children's education should be attended to. No
" moral evils or hardships attend the employment of
" such a gang as is employed on this farm."

Mr. W. W. Kilpin, occupier, Bickerings Park, Woburn, says, "I employ a gang of 14 boys, in spring
" and early summer in twitching, picking stones,
" singling turnips, &c., their ages are,

" 6 between 8 and 10 years.
" 8 „ 10 and 13 „

" They work under one of my own labourers. They
" have to come from 1 mile to 1½ miles to their work
" and their hours of work on the land are from
" 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. in summer, and from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.
" in spring, including 1½ hours for meals; they are
" in no way injured by their employment; the state
" of their education is not good. Private gangs such
" as mine need no legislative interference."

Mr. T. T. Hine, Knotting Green, Bedford, says:
" I employ for almost a fortnight at a time in spring,
" summer, and autumn, a gang of boys and girls,
" they are at work now, and their ages are:—

Boys.	Age.	Girls.	Age.
" 2 between	8 and 10	5 between	10 and 13.
" 3 „	10 and 13		

" They are employed in twitching, weeding, hoeing,
" and singling turnips. They come half a mile to
" work, and they work from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. in-
" cluding 1½ hours for meals, they are not over-
" worked, and are too young to be immoral. They
" can read and write a little, and require no legis-
" lative interference."

Mr. John Blundell, Woodside, Luton, occupier,
" For about a month in the year I employ a gang of
" from 20 or 50 boys, between 6 and 12 years of age.
" They are employed in weeding, and I pay them
" each 6*d.* per day."

Onion Peeling.—Another kind of employment in gangs which cannot strictly be called employment in agriculture is the employment of women and children in peeling onions in sheds in the market gardens in the neighbourhood of Sandy and Biggleswade (see general evidence from Biggleswade) of these gangs.

Rev. John Richardson, of Sandy, says: "The
" following is the number and age of women and
" children employed in two gangs by market gar-
" deners in Sandy parish:—

" Females:		
" Under 8 years	-	29
" Between 8 and 10	-	54
„ 10 and 13	-	55
„ 13 and 18	-	42
" Over 18 years married	-	93
" Over 18 years unmarried	-	66
" Total females so employed in Sandy		339

" A few little boys are sometimes present, but no men
" are employed, they work from 7 a.m. till 6 p.m.,
" and take their own time for meals; some few of
" them come three or four miles to their work."

In answer to the questions as to whether the young or females are subject to any ill-treatment or whether any special employment injuriously affects them, Mr. Richardson answers "No."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS.—II. § 2. *a. b. c.*

II. As to the EMPLOYMENT of CHILDREN, YOUNG PERSONS, and WOMEN not in GANGS, either "PUBLIC" or "PRIVATE," but individually or in company with a few other PERSONS.

22. Inasmuch as on every farm there will probably be children, young persons, and women both permanently and occasionally employed, not in gangs either "public" or "private," but individually or with a few other persons; and as these could not be omitted from any protective legislation which might be thought desirable and practicable on behalf of those employed in "public" or "private" gangs, if the circumstances of their employment should be found to require it, be kind enough to answer, as fully as you are able, the following questions:—

(*a.*) What is the number of children, young persons, and women employed in agricultural labour singly or with a few others

In your parish?

On your farm?

Bedfordshire.

Mr. Culley.

f.

(*b.*) Give as nearly as you can the following particulars as to the number and age of such persons so employed.

Males.					Females.						
									Over 18.		
Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Married.	Unmarried.	Total Females.

(*c.*) In what kinds of work are they employed during the different seasons of the year?

In spring, in
In summer, in
In autumn, in
In winter, in

The following summary will give the substance of answers to these questions from 90 circulars returned to the Assistant Commissioner as described in the first page of the "Summary of Answers to the Commissioners' Circular Questions."

Nature of the employment in farm labour of children, young persons, and women individually or with a few other persons in the county of Bedford.

From 50 answers.

In Spring -
- "Field keeping" or "Bird scaring."
- Picking twitch.
- " stones.
- Cutting and cleaning roots.
- Hoeing and weeding.
- Potatoe setting.
- Bean dibbling.
- Driving teams.

In Summer -
- Picking twitch.
- Spudding thistles.
- Weeding.
- Hoeing and singling root crops.
- Haymaking.
- Driving carts and teams.

In Autumn -
- Harvesting.
- Picking and forking twitch.
- Pulling and storing roots.
- Driving carts and teams.

In Winter -
- Forking twitch.
- Cleaning roots.
- Feeding cattle and sheep.
- Driving manure carts and teams.

Returns of ages and numbers of persons so employed.

With the exception of 11 girls under 13 years of age, of whom five are under the head of private gangs, the only return of females as employed in farm labour is by the Messrs. Howard, occupiers at Clapham, and amounts to—

9 females,	between	8 and	9	years
6 "	"	10 "	13	"
4 "	"	13 "	18	"
6 married females		above	18	"
5 unmarried "		"	18	"

Total, 30 females "occasionally employed;" further, in answer to questions, the Messrs. Howard say, "Females are not employed in farm labour in this district except in hay season."

This unusual employment of females no doubt arises from the proximity of the town of Bedford.

The same gentlemen return 43 males under 18 years as regularly or frequently employed.

Table A.

Gross returns of numbers and ages of children, young persons, and women employed in farm labour from all circulars, giving these particulars—

Males—

Under 8 years - - -	1
Between 8 and 10 years -	55
10 " 13 " -	204
" 13 " 18 " -	241
Total males under 18 -	501

Females—

Under 8 years - -	0
Between 8 and 10 years -	11
" 10 " 13 " -	10
" 13 " 18 " -	4
Above 18 { married - -	6
Above 18 { unmarried -	5
Total females -	36

Table B.

Return of Males (no Females are employed) under 18 years employed in eight parishes in Woburn Union.

PARISH.	Nature of Cultivation.	Population.	Acreage.	Females.	Males. Under 8.	Males. 8 to 10.	Males. 10 to 13.	Males. 13 to 18.	Total Males under 18.
Holcut and Salford -	Mixed -	335	1,780	0	0	5	12	10	27
Husborne Crawley -	Chiefly arable -	535	1,520	0	0	0	0	12	12
Tilsworth - -	Mixed -	348	1,510	0	0	0	2	9	11
Tingrith -	Mixed -	226	946	0	0	0	12	14	26
Hockliffe - -	Chiefly pasture -	416	1,021	0	0	2	11	14	27
Ridgmont - -	$\frac{2}{3}$ arable -	1,029	2,248	0	0	10	32	26	68
Milton Bryant - -	$\frac{1}{3}$ arable -	345	1,480	0	0	7	10	7	24
		3,234	10,505	0	0	24	79	92	195

Table C.

Woburn Union.

Return of males under 18 (no females are employed) employed on nine farms in Woburn Union, containing,

2,623 acres arable.
1,150 „ pasture.

Total 3,773 acres.

Farm varying from 270 to 600 acres—

Males under 8 - - -	0
„ between 8 and 10 -	14
„ „ 10 „ 13 -	48
„ „ 13 „ 18 -	47
Total males under 18	109

Including 14 boys employed in private gang.

Farms worked in four-course husbandry and requiring according to average of union from 120 to 140 adult men.

Table D.

Bedford Union.

Return of children, young persons, and women employed on 16 farms in Bedford Union; 6 in Luton Union; and one in Biggleswade. Farms varying from 200 to 950 acres.

23 farms containing 6,764 acres arable.
2,838 „ pasture.

Total 9,602 acres.

Males.		Females.	
Under 8 - -	0	Under 8 - -	0
Between 8 and 10	28	Between 8 and 10	2
„ 10 „ 13	79	„ 10 „ 13	9
„ 13 „ 18	65	Above 13 - -	0
Total males under 18.	172	Total females	11

Of these 11 girls, 5 are included in return of private gang for Knotting parish.

These farms would probably employ about 300 males over 18 years.

Comparative ages of males employed on two farms in Luton containing 850 acres.

Males under 10 - - -	2
„ between 10 and 13 -	9
„ „ 13 „ 18 -	4
„ over 18 - - -	36

Table E.

Return of persons employed on 10 farms in the adjoining parishes of Cople and Willington, in Bedford Union, farmed in four-course husbandry, and containing

2,030 acres arable.
695 „ pasture.

Total 2,725 acres.

These farms find regular employment for—

10 males between 8 and 10 years
21 „ „ 10 „ 13 „
26 „ „ 13 „ 18 „
90 „ over 18 years

147 males of all ages and no females.

Nearly $3\frac{1}{2}$ males over 18 to every 100 acres, and a probable requirement of over three cottages to every 100 acres.

Table F.

County of Bedford.

Taken throughout the county where the acreage of farms was given to the Assistant Commissioner.

42 farms containing 11,417 acres arable.
4,683 „ pasture.

16,100 acres.

Employ—

Males.		Females.	
Between 8 and 10	52	Between 8 and 10	2
„ 10 „ 13	148	„ 10 „ 13	9
„ 13 „ 18	133	Above 13 - -	0
Total males under 18	338	Total females of all ages	11

Probable adult males 500.

Circular Questions II. (*d.*)

(*d.*) Do they live on or near the farms on which they work?

If not, how far have they to come from their homes to their daily work.

46 circulars give no answers.
29 „ answer "yes" or "near."
6 „ „ "under a mile."
3 „ „ "one mile."
4 „ „ "$\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 miles."
2 „ „ "$1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 miles."

Circular Questions II. (*e.*)

(*e.*) What are their usual hours of work upon the land?

35 circulars give no answer.

55 circulars from 41 parishes establish the fact that the ordinary hours of work in farms in Bedfordshire are from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. in summer, and from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., or from light to dark in winter; in some cases instead of beginning work at 6 a.m. and stopping for breakfast at 8, the workers come at 7 a.m. and are not allowed to stop for breakfast. These hours, that is to say, about 10 hours work in summer and eight in winter, exclusive of time allowed for meals, applies to all persons employed in farm labour of whom returns were sent to the Assistant Commissioner, except the children employed in Woburn Park and Knotting parish, whose hours of labour are shorter.

(Answers to Question *f.* are omitted totally.)

Circular Questions II. (*g.*)

(*g.*) What are the times allowed for meals?

35 circulars give no answer.

Of 55 circulars from 41 parishes—

31 circulars say $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours.
5 „ say $1\frac{3}{4}$ hours.
17 „ say 2 hours.
1 „ says 2 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours.
1 „ says 2 hours, but in hay time and harvest they have "baver" at 11 a.m. and 4 p.m.
1 „ In summer they come at 6 a.m. and have from 8 to 9 a.m. for breakfast, in winter they come at 7 a.m. and have from 10.30 to 11 a.m. for luncheon, and in both winter and summer 1 hour for dinner.

[Note.—The time allowed for meals varies from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 hours, and at certain work a quarter of an hour is allowed about 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., at least for those who have only half an hour allowed for breakfast or who come at 7 a.m. and have no time allowed for breakfast.]

Bedfordshire.

Mr. Culley.

f.

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS II. (*h.*)

(*h.*) Does the demand upon their physical powers injuriously affect their health and constitution?

33 circulars give no answer.
53 „ say "No."
4 „ say "They are decidedly the better for outdoor work," or words to that effect.

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS II. (*i.*)

(*i.*) Are the young or the females whether young or grown up, subject to any ill-treatment?

34 circulars give no answer.
56 „ answer "No."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS II. (*j.*)

(*j.*) Do any special employments injuriously affect females or the young generally?

59 circulars give no answer.
21 „ answer "No."
3 „ „ "Straw Plaiting."

Others answer as follows :—

WOBURN UNION.

Rev. J. M. Hamilton, Chalgrave, says, "Straw plait not only in the plait schools, but in certain cases in private houses."

BEDFORD UNION.

Mr. Charles Howard, Biddenham, occupier, says, "None as it regards the boys as a rule, but to my mind the employment of lace making so common in this country is injurious to the health of the girls and the proper development of their frames."

Mr. John Thomas, Bletsoe, occupier, says, "Yes, I believe growing girls are injuriously affected by being put by their parents to the lace-pillow, which from the stooping position has a tendency to contract the chest and bring on pulmonary disease."

Rev. A. J. Coleridge, Bromham, says: "They are principally employed in lace-making which is certainly not a healthy pursuit, as it keeps them so many hours confined to the house and leaning over the pillow."

Rev. B. Trapp, Thurleigh, says, "Girls from 6 to 7 years of age are taught lace-making, which seems to affect injuriously their physical development. They are usually employed 10 or 12 hours per diem."

AMPTHILL UNION.

Rev. H. H. Birley, Cranfield, says, "Young girls are often crowded together in what they call a lace school."

Rev. A. Browne, Flitton, says, "Not generally, but the straw plaiting business, which is the staple employment of women and young persons of both sexes in this country is by some considered to be unfavourable to delicate or consumptive constitutions, from its tendency to contract the chest and hurt the free use of the arms."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS II. (*k.*)

(*k.*) Have you any observations to make as to the effect of the employment of females in agriculture on morals and on the proper training for domestic duties?

85 circulars either give no answer, or answer that women are not employed in agriculture.

Others answer as follows :—

BEDFORD UNION.

Mr. Charles Howard, Biddenham, occupier, says, "There are no females employed except occasionally in hay time and harvest, in my opinion more might be beneficially employed, to the advantage of all parties at these seasons."

Messrs. J. and F. Howard, occupiers, Clapham, says, "Females are not employed in this district in field work, except in the hay harvest, even this, through the general use of machinery, is on the decrease."

Rev. B. Trapp, Thurleigh, "lace making prevents the proper training of young women for domestic duties, so that when married they cannot mend their husbands' clothes or make a pudding fit to eat."

BIGGLESWADE UNION.

Rev. R. F. Scott, Arlesay, says, "The females are employed at straw plait which I consider as a rule unfits them for domestic service. No females are employed in agriculture."

LUTON UNION.

Rev. A. Bloomfield, Barton, says, "The females in these parts are employed in straw plait, the effect of which is to keep at home ALL the females, hence a good deal of immorality in the young, and morality held little in esteem. I consider morality at a low ebb in South Beds."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS II. (*l.*)

(*l.*) Taking into consideration the demand for labour in your parish and neighbourhood, and the pecuniary resources of the agricultural labourers, are you prepared to recommend that any restriction should be placed on the employment of females in field work.

If so, would you limit the restriction to females of a defined age, or would you prohibit female labour in the fields altogether, excepting at hay and corn harvest.

87 circulars give no answer as it is not the custom to employ females in farm labour.

BEDFORD UNION.

Messrs. Howard, occupiers, Clapham, say, "We would not allow girls to go to work under 12 years old. We would not prohibit the employment of females."

Rev. R. N. Durrant, Risely, says, "I would restrict the employment to married women or women over 40 years of age, and to girls between 10 and 13."

Rev. B. Trapp, Thurleigh, says, "The employment of females in field work is so rare that no inconvenience would be felt if it were prohibited altogether except in hay and corn harvest."

CIRCULAR II. (*m.*)

(*m.*) 1. Taking into consideration the demand for labour in your parish and neighbourhood, and the pecuniary resources of the agricultural labourers, are you prepared to recommend that any restriction should be placed upon the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed in farm labour?

(*m.*) 2. If so, please to state the age below which you would recommend that boys should not be so employed.

(*m.*) 1. 71 circulars give no answer.
9 „ answer "Yes."
9 „ „ "No."

(*m.*) 2. 45 circulars give no answer.
2 „ answer 8 years.
6 „ „ 9 years.
22 „ „ 10 years.

Others answer as follows:—

WOBURN UNION.

Rev. J. G. Bulman, Potsgrove, says, "The supply of "labour appears to me to exceed the demand; wages "are low in consequence, which of course is an induce- "ment to parents to utilize their children, as soon as "and whenever they can get them employed. It "would be for the good of the children to be "kept at school till they are 10 or even 12 if "practicable, but the poverty of the parents is the "difficulty."

Rev. B. C. Smith, Hulcot Rectory, says, "If a "restriction is made, it should not affect boys over 9 "years of age, or at most 10."

Rev. T. Tanqueray, Tingrith, says, "Parents are "glad to get 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* per week as soon as they "can. I think 10 years is early enough."

BEDFORD UNION.

Mr. John Brimley, Cople, says, "10 if the parents "can spare them."

Mr. Thos. James, Cople, says, "10 for the sake of "education."

AMPTHILL UNION.

Mr. George Street, Maulden, says, "8 years. I "should have said 10 years, but find on inquiry that "with one exception my best and most skilful "labourers began when about 8 years old, and have "worked here ever since, on a farm where the "occupiers have the choice as labourers are "abundant."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS II. (*n.*)

(*n.*) Do you see reason for recommending that the distance to which children and young persons should be allowed to go to work in farm labour should be restricted according to age?

If you should think some restriction of distance in reference to age desirable, do you approve of the following, which assumes that boys under 8 years of age would not be allowed to be employed at all?

No boy of 8 years of age and under - - - 10	To be taken to work beyond a distance from his or her home of	1 mile.
No girl under the age of - 13		
No boy of 10 years of age and under 11		2 miles.
No boy of 11 " " 12		
No boy of 12 " " 13		
No young person of 13 " " 14		3 miles.
No young person of 14 " " 15		
No young person of 15 " " 16		4 miles.
No young person of 16 " " 17		
No young person of 17 " " 18		

Have you any modification to propose in the above table?

74 circulars give no answer.
6 " answer "No."

Others as follows:—

WOBURN UNION.

Mr. J. Foll, Harlington, says, "I think the above "table suitable as it would not be beneficial to em- "ployers for young people to walk a greater distance "to their work."

Rev. J. G. Bulman, Potsgrove, says, "I should "say that 3 or 4 miles is too great a distance for "any young person to be compelled to go to "work."

Mr. Z. Philips, Birchmore, says, "It would in my "opinion be a very difficult matter to legislate upon. "It is an important matter for a labourer to be near "his work, but often they must go to a distance to "seek employment."

BEDFORD UNION.

Mr. John Thomas Bletsoe, occupier, says, "1½ miles "is the greatest distance a boy would have to go to "his work in this parish; my farm is close to the "village, but I think boys should not be sent to "general employment before 10 years old, but they "may be of use for a few days, occasionally weeding "during summer months. I do not employ women "except in hay time, and then only 2 or 3.

Messrs. J. and *F. Howard*, Clapham, say, "No "such scheme could be enforced, even if the police "force were doubled."

Rev. R. N. Durrant, Risely, says, "No girl or boy "under 13 should go more than 2 miles; no young "person more than 4."

AMPTHILL UNION.

Rev. J. A. Frere, Shillington, says, "My impression "is that owing to the labourers' cottages being pretty "evenly dispersed over the parish few lads have in "this parish any unreasonable distance to walk to "their work, otherwise I should consider this table a "fair one."

BIGGLESWADE UNION.

John Harvey, Esq., Northill, says, "I think 4 miles "is too far for any labourer to go to his work, but of "course no restriction can be placed on grown up "persons."

LUTON UNION.

Rev. A. Blomfield, Barton, says, "In this parish "as stated before, work being handy, no one is over- "tasked in walking to and fro, or overworked."

Lionel Ames, Esq., East Hyde, says, "No, inas- "much as the matter will adjust itself."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS II. (*o.*)

(*o.*) Do you see reason for recommending that any restriction should be placed upon the hours of work for children and young persons employed in agriculture; and if so, what amount of restriction would you propose?

52 circulars give no answer.
20 " answer "No."
4 " 10 hours exclusive of meal hours.

Others answer as follows:—

WOBURN UNION.

Mr. Z. Philips, Birchmore, says, "Certainly not; "my boys always enjoy a good game after leaving "work, under such circumstances they cannot in any "way be exhausted."

Rev. H. Cobbe, Milton Bryant, says, "Yes, but "chiefly for the sake of education."

Rev. Truman Tanqueray, Tingrith, says, "They "are never overworked except during hay time and "harvest, when the number of hours is sometimes "very great; I do not see how the fillers of corn "can work without the boys."

BEDFORD UNION.

Rev. R. N. Durrant, Risely, says, "The hours of "work should be restricted to the intervals between "6 a.m. and 6 p.m for summer, 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. for "winter."

Rev. W. B. Russell, Turvey, says, "No restrictions "seem to be required in agriculture, but I think "the hours of work for young girls in the lace "school excessive, and decidedly injurious to their "health."

Messrs. J. and *F. Howard*, Clapham, say, "No; "when they are allowed to go to work it is impera- "tive they should work the same time as the men; "break a link in the chain and the whole routine of "the farm is thrown out."

Rev. A. Coleridge, Bromham, says, "I should say "that 10 hours per diem is ample work for children "under 13.

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Mr. Edward Campion, Melchbourne, says, "No boy "under 11 years of age ought to be employed above "10½ hours exclusive of meal times."

Rev. E. J. Hillier, Cardington, says, "Boys "from 10 to 13 years of age should leave work at "2 p.m."

Mr. Thomas James Cople,—"You cannot have "different hours of labour for boys above 10, and "the carters and ploughmen withdrawn from their "work."

AMPTHILL UNION.

Major J. H. Brooks, Flitwick,—"All children under "10 should attend day school, and from 10 to 14 "night school."

Mr. G. Street, Maulden, says, "No, they must be "taught regular habits from the commencement, or "never have a regular plan of work."

Rev. A. J. Frere, says, "I think lads ought not to "be employed more than 12 hours (including meal "times), as they sometimes are I believe in bird-"keeping, shepherding, and the like; I believe such "cases however in this neighbourhood to be very "rare."

BIGGLESWADE UNION.

Mr. Samuel Bailey, Southill, says, "Less hours "would be desirable, but I do not see how it could "be done."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS.

III. AS TO REQUIRING SOME AMOUNT OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN THE CASE OF CHILDREN EARNING WAGES BY EMPLOYMENT IN FARM LABOUR.

23. The Commissioners being instructed to inquire to what extent, and with what modifications the principles of the Factory Acts can be adopted in reference to children employed in agriculture, "especially with a view to the "better education of such children," your opinion is invited on the following points:

24. The three modes by which the prescribed amount of school attendance of children employed in trades and manufactures is obtained are—

By the Factory Act (7 Vict. c. 15. ss. 31–9).

1. By half day at school and half day at work.
2. By alternate whole days at school and whole days at work.

By the Printworks Act (10 & 11 Vict. c. 70. ss. 2, 3, 26).

3. By school attendance for a certain number of hours during the preceding six months.

26. You are requested to state which of such modes of enforcing some amount of school attendance would seem most applicable to the circumstances of your parish and neighbourhood; or whether a combination of one or more of them would better meet those circumstances; or whether any other mode that you might wish to suggest appears to you preferable.

Of 90 circulars returned from Bedfordshire 45 give no answer to this question.

WOBURN UNION.

Mr. C. Stephenson, Woburn Park farm, says, The half-day system does not appear feasible for "an agricultural parish. I think it is a work which "would answer best in a gradual rather than a "compulsory change; if the men would give up beer-"drinking as a habit, no legislative interference would "be necessary; encourage industry and economy, and "then you have an antidote to vicious and idle "habits."

Mr. W. L. R. Freeman, Speedwell, says, "The "winter months for school."

Mr. Kilpin, Bickerings Park, says, "Of these "modes, No. 3 is the only one at all applicable to "farm labour."

Mr. James Crouch, Ridgmont, says, "I do not "think the Factory Acts principles applicable, but "I think it desirable that boys between the ages of "10 and 12 should attend a day school for at least "four months in the year."

Mr. Platt, Ridgmont, says, "The only one of these "three modes applicable to farm labour is the 3rd. "I have no objection to boys under 13 being sent to "school for four winter months."

Mr. R. Checkley, Ridgmont, says, "Quite inappli-"cable to farm labourers; boys under 10 could be "dispensed with for four winter months."

Mr. H. Readman says the same as Mr. Checkley.

Mr. Morris, Ridgmont, says same as Mr. Checkley.

Rev. J. S. Neumann, Hockliffe, says, "No 2 seems "to be the best arrangement."

Rev. V. S. C. Smith, Husborne Crawley, says, "I "would by no means advocate or countenance any "mode of enforcing school attendance; it would in "my opinion be an unjust and undesirable stretch of "authority."

Rev. H. M. Erskine, Aspley Guise, says, "No. 1. "This would hardly be practicable in the country.

"No. 2. This, if practicable, would be the best "mode, but it is doubtful whether employers would "readily fall in with it.

"No. 3. This mode seems the most practicable, "but not the best, as a six months' vacation is too "long, and would undo much of the work of the pre-"ceding six months, as there is no general unwilling-"ness on the part of parents to send their children "to school, I do not see that any compulsory system "is necessary."

Rev. Truman Tanqueray, Tingrith, says, "The "first mode is useless; the second is worse; still, "any instruction to be satisfactory must be con-"tinuous. The third mode is more feasible, but not "likely to act. It is my opinion that farmers con-"sider that continuous instruction in agriculture is "as necessary as it is in other branches of edu-"cation."

Rev. H. Cobbe, Milton Bryant.—"No. 1 would be "most useful to the children, but No. 3 most con-"venient to the farmers and sufficient for the "children if they remained at school up to 10 years."

BEDFORD UNION.

Mr. Charles Howard, occupier, Biddenham, says, "There is no necessity for any compulsory system, "so far as this parish is concerned; if the boys were "prohibited from working they would in all proba-"bility remain at school. As will be seen by the "return, there are only six boys employed under 10 "years of age, and these are mostly the children of "widows, or whose parents are badly off, in some "cases through their own seeking."

Mr. Ulysses Payne, occupier, Goldington.—"1st. "Two modes impossible in agriculture. 3rd might "apply in winter. It appears to me that an evening "school from 6 to 7.30 for boys over 9, all the year, "would keep up what they had learned, and if quick "and apt would make them good scholars."

Mr. Edward Turney, occupier, Souldrop, says, "Say winter schooling for four months.

Rev. A. J. Coleridge, Bromham, says, "I think "that any of the above plans would be most unde-"sirable and impracticable; it would seriously in-"terfere with the cultivation of the land, and I "think would lead to no educational advantages. "The only plan I think is to keep children at school "as long as possible, and then provide a night "school."

Mr. John Thomas, occupier, Bletsoe, says, "I "think all that is necessary might be done by using "kind and persuasive measures to induce parents to "send their children to school; it would be in my "opinion unnecessary and injudicious to enforce it."

Mr. John Wallis, Renhold, says, "After 10 years "of age a night school for the winter months, "say from 6 o'clock till 8, would be a good thing, "as our boys are wanted as much in winter as in "summer."

Mr. Thomas James, Cople, says, "I think compulsory school attendance after 10 years of age is not necessary; boys can attend Sunday and night schools."

Rev. E. J. Hillier, Cardington, says, "Forbid the employment of children under 10 years, and compel children from 10 to 13 years of age to attend school half the day."

Mr. W. Islip, Melchbourne: "Alternate days work and school would be objectionable, and on my own farm could not be carried out. Evening schools should be open during winter months."

Mr. Charles Street, Cople, say, "I do not think it necessary to interfere after 10 years of age."

Messrs. J. & F. Howard, Clapham, say, "No such scheme would do in agricultural parishes, we do not think any compulsory enactment would work, such provisions have invariably broken down in America. We think if it were made illegal for boys to go to work until they are 10, it will suffice."

Rev. J. H. Williams, Kempston, "I should think the proposed number, 3, the most suited to the case: the attendance, commencing Nov. 1st and lasting till March 1st, the half day or alternate day system could not be carried out in agricultural districts."

Mr. John Smith, Risely Grange, says, "Some boys might attend school during 4 winter months."

Rev. R. N. Durrant, Risely, says, "2nd mode, with the option of being kept entirely to work for 2 or 3 weeks in busy times."

Mr. William Golding, agent to Lord Dynevor's trustees, Biddenham, says, "I think that any one of these modes, if made compulsory, would most seriously interfere with the employment of children of more than 10 years of age, and injure the pecuniary resources of the parents."

Mr. John Brimley, Cople, says, "Whole days at school and whole days at work."

Mr. H. Purser, Cople, "All these modes totally inapplicable to farm labour."

Mr. Jas. Eaton, Risely, says, "Some boys might attend day school in 4 winter months. Boys driving teams could attend night school."

Revd. B. Trapp, Thurleigh, says, "The 3rd mode by school attendance for a certain number of hours or days during preceding 6 or 12 months, or daily during 4 winter months would interfere least with the employment of boys in agriculture."

Mr. John H. Bodger, Cardington: "Government should extend its aid to boys of 10 years of age attending night schools."

Mr. Edward Campion, Melchborne, "Boys from 10 to 13 years of age might attend school during 4 winter months from 4 to 7 p.m., and boys below 10 years of age might attend regularly in 4 winter months."

Mr. John Horrell, Oakley, says, "By school attendance for a certain number of hours during preceding six months."

Revd. R. P. Bent, Melchborne, says, "I should be glad to see an age fixed by legislature below which boys might not be allowed to perform any agricultural work. I am not quite prepared at present to suggest a minimum age, but I think 12."

Ampthill Union.

Revd. John A. Frere, Shillington, says, "No. 1 will not work, nor No. 2; No. 3 is more feasible, the slack time being from October to March or April. I think it might be made the interest of the parents to keep their boys at school regularly by fixing 11 years as the term below which (ordinarily) no lad should go to farm work, but that if he could at 10 obtain the inspector's certificate that he can read and write and sum fairly, he might go to work at 10."

Revd. J. W. C. Campion, Westoning, "I do not approve of compulsory education in any shape."

Revd. George Renaud, Silsoe: "The 2nd mode best. Say Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at school: in my opinion the educational acts now applied to mines and factories might be applied to agricultural populations; no work under 10 and none from 10 to 12, unless a certificate that the boy can read and write, failing that, half time."

Major John Brooks, Flitwick, "I think the farmers here would not tolerate any sort of half time system, which is also at the same time found to be very prejudicial to education."

Revd. Charles Ward, Maulden, "1st mode for plaiters: 3rd mode for boys employed on land; I should not have thought it desirable to enforce attendance at school, but that I am informed that children are set to learn plaiting sometimes at 4 years of age, and that they are kept too long at work in the plaiting schools, which as a rule are badly ventilated."

Mr. George Street, Maulden, says, "Boys might be sent to school during the winter up to 10 years old, any interference after that time would be injurious to parents."

Revd. David Wheeler, Pulloxhill, says, "The conditions of work are so different in the case of agricultural lads, that I do not see how regulations very suitable for factory boys can be made to apply to them; the agricultural boy's work is fixed by the season and the weather, according to these will there be an amount of leisure, or a continual run of work."

Biggleswade Union.

John Harvey Esq., Ickwell Bury, Northill, says, "I have seen no plan comparable to that suggested by Mr. Baker of Hardwicke, a copy of which I enclose."

[Note.—This is an educational examination recommended by Sir J. K. Shuttleworth. *See* general evidence.]

Revd. Charles Baldock, Southill. "Far better if possible to insure constant regular attendance at school up to a certain age, say 10 years."

Charles L. Lindsell, Esq., Biggleswade:—"No interference is necessary as the boys employed in agriculture cease work at sunset in winter and most of them attend night schools."

Luton Union.

Lionel Ames, Esq., East Hyde, says, "Were parents made to send their boys to school until they were 10 years old, two or three attendances at a night school per week, until the age of 14, would be amply sufficient for an agricultural labourer."

Circular Questions.

27. How far is the school attendance affected by the distance that the children have to go to school?

35 circulars give no answer,
37 „ answer "Not at all,"
9 „ „ "Very little,"
Others answer as follows:—

Woburn Union.

The Rev. Joseph Simpson, Tilsworth, says, "There is no efficient school."

Bedford Union.

The Rev. B. Trapp, Thurleigh, says, "Not much except in outlying parts of the parish."

Mr. John Smith, Risely, says, "There is no school in Swineshead parish, nor any resident clergyman, and both are very much wanted."

Mr. G. Hine, Knotting, says, "A very good school, but no master or mistress for two years."

Rev. R. P. Bent, Melchbourne, says, "In this parish it is not affected by distance in the slightest degree, a few children who live furthest from the school are about the most regular in their attendance."

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AMPTHILL UNION.

Rev. J. A. Frere, Shillington, says, "A good deal, "this being a scattered parish, there is a hamlet "of 22 cottages at Pigsdon, near no school, that "can be made available for the children, although "there are two schools in the parish."

Rev. D. Wheeler, Pulloxhill, says, "Not affected "except in the case of children under six, who live "about one mile off."

Rev. H. H. Birley, Cranfield, says, "In the case "of a small hamlet, two miles from the school; but "it is in contemplation to build a school, which will "meet this difficulty."

LUTON UNION.

Lionel Ames, Esq., East Hyde, says, "It is difficult "if not impossible to get children to school who live "more than a mile or a mile and a half from the "school houses."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS.

28. How far is the school attendance affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents?

41 circulars give no answer.
9 witnesses, say, "Considerably," or "Very much."
9 „ say, "Very little," "Somewhat," or "Slightly."
10 „ say, "Not at all."

Others answer as follows:—

WOBURN UNION.

Mr. C. S. Stephenson, says, "The attendance has "no doubt been greatly affected by the poverty of "the parents, a more satisfactory state is however "daily appearing. School accommodation is much "increased, and expenses of management liberally "responded to by subscription."

Rev. V. S. C. Smith, Huxborne, Crawley, "Very "slightly the parents make great efforts to send "their children."

Rev. Truman Tanqueray, Tingrith, "If the wages "all went home, instead of in part to the beershop, "parents would be able to pay for their children's "schooling."

Rev. H. M. Erskine, Aspley Guise, "Considerably; "some are unable to afford the pence for their "children's schooling, others for the sake of the "small gains of their children will send their boys "early to bird-keeping, &c., and their girls to plaiting "or lace schools."

Rev. W. S. Baker, Eversholt, "Where the family "is large, some of the children are obliged to be "taken from school to earn."

Rev. J. G. Bulman, Potsgrove, "There is not one "boy in our school 10 years of age, they are sent to "work as soon as they can earn anything."

Rev. J. M. Hamilton, Chalgrave, "As a general "rule, the parents can well afford to pay for their "children's schooling."

Rev. B. C. Smith, "In only one or two cases."

BEDFORD UNION.

Mr. John Thomas, Bletsoe, says, "Not at all, "except in larger families where parents are anxious "to get their children out to work."

The Rev. R. P. Bent, Melchborne, says, "It is "certainly affected by this cause, inasmuch as boys "are taken from school as soon as they can earn "anything in the fields."

Mr. Wm. Islip uses nearly the same words.

Mr. H. Purser, Willington, "Very considerably, "boys from 9 to 10 years of age having 2*s.* 6*d.* "per week."

Mr. Thomas James, Cople, says, "Poverty of "parents compels children to leave school early."

Messrs. J. & F. Howard, Clapham, "When "parents are too poor to clothe their children de-"cently, absence is the result; we incline to the "opinion that help from the school fund should be "given in very urgent cases."

Rev. B. Trapp, Thurleigh, "Girls are put very "early to the lace pillow, at about 6 years, and boys "taken with their parents to work on farms as soon "as they are strong enough to earn anything, the "little money they earn is too valuable to their "parents to be sacrificed for education."

AMPTHILL UNION.

Rev. J. A. Frere, Shillington, says, "Very much, "the wives of the labouring poor say they cannot "spare the produce of their children's plaiting, and "though plaiting is allowed in the school at fixed "times, this does not meet the difficulty, as the whole "of a child's time from very early years is generally "appropriated to plaiting, the dames plaiting schools "I look on as nurseries of evil, the children learn "next to nothing, but plaiting (though reading and "writing is said to be taught there) and boys and "girls are mixed together in a way that tells mis-"chievously."

BIGGLESWADE UNION.

The Rev. Charles Baldock, Southill, says, "Nor "do I think that money or the want of it rather has "much to do with the matter generally speaking."

Rev. G. C. Douton, Biggleswade, "So far as this, "that parents withdraw their children at a very early "age from school that they may get the benefit of "their earnings."

LUTON UNION.

Lionel Ames, Esq., East Hyde, says, "The pe-"cuniary resources of the parents materially affect "the attendance of their children, also the straw-"plaiting business at which children of 7 or 8 years "of age can earn something."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS.

29. Are any efforts being made for the industrial training of girls, in connexion with elementary education, with especial reference to preparing them for their domestic duties?

33 circulars give no answer.
39 „ answer "No."
7 „ „ "Sewing in school."
4 „ „ "Yes."

Others answer as follows:—

WOBURN UNION.

Rev. H. Cobbe, Milton Bryant, says, "Yes, the "elder girls clean the school, brighten the grates, &c."

BEDFORD UNION.

Mr. Thomas James Cople, says, "Yes, under care "of Mrs. Barnard, of Cople House."

Rev. A. J. Coleridge, Bromham, says, "Yes. The "Hon. Miss Rice Trevor has a school especially for "this purpose: needlework and knitting are also "taught in the day school."

Rev. E. J. Hillier, Cardington, says, "There is an "industrial day school here for the training of 30 "girls for domestic service." (A report of this school will be found in the General Evidence of Bedfordshire.—G. C.)

AMPTHILL UNION.

Rev. J. A. Frere, Shillington, says, "We have "tried training for domestic service, but they very "seldom stay in it, the complete liberty which they "have from 14 onwards, if they remain at home, as "plaiters, indisposes them to it."

Rev. Charles Ward, Maulden, says, "The elder "girls are trained in housework and all in needle-"work."

LUTON UNION.

Lionel Ames, Esq., East Hyde, says, "Needle-"work is taught three afternoons a week to the "girls, who also by turns sweep and clean the school-"room."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS.

30. Have you any remarks to make on the subject of cottage accommodation in regard to its effect on morality or education; or on the health and comfort of the labouring poor?

67 circulars give no answer to this question.

WOBURN UNION.

The Revd. B. C. Smith, Holcut, says, "My firm "conviction is that you may preach what you please, "and educate as you please, but will never make "people value morality, education, or religion who "are condemned to live in homes a decent farmer "would be ashamed to put his beasts into. Good "cottage accommodation is the first requisite."

Revd. H. M. Erskine, Aspley Guise, "Defective "cottage accommodation is decidedly injurious to the "moral condition of many of the inhabitants, and "also, I should say, to their health and comfort."

Revd. W. S. Baker, "The cottage accommodation "is good for the most part. Where it has been im-"proved a marked change for the better has taken "place in the cleanliness, order, and self-respect of "those who inhabit them."

Revd. John Clegg, Toddington, says, "The dwell-"ing houses are many of them in a most lamentable "state and totally unfit for human habitation. I "consider that the insufficient accommodation in "them must have a very bad effect on morals and "health."

Mr. C. Stephenson, Woburn Park farm, "Good "cottage accommodation is necessary for the ame-"lioration of the working classes. It is primarily "of as much importance, if not more, than educa-"tion: a great improvement has taken place in this "and neighbouring parishes, and in some places "little more is required. I would suggest what is in "a measure being carried out, that each farm have a "certain number of cottages attached to or near to "the buildings. Nothing could add more to the "labourer's health and comfort than this."

BEDFORD UNION.

Mr. Charles Howard, Biddenham, says, "The "cottage accommodation in this parish is certainly "not good, but I think I may truly say that it is "much beyond the average of the county. There "are a few illegitimate children, attributable doubt-"less to our proximity to Bedford; in other respects "the morality of the village is good. New cottages "are being erected, and there is a growing disposition "to remedy the present state of things. When we "get an improved education, men will not consent to "live in such hovels as are to be found in many parts "of this county."

Revd. R. N. Durrant, Risely: "Health and com-"fort and morality would be promoted by improved "cottage accommodation, but education might be "lessened by the increased rents required."

Mr. Ulysses Payne, Goldington: "Morals and "health are affected by short accommodation."

Revd. H. J. Williams, Kempston: "I consider "the subject a very important one as bearing on the "health and moral character, and where there is "insufficient accommodation the effect of education "is much impaired."

Revd. A. J. Coleridge, Bromham, says, "I have "no doubt that deficient bedroom accommodation is "not only injurious to the health and comfort of the "poor, but that it is a fertile source of indecency and "immorality."

Revd. W. B. Russell, Turvey: "The good state "of the cottages in Turvey has been one means of "improving the morality of the parish; certainly, "the comfort, and I doubt not the health of the "labouring poor."

Mr. John Thomas, Bletsoe: "I believe the want "of cottage accommodation seriously affect the "morals of the young."

Revd. B. Trapp, Thurleigh: "The wonder is that "they are as moral as they are when from early to "adult age both sexes are frequently herded together "in one bedroom, and that very small."

Mr. Thomas James, Cople, says, "The cottage "accommodation is good, and the good cottages teach "decency."

Mr. Edward Campion, Melchborne: "Good cot-"tages generally make good labourers. The men "from good cottages are more sober, industrious, and "superior workmen; their health is better, they at-"tend work more regularly. Education is useless "without good cottages."

Revd. R. P. Bent, Melchborne, says, "I am con-"vinced that cottage accommodation has a great deal "to do with the questions of morality and education "of the working classes."

Mr. Wm. Islip, Melchborne: "There wants great "reform in many parishes in cottage accommodation, "or the morality of the inmates will not be improved "by further education."

AMPTHILL UNION.

Revd. J. A. Frere, Shillington, says, "Every "cottage ought to have three bedrooms; most of those "belonging to large proprietors have or are occupied "by small families."

Major John Brooks, Flitwick, says, "The miserable "cottage accommodation is no doubt very prejudicial "to morality, but as a rule the people are healthy "and the population steadily on the increase."

Rev. G. Renaud, Silsoe: "It is of immense im-"portance."

BIGGLESWADE UNION.

John Harvey, Esq., Ickwell Bury, says, "It is the "most serious question of all, and I fear until some-"thing like decent accommodation is provided, all "efforts to educate or lessen the habits of intoxica-"tion will, to quite one half their extent, be frus-"trated."

Rev. R. F. Scott, Arlesey, says, "When families "are large and bedrooms not sufficient, the conse-"quence too often is gross immorality."

LUTON UNION.

Lionel Ames, Esq., East Hyde, says, "No cottage "where a family is intended to live should have less "than three bedrooms."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS.

31. How many cottages per hundred acres are considered sufficient for the accommodation of persons employed on land in your parish?

36 circulars give no answer.

Where the cultivation is described as chiefly arable,—

1 witness says	2
2 witnesses say	$2\frac{1}{2}$
2 " "	$2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3
5 " "	3
3 " "	$3\frac{1}{2}$
9 " "	4
1 witness says	$4\frac{1}{2}$
1 " "	5

Where the cultivation is described as mixed, or half arable,—

2 witnesses say	2
1 witness says	$2\frac{1}{2}$
6 witnesses say	3
4 " "	$3\frac{1}{2}$
9 " "	4
1 witness says	$4\frac{1}{2}$
2 witnesses say	5

Bedfordshire.

Mr. Culley.

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Where the cultivation is described as chiefly pasture,—

1 witness says - - -	2
1 „ „ - - - -	2½
3 witnesses say - - - -	3

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS.

32. Is there that proportion of cottages in the parish?
33. If not, what is the proportion?

40 circulars give no answer.
36 „ answer "Yes," or, "Yes, and more."
4 „ „ "Nearly so."
9 „ „ "No."

Rev. J. Clegg, Toddington, says, "Toddington is "overcrowded with cottages."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS.

34. Are the cottages conveniently situated with respect to (*i.e.* not more than a mile from) the farms on which the work is to be done?

38 circulars give no answer.
40 „ answer "Yes."
6 „ „ "Generally."
4 „ „ "No," or "Not generally."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS.

35. Is there a sufficient number of cottages with two bedrooms, or three bedrooms, and a sitting-room, for the larger families?

36 circulars give no answer.
30 „ answer "Yes," or "Nearly."
19 „ „ "No," or "Certainly not."

Others answer as follows:—

WOBURN UNION.

Rev. B. C. Smith, Hulcot and Salford, says, "Most "of the cottages have two bedrooms, scarcely one has "three.

Rev. H. Cobbe, Milton Bryant, says, "Hardly: "eight or nine require a third bedroom for decency."

AMPTHILL UNION.

Rev. A. Browne, Flitton, says, "Few cottages have "more than two bedrooms, some with one one, but "the number of all sorts appears to be adequate to "local wants."

Rev. A. J. Frere, Shillington, says, "There is a "want of three bedroom cottages for the larger "families."

Mr. Henry Trethewy, Silsoe, says, "Most of the "cottages have three bedrooms."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS.

36. Are the cottages crowded, either with members of the family or with lodgers?

40 circulars give no answer.
27 witnesses say "No."
6 „ „ "With members of the family."
5 „ „ "Yes."
4 „ „ "Some are."
2 „ „ "A few of them."
1 „ „ "Not as a rule."
1 „ „ "Not generally."
1 „ „ "Very rarely."
1 „ „ "A considerable portion of "them."

Others answer as follows:—

BEDFORD UNION.

Mr. William Golding, Biddenham, says, "No "lodgers are allowed; after all the children are "grown up or have finally left the cottage, the "parents are allowed to take as lodgers one of their "married children."

BIGGLESWADE UNION.

John Harvey, Esq., Ickwell Bury, says, "Hamlets "of Upper and Lower Caldecote very much crowded "with both."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS.

7. Give a general description of the cottages in your parish in respect of,—1. Construction (including size of rooms, ventilation, and drainage). 2. Accommodation (including number of rooms in proportion to the family, water supply, garden, outhouses, &c.) 3. Ownership; *i.e.*, whether by landowner, or by tradesmen with whom the tenants are obliged to deal, or by other person or persons. 4. Rent.

The answers to this question will be found in the general evidence at the beginning of the evidence from each parish. The following summary will however indicate the bearing of the evidence.

1. Rooms in old cottages are small and low.

Cottage rooms vary from 10 ft. by 8 ft. to 12 ft. by 12 ft., for both old and new.

Ventilation is generally stopped by the occupier.

Artificial drainages very unusual.

2 & 3. In about half of 55 parishes the cottages are described as good, fairly good, or generally good, in all of these, except one, in which the cottages belong to small proprietors, the cottage property belongs, either altogether or in part, to chief landowners. In the remaining half of the parishes described the cottages are either mixed bad and good, or generally bad, and in these cases the ownership is generally described as, various, or, chiefly small proprietors, or it is said that many cottages are built on the waste, and belong to occupiers, in which last case they are always described as bad.

The water supply is only described as bad in four parishes.

Except where they belong to chief landowners, and in some cases then, the cottages are generally described as lacking accommodation necessary for a family. Where the cottages belong to chief landowners sufficient outhouses are generally provided, but not always; the cottages built on speculation belonging to small proprietors very deficient in outhouses. In only two cases are the occupants of cottages supposed to have to deal with the owners who are tradesmen. Gardens will be found dealt with in general evidence under the head of allotment system. Where gardens do not exist many landowners provide allotments at moderate rents, even where the cottage property does not belong to them in some cases. Gardens, however, are much required in some of the larger villages.

4. Rent varies from 1*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* per week, being highest in such towns as Biggleswade, and lowest, in proportion to the accommodation, where the cottages belong to the chief landowners.

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS III.

38. If there is deficient accommodation, is any progress being made towards increasing it?

72 circulars give no answer.
4 witnesses say "No."
1 „ says "Some progress."
1 „ „ "Little or none."
2 „ „ "Better cottage accommodation is being provided."
2 „ say "Cottages are being built, but not such as should be built."

Others answer as follows:—

WOBURN UNION.

The Rev. H. M. Erskine, Aspley Guise, says, "A "number of cottages have been built during the last "two or three years."

Mr. J. W. Foll, Harlington, "Some cottages in "course of erection."

Mr. W. W. Kilpin, Bickerings Park, says, "Re-"placing old by new."

Rev. James M. Hamiton, Chalgrave, says, "All the "cottages recently built have been by a tradesman "and a farmer."

Rev. H. Cobbe, Milton Bryant, says, "Yes. Seven "cottages recently built; five enlarged; and two "about to be built."

BEDFORD UNION.

Rev. R. P. Bent, Melchborne, says, "Of late the "number of cottages has decreased."

Mr. Thomas James, Cople, says, "The Duke of Bedford is replacing old cottages by new yearly."

AMPTHILL UNION.

Rev. H. H. Birley says, "The cottage accommodation is decidedly in course of improvement."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS 39.

39. Is the Union Chargeability Act (28 & 29 Vict. c. 79, March 1866) having any effect in causing an increase of cottage accommodation?

68 circulars give no answer.
16 witnesses say "No."
2 „ „ "None at present."
1 „ „ "To some extent."
1 „ „ "This will doubtless cause improvements to be made."

Others answer as follow:—

AMPTHILL UNION.

Rev. H. H. Birley, Cranfield, says, "It is more "likely in this parish as many of our cottagers go to "their work in other smaller parishes."

BIGGLESWADE UNION.

John Harvey, Esq., Ickwell, Bury, says, "not at "present, but having had two close parishes adjoining "has greatly tended to cause the present want of "cottages."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS.—40.

40. By the Act 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114., July 1864, the Enclosure Commissioners are authorized to advance public money for the improvement of land, including, by s. 9, "The erection of "labourers' cottages, * * and the improve-"ment of and addition to labourers' cottages."

Have you any remarks to make upon this Act in regard to any additional facilities, or any reduction of cost, that might cause greater progress to be made in supplying the want of good cottages?

Of 90 circulars returned for Bedfordshire 86 give no answer.

Others answer as follows:—

BEDFORD UNION.

The Rev. R. N. Durrant, Risely, says, "The same "scheme as that adopted in the administration of "'Queen Anne's Bounty Fund' for the erection of "Parsonages might aid to provide better cottages. "The Commissioners should advance to labourers "themselves and others the amount needed for the "erection of good cottages, plans of which should be "submitted for their approval. The loan to be by "30 annual instalments with interest at 4 per cent."

Mr. William Golding, Biddenham, "I consider "this a most beneficial act for the improvement of "landed property."

AMPTHILL UNION.

Mr. Henry Trethewy, Silsoe, says, "I am of opinion "that the act referred to may be of great use in some "localities."

The Rev. W. C. Campion, landowner, Westoning, says, "Where entails exist it is desirable that power "should be given to raise money with as great facility "and upon as easy terms as possible, a loan should "not be hampered with many conditions."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS 41.

41. Can you suggest any mode by which good cottage accommodation could be procured on self-supporting terms and involving no disadvantage to the tenant?

77 Circulars give no answer.
4 witnesses say "No."
1 witness says "Impossible."

Others answer as follow:—

WOBURN UNION.

Rev. B. C. Smith, Holcut and Salford, says, "My "own case in Salford is hopeless as long as the pro-"perty continues to be leasehold; the lessees cannot "be expected to build new cottages without the help "of the college (All Soul's, Oxford), or some guarantee "from the college as to tenure, which the college can-"not or will not give; the only plan would be for the "lessees and the college to work together."

Rev. Truman Tanqueray, Tingrith, says, "Cer-"tainly not; I look upon cottage property as a "necessary encumbrance upon the land, and so I am "sure will all find who build cottages as an invest-"ment."

BEDFORD UNION.

Rev. R. N. Durrant, Risely, says, "By the addition "of ½ an acre of garden to each cottage."

Rev. H. J. Williams, Kempston, says, "One mode "of the labourer getting the ownership of a cottage "is by means of the building clubs, under which "several have been built here."

Mr. Edward Campion, Melchbourne, says, "Let "cottages be built of a more simple and plain design, "study economy in the building, attend to comfort "and convenience, and look less at the outside "appearance."

The Rev A. Browne, Flitton, says, "This is a diffi-"cult question, as building materials have to be "brought from a distance, and a cottage worthy the "name cannot be built for much short of 130*l.*, while "5*l.* rent without a garden is quite as much as the "ordinary farm labourer can conveniently give."

BIGGLESWADE UNION.

John Harvey, Esq, Ickwell Bury, says, "It is, I "fear, at the present rate of wages a simple impos-"sibility to build cottages which will pay directly "without charging an exorbitant rent, but I think "the indirect benefits make it worth a proprietor's "while, and that he will be repaid by the increased "value of the labourer's services. An allotment of "a rood of land, not too far from the cottage, is an "incalculable benefit of the cottager, having tried it "for 30 years I maintain, in spite of the dislike of "farmers, that it has no drawback."

LUNTON UNION.

Lionel Ames, Esq., East Hyde, says, "Cottage "property is not remunerative except in obtaining a

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"permanent and respectable wo rk man whose family "can be properly brought up."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS IV. 42 and 43.

IV. As to the NUMBER of CHILDREN at SCHOOL and the NUMBERS EMPLOYED in FARM LABOUR.

42. It would be of great assistance towards forming a correct judgment upon the question of requiring some amount of school attendance in the case of children earning wages by employment in farm labour if you could furnish the Commissioners with precise information, or with an approximate estimate, relating to the points embodied in the following tables.

43. Approximate Number of Children of the Agricultural Labouring Class in attendance at Elementary Schools.

The following tables will give a summary of the information given to the Assistant Commissioner in answer to this question. The expression "Agricul-"tural Labouring Class" was always pointed out by the Assistant Commissioner, and the returns asked for as of that class only. In order to arrive at the age at which the labourers' children are usually withdrawn from school it will be necessary to use only the returns from thinly populated rural parishes, or such other parishes as are stated in the notes as having the school returns confined to the agricultural labouring class, as in some cases the school return is a return of the whole school, a considerable proportion of the elder children belonging to a class somewhat better off than the agricultural labouring class.

A.—SCHOOL RETURNS.

Woburn Union.			Day Schools.															
			Summer.								Winter.							
			Number on Register.				Average Attendance.				Number on Register.				Average Attendance.			
			Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.	
Name of Parish.	Population, Census 1861.	Acreage.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.
Aspley Guise.	1,435	1,936	82	42	55	35	63	39	43	33	82	42	55	35	63	39	43	33
Battlesden	143	1,123	No School (Potsgrove).															
[b] Chalgrave	961	2,130	23	0	9	4	19	0	6	2	22	1	9	4	18	1	6	2
Eversholt-	885	2,119	66	11	48	10	55	11	41	8	66	10	44	12	55	9	36	11
Harlington	529	1,815	No School.															
[b] Hockliffe -	416	1,021	32	1	36	2	27	1	32	2	21	1	15	8	19	1	14	5
Holcut -	71	880	No School (*see* Salford).															
[b] Husburne Crawley.	535	1,520	31	1	25	3	26	1	22	2	31	1	25	3	26	1	22	2
[b] Milton Bryant.	345	1,480	25	0	21	4	20	0	16	4	25	0	21	4	20	0	16	4
[b] Potsgrove	298	1,385	27	0	15	2	20	0	10	2	27	0	15	2	20	0	10	2
Ridgmont	1,029	2,248	59	10	45	7	50	8	33	4	66	13	42	9	45	8	28	5
[b] Salford -	264	900	28	0	29	0	26	0	26	0	28	0	29	0	26	0	26	0
Tilsworth	348	1,510	No School worth the name.															
Tingrith -	226	946	20	9	19	16	20	9	19	16	20	9	19	16	20	9	19	16
[c] Toddington	2,433	5,390	122	28	58	11	70	10	33	4	133	20	58	12	85	10	33	4
[a] Woburn -	1,764	3,200	4	5	10	0	3	4	8	0	4	5	10	0	3	4	8	0
	11,682	29,603	519	107	370	104	399	74	289	77	525	102	342	105	400	82	261	85

[a] In this parish the return is confined to the children of farm labourers.

[b] In these six rural parishes the return may be taken as confined to the agricultural labouring class. The returns were all asked for as of the agricultural labouring class, but some of them certainly represent returns of the whole school.

[c] This is only an approximation (one school putting boys and girls together, and the other only separating them as returned "on the register").

Husborne, Crawley, and Salford being new schools could only give return for one half-year, and Milton Bryant, Potsgrove, Tingrith and Woburn are returned in summer and winter as having very much the same attendance, and are here entered as being the same in winter and summer.

B. School Return.—Average Attendance in 19 Parishes in Bedford Union.

Name of Parish.	Population, Census 1861.	Acreage.	Summer. Boys. Under 10.	Summer. Boys. Between 10 and 13.	Summer. Girls. Under 10.	Summer. Girls. Between 10 and 13.	Winter. Boys. Under 10.	Winter. Boys. Between 10 and 13.	Winter. Girls. Under 10.	Winter. Girls. Between 10 and 13.
[a] Biddenham -	350	1,760	16	0	19	0	17	0	18	0
[a] Bletsoe -	412	2,239	16	0	19	5	14	1	16	4
[a] Bromham -	361	1,708	29	5	30	10	24	3	16	11
Cardington -	1,419	5,170	43	0	18	13	40	0	17	18
[b a] Clapham - -	502	1,982	28	0	15	1	28	0	15	1
[a] Cople -	565	2,109	25	1	20	1	25	1	20	1
[a] Goldington -	609	2,735	45	5	43	12	38	6	44	26
[f] Kempston -	2,191	5,160	45	32	74	80	45	32	76	83
[e] Knotting - -	185	1,724	Has been no teacher for 2 years.							
[b a] Melchbourne -	251	2,574	8	1	13	11	8	1	13	11
[b a] Oakley - -	443	1,740	18	0	13	2	18	0	13	2
[c a] Ravensden -	477	2,160	19	1	9	2	30	2	6	2
[b a] Renhold -	513	2,165	15	11	18	18	15	11	18	8
[a] Risely -	1,026	2,980	28	1	24	3	31	1	21	3
[a] Sharnbrook -	872	2,880	24	2	26	6	31	5	32	7
[b a] Souldrop - -	276	1,290	15	2	25	9	15	2	25	9
[a] Thurleigh -	666	3,480	20	0	8	0	20	0	8	0
Turvey -	1,093	3,944	8	3	5	1	16	7	3	1
[d b a] Willington -	290	1,648	13	0	5	0	13	0	5	0
	12,501	49,536	415	64	384	173	428	72	366	182

[a] In these 15 parishes there is no other school.
[b] In Clapham, Melchbourne, Oakley, Renhold, Souldrop, and Willington the winter attendance is taken as the same as summer attendance.
[c] In Ravensden and Souldrop the schools are new, *i.e.*, recently erected.
[d] In Willington a new school has been erected, but is not yet opened.
[e] In Knotting there is a school, but has been no teacher for 2 years.
[f] As to Kempston, the Rev. Hy. Williams says, "In giving the number of girls in attendance at elementary schools I have "included in the return the number belonging to two schools, which meet two days a week each at different parts of the "parish. The whole number in the registers of these schools is 163 girls; they remain up to 16 or 17 years of age in some "cases. There is also an infant school under Government; No. in register, 80 boys and 50 girls; average attendance, 64 boys and 31 girls. There are three Sunday schools, Church, Wesleyan, and Independent."

(The total number of children and young persons in average attendance at day and night schools, exclusive of Sunday schools, is therefore in Kempston. (See night schools.)

Summer, Males - - 141 } 326
Females - 185 }

Winter, Males - - 198 } 388
Females - 190 }

In several cases infant schools are included in these returns, as in Goldington and elsewhere.

C. School Return.—Return of 7 Parishes in Ampthill Union.

Name of Parish.	Population, Census 1861.	Acreage.	Day Schools. Summer Attendance. Number on Register. Boys. Under 10.	Summer. Number on Register. Boys. Between 10 and 13.	Summer. Number on Register. Girls. Under 10.	Summer. Number on Register. Girls. Between 10 and 13.	Summer. Average Attendance. Boys. Under 10.	Summer. Average Attendance. Boys. Between 10 and 13.	Summer. Average Attendance. Girls. Under 10.	Summer. Average Attendance. Girls. Between 10 and 13.	Winter Attendance. Number on Register. Boys. Under 10.	Winter. Number on Register. Boys. Between 10 and 13.	Winter. Number on Register. Girls. Under 10.	Winter. Number on Register. Girls. Between 10 and 23.	Winter. Average Attendance. Boys. Under 10.	Winter. Average Attendance. Boys. Between 10 and 13.	Winter. Average Attendance. Girls. Under 10.	Winter. Average Attendance. Girls. Between 10 and 13.
Cranfield -	1,591	3,933	68	7	51	3	63	4	51	3	78	14	43	8	60	8	35	8
[b] Flitton -	597	1,020	18	0	23	0	15	0	15	0	18	0	13	0	15	0	15	0
Flitwick -	780	2,100	30	0	24	0	21	0	13	0	37	1	22	4	23	1	13	4
[c] Maulden -	1,563	2,503	47	5	48	16	36	5	38	7	43	11	38	23	30	8	30	14
Pulloxhill	703	1,576	35	12	47	10	24	20	34	10	35	10	40	10	27	10	30	10
Silsoe -	713	2,967	22	18	24	22	17	13	21	19	35	16	24	22	30	12	21	19
[a] Westoning	784	1,715	32	19	17	9	22	13	11	5	29	23	15	7	22	18	11	4
	6,731	14,911	255	61	234	60	198	55	183	44	275	75	235	74	207	57	155	59

[a] The return for Westoning is of the whole attendance.
[b] For Flitton only the average attendance in summer was given. Winter attendance said to be nearly the same. From Shillington only the numbers "*on the register*" of the two National schools were given.
[c] In Maulden "plaiting" is allowed in school for a certain number of hours.

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D.—School Returns.

Biggleswade Union.			Day Schools.															
			Summer.								Winter.							
			Number on Register.				Average attendance.				Number on Register.				Average attendance.			
			Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.	
Name of Parish.	Population, Census 1861.	Acreage.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.
Arlesey -	1,403	2,303	54	10	30	14	40	6	22	10	60	10	30	15	45	6	20	10
[a] Biggleswade.	4,631	4,310	68	18	104	16	38	10	72	8	68	18	104	16	46	14	70	12
Northill -	1,362	4,120	25	15	20	20	20	10	20	10	25	15	20	20	18	7	18	7
Southill -	1,391	6,180	87	9	73	8	77	7	68	6	90	16	75	8	82	8	73	6
Sandy -	2,118	4,010	60	20	55	8	46	12	40	3	81	27	57	12	50	19	33	11
Total -	10,903	20,923	294	72	282	66	221	45	222	37	324	86	286	71	241	54	214	46

These five returns are supposed to be confined to the agricultural labouring class.

[a] There is a British School in Biggleswade with about 100 children of this class not given here.

E.—School Return.

Luton Union.

Return of East Hyde School.

Population - 420
Acreage - - 1,605

Average attendance.

In summer:

Boys under 10 - 28 } 32
„ 10 to 13 - 4 }
Girls under 10 - 25 } 29 } 61
„ 10 to 13 - 4 }

In winter:

Boys under 10 - 27 } 33
„ 10 to 13 - 6 }
Girls under 10 - 20 } 25 } 58
„ 10 to 13 - 5 }

[East Hyde school return is confined to children of agricultural labouring class.]

"Barton in the Clay," with a population of 956 and acreage of 2,225, has no day school or night school.

F.—School Return.

Statement contrasting the number of Children actually under education in the under-mentioned Schools, with that proportion of the population expected to be so by Government.

—	Population.	One sixth of Population [nearly.]	Number of children in Schools inspected by Government.		Per-centage not so educated in 1867.
			1866.	1867.	
Goldington -	609	101	90	97	3·96
Apsley - -	1,437	239	177	162	32·21
Milbrook	430	71	—	45	36·61
Eversholt - -	885	147	88	90	38·77
Ampthill -	2,144	357	216	203	43·13
Woburn	1,764	294	148	159	45·91
Oakley - -	443	74	—	38	48·64
Stevington -	606	101	51	45	55·44
Marston -	1,270	211	98	90	57·34
Flitwick	773	128	40	—	*68·75
Maulden -	1,563	260	57	79	69·61
Ridgmount	1,029	171	37	42	75·43
Toddington -	2,433	405	—	89	78·02

[* 1866].

N.B.—The number of children represents the *average* attendance. The number on the books is not known at Bedford Office.

Note.—(This return of schools in some of the parishes in which the Duke of Bedford interests himself was given to the Assistant Commissioner by Mr. Wing.)

Circular Questions, IV.—44.

44. Approximate number of children of the agricultural labouring class neither at school nor at work.

In summer.

Total boys - - Total girls - -

In winter.

Total boys - - Total girls - -

74 circulars give no answer.
7 „ answer "None."
3 „ „ "Few or none."

Woburn Union.

Rev. S. F. Cumberlege, Woburn, says:
In summer, 1 boy between 10 and 13 years,
„ 1 girl „ 8 and 10 „

Rev. V. C. Smith, Husborne Crawley, says,
In winter, 1 girl between 8 and 10 years,
„ 7 girls „ 10 and 13 „

Rev. B. C. Smith, Holcote and Salford, says,
In summer, 3 girls between 8 and 10 years.

Bedford Union.

Rev. R. N. Durrant, Risely, says,
In summer, 2 boys between 8 and 10 years,
„ 8 girls „ 8 and 10 „
„ 3 girls „ 10 and 13 „
And the same in winter.

Rev. G. Thornton, Sharnbrook, says,
In summer, 4 boys between 8 and 10 years,
„ 3 girls „ 8 and 10 „
In winter, 6 boys „ 8 and 10 „
„ 4 boys „ 10 and 13 „
„ 2 girls „ 10 and 13 „

Ampthill Union.

Rev. G. Renaud, Silsoe, says, 13 boys not at school.

For Swineshead parish which is in the county of Huntingdon, but surrounded by Bedfordshire.

Mr. John Smith, says, "Two-thirds of the children "in the parish who are not at work, as there is "no school."

Circular Questions, IV.—45.

45. Approximate number of young persons of the agricultural labouring class, growing up with insufficient education.

Males—Approximate number - - - -
Females—Approximate number - - -

73 circulars give no answer to this question.
The others answer as follows:—

WOBURN UNION.

Woburn—Males, 17.
„ Females, 8.
Milton Bryant—Males, 3.
„ Female, 1.
Ridgnorth, "A large number."
Tingrith, "All can read and write."
Tilsworth, "Most of our young persons, say 40."
Harlington, "Nearly all have a certain amount of "education, but generally inefficient."

BEDFORD UNION.

Clapham—Males, 5.
„ Females, 5.
Sharnbrook—Males, 6.
„ Females, 5.
Willington, "All we have."
Biddenham, "The education of a very large pro- "portion of the males is very insufficient owing to "the early age at which they are removed from "school, the females, as a rule, are better educated "owing to their longer attendance both at day and "Sunday school."
Turvey, "From the early age at which both boys "and girls are taken from school, the education of "the great mass is insufficient."

AMPTHILL UNION.

Silsoe—Males, 10.
„ Females, 3.
Flitwick—"Perhaps 30 of both."
Flitton—"About half a dozen."
Maulden—"Very few males or females can sign "the marriage register."

BIGGLESWADE UNION.

Northill—Males, about 250.
„ Females, about 250.

LUTON UNION.

East Hyde—"About half."
[NOTE.]—*i. e.* 17 out of 55 parishes answer as above.

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS IV., 46 to 53.

46. Is there any evening school in your parish?
47. How many weeks in the year is it open? At what periods of the year?
48. How many nights per week?
49. How many hours per night?
50. What is the number of scholars?

On the Register.		In average attendance.			
		In Summer.		In Winter.	
Under 12.	Above 12.	Under 12.	Above 12.	Under 12.	Above 12.

51. What are the subjects of instruction?
52. Do you consider that the evening school adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school?
53. What do you find to be the principal difficulties in the way of maintaining an efficient evening school?

COUNTY OF BEDFORD.

Out of 50 parishes in the county of Bedford for which school returns were sent to the Assistant Commissioner, 27 have evening schools, in all of which reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught; in 3 or four there is religious teaching, and in one geography is taught. In 2 parishes there are evening schools in summer for girls, viz., in Eversholt and Tingrith.

Of the 27 evening schools—
6 are open for more than 20 weeks per year.
16 are open for 20 weeks per year.
5 are open from 10 to 20 weeks per year.
2 are open for 4 nights per week.
15 „ „ 3 „ „
9 „ „ 2 „ „
1 „ „ 1 „ „
13 are open for 2 hours per night.
14 „ „ 1½ „ „

In 24 out of these 27 returns of evening schools the numbers and ages of the scholars on the register and in average attendance are given, and are as follows:—

On register.		In average attendance.	
Under 12 years	134	Under 12 years	78
Above „	722	Above „	468

On the register of the remaining three schools there are 96 scholars, with an average attendance of about 60.

Of the 23 parishes which are returned as having no evening schools, 5 have had such schools, which are now discontinued from the want of available teachers.

In answer to question 52, "Do you consider that "the evening school adequately supplies the defi- "ciencies of the day school?"
17 witnesses answer "No."
1 witness says, "No, though of great use."
2 witnesses say, "Would do if they would attend."
2 „ „ "In a great measure."
4 „ „ "Yes."

The other answers to this question are given at length.

In answer to question 53, "What do you find to "be the principal difficulties in the way of maintain- "ing an efficient evening school."
10 witnesses say, "The want of a suitable teacher."
5 „ „ "Weariness of children after work."
4 „ „ "Indifference of parents."
2 „ „ "Indifference of youths."
1 witness says, "The great number of public houses."
1 „ „ "Want of encouragement from em- "ployers."
1 „ „ "Distance they have to come."
1 „ „ "Want of money."
1 „ „ "There is no difficulty."

The other answers to this question are given at length.

WOBURN UNION.

Eight out of the 16 parishes in Woburn Union have night schools.

The number and age of scholars as follows:

On register.		In average attendance.	
Under 12 years	30	Under 12 years	24
Above „	219	Above „	141
Total on register	249	Total average attndce.	165

These are all the evening school scholars out of a population of 11,682 in Woburn Union.

COUNTY OF BEDFORD.

The aggregate of 546 scholars in average attendance at evening schools for 50 parishes, of which 27 have such schools is for a population of 44,378.

WOBURN UNION.

The following are the other answers to questions 52 and 53.

Revd. H. M. Erskine, Aspley, says in answer to

Bedfordshire.

Mr. Culley.

f.

question 52, "No, but as a supplement to the day "school it is of very great advantage." In answer to 53, "The irregular hours at which some of the "pupils leave off work and the distance others have "to go after their day's labour."

Revd. J. M. Hamilton, Chalgrave, in answer to question 53, says, "The instruction of the children "having been greatly neglected in their earlier years "for the sake of straw plait, they are ashamed when "above 12 years old to come and begin to learn the "very rudiments of reading."

Revd. W. S. Baker, Eversholt:

52. No. The children leave the day school about 10, and are not admitted to the evening school until 12 years old.

53. The difficulty of obtaining the attendance of the boys except during the four winter months, on account of their work; and the difficulty of obtaining the attendance of the girls in daylight, except during the four summer months on account of their employments in straw plaits.

Revd. T. Tanqueray, Tingrith, in answer to question 53, "Want of inclination to attend on the part "of the people."

53. What do you find to be the principal difficulties in the way of maintaining an efficient evening school?

Rev. V. C. Smith, Husborne, Crawley: I consider that in this parish, and I believe in county parishes generally, an evening school would supply to a great degree the deficiencies of the day school, *e.g.*, in the case of those boys employed in farm labour, and those girls employed in lace making and straw plaiting, whose parents cannot afford to give up the children's earnings or pay for school. Also many who have neglected school when young and are too old for the day school, would attend an evening school. I believe a good evening school to supplement a good day school (not of course, omitting the Sunday school) would be found sufficient for the wants of agricultural parishes and sufficiently attended without having recourse to any compulsory legislation. There is no evening school in this parish, there not being any room in the parish available for the purpose of a school, except the day schoolroom. This I am prohibited from using, it being private property.

The Rev. A. B. Hamilton, Ridgmont. The opposition of the authorities on the Bedford estate is one chief difficuly, and I find it impossible to get any persons above 18 or 20 to avail themselves of the night school. I have not been distinctly ordered to discontinue the night school, but have been advised to do so. I am most unwilling to do so, as it has been very successful in some cases, and many boys who could neither read nor write two years ago can now fairly do both. I think the gang system as pursued in this parish, *i.e.* of employing very young children who are paid by the employer, not by the gang master, is very injurious to the education of the poor. Numbers of these young children are employed by the Duke of Bedford and by several tenants in this parish. They say "We have no gangs" because the children are paid and employed by the farmer, not by the gang master. "We have no boys in our school over the "age of 10, and yearly in spring we lose all boys of "from 8 to 10, as they are sent by their parents to "work in preference to school. I should be glad to "hear of some measure being passed to prevent the "occupation of such young children in these gangs, "for by no other name can I describe them."

Rev. S. F. Cumberlege, says, "The evening school "by no means supplies the deficiences of the day "school. The difficulties in the way of maintaining "an efficient evening school are: indisposition to "work, preference of other employment, attendance "at mechanics' institutes, volunteers, drum and fife "bands, &c. There are two or three lads anxious "for further education, but most having left the day "school early have lost both what they learnt and "the capacity to learn, so that at the examination of "the evening scholars last year the report of the "Government inspectors reported their attainments "to be little better generally than that of the first "class of an infant school."

Bedford Union.

Mr. Charles Howard, Biddenham, in answer to question 52, says, "Perhaps not adequately, but it is "a most useful adjunct."

In answer to question 53, *Mr. C. Howard* says, "Want of Goverment help and the consequent in-"ability to maintain a properly qualified master. "Government help being at present restricted to "those particular districts which can afford a cer-"tificated master."

Ampthill Union.

Rev. H. H. Birley, Cranfield, in answer to question 52, says, "Not adequately, though of much use."

In answer to question 53, he further says, "Boys "who have been hard at work all day have not much "mental energy left, they will read and write readily, "but unless they have had previous instruction it is "very difficult to get them to."

Rev. A. Frere, Shillington, in answer to question 53, says, "I consider the rule of the Committee of "Council, that in order to be aided the night school "must be paid for by the lads, has worked very ill in "this parish."

Rev. A. Browne, Flitton:—

52. Do you consider that the evening school adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school?—"Certainly not to the extent desired."

53. What do you find to be the principal difficulties in the way of maintaining an efficient evening school?—"If the attendance is voluntary, the "only real obstacle is the want of appreciation "on the part of the recipients, *i.e.* the parents "as well as the scholars themselves. There is "less of this in the case of adults, but there "will always be some shortsighted individuals "who cannot be induced by any prospect of "remote advantage to forego the present earn-"ings of their children, however small, in "favour of a steady continuance at school for "at least say three or four years. The expense "of properly qualified superintendents would "be another difficulty in the way of an efficient "evening school in such a place as this."

N.B.—"There is no want of educational appliances "in this neighbourhood if only the people could be "induced to avail themselves thereof. No part of "this parish is a mile distant from one or other of "three good daily schools, but scarcely more than six "are receiving instruction at any one time in all three "of them together. In fact the only teaching that "the great majority of this parish have had is that of "the Sunday school, supplemented by an evening "school two days in the week during the winter half "year, mostly for adults, but including also a few "boys above 15 years of age, who are exercised for "1½ hour in reading, writing, and arithmetic; aver-"age attendance about 34. As it is there are few "who cannot both read and write, and some have a "tolerable notion of the common rules of arithmetic."

Circular Questions, IV. 54.

"Field keeping on Sunday."

In answer to the question, "Are any boys pre-"vented from attending church by 'field keeping' or "'bird scaring' on Sundays?" a good many witnesses say, "One or two;" others say, "A few at "certain seasons of the year."

The following witnesses answer more fully as follows:—

Mr. Charles Howard, occupier, Biddenham, says, "I think it a practice that cannot be too strongly "condemned. I am glad to say that in this parish "we have relays of men for this work."

Mr. George Wallis, occupier, Renbold, says, "I "never allow boys to keep the fields on the Sundays,

" as I don't think it right; I send a man with a gun " to shoot off several times in the day if the crows " are troublesome."

Mr. John Horrell, occupier, Oakley, says, " We " require one boy on each Sunday about four months " in the year, and having about five boys we have " them in turns."

Rev. A. J. Coleridge, Bromham, says, " Yes, some " few; I cannot say how many. It is a great and " unnecessary evil, as I think, and has only last " Sunday resulted in a little boy of 11 years of age " shooting himself so badly that his life was almost " despaired of; he is now in the Bedford Infirmary."

Rev. J. A. Frere, Shillington, says, " Yes, a good " many, and by horse-keeping also. My own idea is, " that in the latter case the difficulty might be met " by having the entire work (and pay) divided be- " tween two lads, where now one is retained for the " work, and giving them the alternate Sundays free."

Rev. T. Tanqueray, Tingrith, says, " I cannot " think of more than three who go 'crow keeping;' " these three have not attended church service during " that time. I have known them come sometimes to " church once of the Sunday when the parent has " taken the 'crow keeping.' "

SUMMARY OF ANSWERS TO CIRCULARS OF INQUIRY FROM BUCKS.

The following summary of answers given in circulars of inquiry is from 82 such circulars returned from 74 parishes in the county of Buckingham, of which—

41 were returned by clergymen of parishes.
41 by landowners and occupiers or their agents, of whom 30 are guardians of the poor for their respective parishes.

The number of parishes in the different unions from which these returns have been received are—

In Aylesbury Union from	18 parishes.
In Thame Union from	6 "
In Winslow Union from	8 "
In Buckingham Union from	9 "
In Newport Pagnell Union from	12 "
In Leighton Buzzard Union from	2 "
In Amersham Union from	4 "
In Wycombe Union from	10 "
In Eton Union from	5 "

The circulars from one parish in Aylesbury Union and one in Eton Union arrived just too late to be inserted in the summary.

Circular Questions I.

As to Employment in Private Gangs.

Circulars either give no answer to the questions under this head, or answer that gangs are not employed. From only one parish is there a return of a private gang, viz., from Aston Clinton, of which the *Rev. C. W. W. Eyton* says, in answer to questions, " A gang of 15 boys, whose average age is 10½ years, " is employed in this parish in spring, summer, and " autumn in destroying weeds, thinning root crops, " &c.; none of them have to come more than 1½ miles " to their work. The hours of work are from 6 a.m. " to 6 p.m., 1½ hours being allowed for meals. There " is nothing injurious to the health of these boys " arising from the nature of their employment, nor " are they ill-treated in any way. The state of " education among them is bad."

Mr. W. Hawkins, Emberton, Newport Pagnell, under the head of general employment, says, " I " sometimes have from 8 to 10 children from 8 to 12 " years of age, pulling up charlock out of the barley " generally, and one old man to look after them; they " only work while the weather is fine, and are paid " 3*d.* each per day. There are no organized gangs " in this neighbourhood."

Circular Questions II. (*a.*) (*b.*) (*c.*)

II. As to the Employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women not in Gangs, either "Public" or "Private," but individually or in company with a few other Persons.

22. Inasmuch as on every farm there will probably be children, young persons, and women both permanently and occasionally employed, not in gangs either "public" or "private," but individually or with a few other persons; and as these could not be omitted from any protective legislation which might be thought desirable and practicable on behalf of those employed in "public" or "private" gangs, if the circumstances of their employment should be found to require it, be kind enough to answer, as fully as you are able, the following questions:—

(*a.*) What is the number of children, young persons, and women employed in agricultural labour singly or with a few others
In your parish?
On your farm?

(*b.*) Give as nearly as you can the following particulars as to the number and age of such persons so employed.

Males.					Females.						
									Over 18.		
Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 10 and 8.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Married.	Unmarried.	Total Females.

(*c.*) In what kinds of work are they employed during the different seasons of the year?

The following summary of answers received to these questions will illustrate the nature and extent of the employment of children, young persons, and women in Buckinghamshire.

The tables include a summary of notes taken of 20 farms in the unions of Aylesbury, Thame, Winslow, Buckingham, Amersham, Wycombe, and Eton, as well the summary of answers in circulars of inquiry.

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Table A.—Labour Returns.

Gross Return of Children, Young Persons, and Women employed in Farm Labour from 82 Circulars (many of whom give no Return), and 20 Farms taken in Note Book, showing comparative Number and Ages.

Unions.	Males.					Females.						
	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Total Males under 18.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
Aylesbury - -	2	31	88	116	237	—	—	—	—	2	1	3
Thame - - -	0	12	53	81	146	—	—	—	—	46	13	59
Winslow - - -	—	—	16	21	37	—	—	—	—	2	1	3
Buckingham - -	2	13	72	76	163	—	—	7	—	5	9	21
Newport Pagnell -	—	2	14	20	36	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Amersham - -	—	16	16	13	45	—	—	—	2	2	2	6
Wycombe - - -	—	—	13	16	29	—	—	—	6	5	—	11
Eton - - -	—	12	25	30	67	—	—	—	—	29	13	42
Total - -	4	86	297	373	760 under 18	—	—	7	8	91	39	145 of all ages.

Table B.—Labour Returns.

Gross Return of Children, Young Persons, and Women employed in 17 Parishes as given in *Circulars of Inquiry*.

—	Population.	Acreage.	Males.					Females.						
			Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Total Males under 18.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
5 parishes in Aylesbury Union -	1,782	7,762	2	19	52	79	152	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4 „ in Thame Union -	2,532	8,132	0	12	53	81	146	—	—	—	10	46	13	69
5 „ in Buckingham Union	1,944	8,994	2	13	63	59	137	—	—	7	—	1	9	17
1 „ in Newton Pagnell Union	155	1,020	0	2	1	4	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2 „ in Eton Union - -	2,189	4,830	0	11	12	10	33	—	—	—	—	7	2	9
Total of 17 parishes -	8,602	30,738	4	57	181	233	475	—	—	7	10	54	24	95

5 parishes in Aylesbury Union—Aston Abbots, Cublington, Fleet Marston, Weston Turville, and Oving.
4 „ in Thame Union—Kinsey, Long Crendon, Shabbington, and Worminghall.
5 „ in Buckingham Union—Addington, Adstock, Beachampton, Leckhamstead, and Thornborough.
1 „ in Newport Pagnell Union—Broughton.
2 „ in Eton Union—Farnham Royal and Taplow.

Table C.—Labour Returns.

Gross Return of Children, Young Persons, and Women employed in Farm Labour as given in Circulars only.

Union.	Males.						Females.						
	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
Aylesbury - -	0	11	16	18	98	143	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Thame - -	0	1	4	4	27	36	—	—	—	—	12	5	17
Winslow - -	0	0	2	3	8	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Buckingham -	0	0	1	2	7	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Amersham - -	0	0	1	3	8	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wycombe - -	0	0	3	12	46	61	—	—	—	—	5	—	5
Eton - -	0	0	7	12	55	74	—	—	—	—	29	13	42
Totals -	0	12	34	54	249	349	—	—	—	—	46	18	64 of all ages.

TABLE D.—LABOUR RETURNS.

TABLE showing the NUMBER and AGE of CHILDREN, YOUNG PERSONS, and WOMEN employed on 13,459 Acres in BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, as stated by Employers to the Assistant Commissioner.

Union.	Acreage.			Males.					Females.						
	Arable.	Pasture.	Total Acreage.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Total Males under 18.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
Aylesbury -	1,986	2,972	4,958	0	11	28	34	63	—	—	—	—	2	1	3
Thame - -	305	512	817	0	1	4	4	9	—	—	—	—	12	5	17
Winslow - -	112	635	747	0	0	2	5	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Buckingham -	620	1,712	2,332	0	0	15	23	38	—	—	—	—	4	—	4
Newport Pagnell -	465	395	860	0	0	7	6	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Amersham - -	250	60	310	—	—	1	3	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wycombe - -	1,140	235	1,375	0	0	3	12	15	—	—	—	—	5	—	5
Eton - -	1,690	370	2,060	0	0	10	16	26	—	—	—	—	22	8	30
Total -	6,568	6,891	13,459	0	12	60	103	175 under 18	—	—	—	—	45	14	59 of all ages.

TABLE E.—LABOUR RETURNS.

TABLE showing NUMBER and AGES of ALL PERSONS employed on 8,442 Acres, of which 4,411 are arable, in Six Unions in BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, as given by Employers to Assistant Commissioner.

Union.	Acreage.			Males.						Females.						
	Arable.	Pasture.	Total Acreage.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
Aylesbury -	1,986	2,972	4,958	—	11	28	34	167	240	—	—	—	—	2	1	3
Thame -	305	512	817	—	1	4	4	27	36	—	—	—	—	12	5	17
Buckingham	120	42	162	—	—	1	2	7	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Amersham -	250	60	310	—	—	1	3	8	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wycombe -	1,140	235	1,375	—	—	3	12	46	61	—	—	—	—	5	—	5
Eton -	610	210	820	—	—	5	10	40	55	—	—	—	—	12	5	17
Totals -	4,411	4,031	8,442	—	12	42	65	295	414 of all ages.	—	—	—	—	31	11	42 of all ages.

Showing comparative number of adult and young males, and of males and females of all ages.

Boys under 12 are employed throughout the county—

In spring in bird scaring.
" picking couch grass (or twitch).
" pulling charlock.
" cutting thistles.
" potato setting.
" attending stock.
In summer, picking couch grass.
" weeding.
" helping in hay-making.
" attending stock.
In autumn, helping at harvest.
" bird scaring.
" pig keeping, &c.
In winter boys under 12 not so much employed, chiefly in attending to stock, helping shepherd, &c.

Boys between 12 and 18 are employed throughout the country—

In spring in couching.
" weeding.
" attending to stock.
" driving teams and carts, &c.
In summer in hoeing root crops.
" driving teams and carts, &c.
In autumn in harvest work.
" driving carts.
" getting up and storing roots, &c.
In winter in driving teams.
" attending stock, &c.

Females.—There is no return of females employed in farm labour from the unions of Newport Pagnell and Leighton Buzzard.

A few women over 18 are employed in weeding in spring in Aylesbury Union.

Women over 18, most of them married, are employed in Thame Union in couching, weeding, hoeing, and planting seed in spring; in hoeing root crops, haymaking, and harvesting in summer and autumn; in thrashing in winter.

In Winslow and Buckingham Unions, as in Aylesbury, a few women are employed in weeding as well as in hay time and harvest; there is one return of girls employed weeding.

In Amersham Union very few females are employed, except in hay time and harvest.

In Wycombe Union a few girls between 13 and 18 are employed in spring, weeding.

In Eton Union women, generally married women, are employed in spring in weeding; in summer in haymaking and harvesting; in autumn in harvesting and raising and trimming roots, &c.; in winter in trimming roots and thrashing.

There is no return of females under 18 as employed in farm labour in Eton Union.

The following witnesses, speaking of the employment of children, young persons, and women, say:—

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AYLESBURY UNION.

Mr. E. Stone, Wotton, says, "Women in spring "and summer only, weeding and haymaking."

Rev. T. J. Williams, Waddesdon, "A good many "lads out of work in winter."

Rev. A. Isham, Weston Turville, says, "Women "are not employed except in hay time and harvest;" and the same answer is given from five or six parishes.

Mr. J. M. Farnborough, Dinton, "I employ one "or two women occasionally, couching, in spring."*

Mr. W. Bell, Bierton, "I do not employ any "females; occasionally a man's wife comes to help "him in piece-work, especially in harvest."*

THAME UNION.

Rev. Jas. Statter, Worminghall, says of female labour, "Occasionally scutching (*i.e.*, twitching) in "winter."

Rev. E. Boys, Oakley, says of females, "At home "in winter."

Rev. W. N. Jackson, Kingsey, says of winter, "Out on the land very little."

Mr. Thos. Fuller, Ickford,—"I employ seven "married women, and two girls between 15 and 18. "They hoe wheat, couch, and clean crops generally, "and single mangold and plant beans; they also "work in hay time and harvest. They usually work "from 9 a.m. till 4 p.m., and hoeing by piece-work "they earn from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* per day; planting "beans by the bushel they earn 10*d.* or 11*d.* per day, "planting about half a bushel."*

Mr. Henry Fuller, Ickford,—"I employ six women, "of whom five are married; they work from 9 a.m. "till 4 p.m., and are paid by the day, 9*d.*, *i.e.*, for six "hour's work, as they rest an hour for dinner."

Mr. Freeman, Chilton,—"Pays two women 4*s.* per "week for weeding, 5*s.* to 6*s.* in hay time and har-"vest, and 6*s.* for untying sheaves on scaffold thrash-"ing."*

WINSLOW UNION.

Mr. Wm. Hinton, for Three Claydons, says, "Very "few females employed in field labour, and boys, ex-"cept with plough, not employed much in winter."

BUCKINGHAM UNION.

Mr. Thos. Attwood, Leckhamstead,—"Women are "employed only a few weeks in summer months."

NEWPORT PAGNELL UNION.

Mr. Wm. Hawkins, Emberton, says, "There are "no females employed on the land in this neighbour-"hood, and labour being plentiful very few young "children, except in weeding seasons, say from "middle of April to middle of May, and again from "middle of September to middle of October. I some-"times have 8 or 10 children from 8 to 12 years old "pulling up charlock in the barley in April generally; "an old man looks after them."

[*Note.*—These boys are not entered in Mr. Hawkins' return of children and young persons employed.]

Rev. J. P. Langley, Olney, says, "There are a few "boys, perhaps eight between 7 and 10, who occa-"sionally go twitching or bird keeping, and at other "times come to school."

WYCOMBE UNION.

Mr. Chas. Brown, Princes Risborough,—"A few "girls weeding and haymaking."

ETON UNION.

Mr. Joseph Trumper, Burnham,—"I employ "women couching and weeding, but not in hay time."

Mr. R. Webster, Hitcham,—"I employ three women "in couching and weeding, in harvest, and in winter "in trimming roots for cattle and sheep."

Mr. Charles Cantrell, Datchett, — "Employs "women. In spring in weeding corn; in summer "in haymaking and harvest; in autumn in raising "and trimming mangold and swedes by piece-work; "in winter only occasionally with thrashing ma-"chine."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS II. 22. (*d.*)

(*d.*) Do they live on or near the farms on which they work? If not, how far have they to come from their homes to their daily work?

24 circulars give no answer.
50 „ answer "yes" or "near."
4 „ ½ mile to 1½ miles.

Others as follows:—

Fleet Marston, Aylesbury.—"Most have two miles "to come."

Oving, Aylesbury.—"Some go two miles."

Weston Turville, Aylesbury.—"Three farms are "two miles from village."

Lavendon, Newport Pagnell.—"One to three miles."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS II. 22. (*e.*)

(*e.*) What are their usual hours of work upon the land?

The answers to this question vary,—for males under 18 from 5 a.m. and 6 p.m. to 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. in summer, and from 6.30 a.m. and 5.30 p.m. to 7.30 a.m. and 4 p.m. for winter; and for females from 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. to 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.

In the unions of Newport Pagnell and Leighton Buzzard the most usual answer is 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. in summer, and 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. in winter for males.

In the other unions the usual answer is 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. in summer, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. in winter for males.

In Thame and Eton Unions the hours of work for women are,—

In Thame 8 or 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
In Eton 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. or 5 p.m.

None of these hours refer to hay-time or harvest.

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS II. 22. (*g.*)

(*g.*) What are the times allowed for meals?

Of 70 circulars giving answers to this question—

43 answer 1½ hours.
13 „ 1 hour.
14 „ 1¾ to 2 hours.

The meaning of these answers is, that where labourers begin work at 6 a.m. the usual time allowed for meals is 1½ hours, ½ an hour for breakfast and the hour for dinner; that where labourers begin work at 7 a.m. (or, in the case of women, at 8 a.m.) no time is allowed for breakfast, which is taken before beginning work, the usual one hour being allowed for dinner; and that in certain kinds of work a rest of 15 minutes is given at 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS II. 22. (*h.*)

(*h.*) Does the demand upon their physical powers injuriously affect their health and constitution?

17 circulars give no answer.
60 circulars answer "No."
3 circulars answer "That farm work improves their health."
1 circular answers "Apparently not till after 50 years of age, when it does."
1 circular answers "No, they are well paid and well fed."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS II. 22. (*i.*)

(*i.*) Are the young or the females, whether young or grown up, subject to any ill-treatment?

Only 32 circulars answer this question, and all say "No."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS II. 22 (*j.*)

(*j.*) Do any special employments injuriously affect females or the young generally?

* From Assistant Commissioner's note book.

32 circulars give no answer.
32 „ answer "No."
9 „ of which eight are from clergymen of parishes, answer "Straw plaiting."
7 „ from clergymen of parishes answer "Lace making."

Others answer as follows:—

Rev. E. T. Drake, Amersham, "Straw plaiting "both morally and physically."

Rev. R. C. Green, Broughton, "I think the health "and agility and mental powers of many would be "better if they had not so many hours work."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS II. 22. (*k.*)

(*k.*) Have you any observations to make as to the effect of the employment of females in agriculture on morals and on their proper training for domestic duties?

51 circulars give no answer.
10 „ answer that females are not so employed.
3 „ answer that such employment is not injurious.

The Ven. Archdeacon Bickersteth, D.D., Aylesbury, says, "I do not think that the *occasional* "employment of females in agriculture is objection-"able. The *habitual* employment of them is in my "judgment degrading and hurtful."

The Rev. H. W. G. Armstrong, Bierton, says, "When mothers are much in the field, both their "morals, and those of their families, with home "comforts for the husband, are likely to suffer."

The Rev. T. J. Williams, Waddesdon, says, "I "have a very strong conviction that both morally, "and as affecting their fitness for being good wives "and mothers, such employment is very bad."

The Rev. W. H. Young, Oving, says, "We have "no female agricultural labour, but a good deal of "straw plaiting, which is quite as great a hindrance "to education, and in my opinion more demora-"lizing."

THAME UNION.

The Rev. B. Morland, Shabbington, says, "I "think that females employed constantly in field "labour become untidy, and, generally speaking, "rough in manner, and their absence causes con-"fusion in domestic affairs."

Rev. Jas. Statter, Worminghall, says, "The "number of young females is so small that it is "difficult to say what effect is produced. I don't "observe that they turn out worse or make worse "servants than those who leave home early."

Rev. Jas. Hemsted, Ickford,—"I think the effect "on the women themselves is bad, but it is still "worse as regards their children who are badly "neglected. The standard of morals is very low."

WINSLOW UNION.

Rev. A. M. Preston, Winslow, says, "When "working with boys they are generally rude and "impudent."

BUCKINGHAM UNION.

Mr. Thos. Barge, Hillesden,—"I hold farms in "three parishes, and I don't remember ever having a "girl apply to me for work. I occasionally employ "a few adult women in hay time and harvest. I "think the employment of young girls is objection-"able."

NEWPORT PAGNELL UNION.

Reginald Walpole, Esq., J.P., says, "Agricul-"tural labour has no evil effect morally, nor do the "proper training for domestic duties, but lace making "has. Only adult women as a rule are ever employed "on farms here."

AMERSHAM UNION.

Rev. E. T. Drake, Amersham,—"Some females "are employed in hay-making and harvesting; it "does them good physically, and no harm morally."

Mr. John Verge Howey, Coleshill, says, "In this "hamlet my experience leaves me to think that the "morals of our young girls are good, when at an "early age they can be induced to go into domestic "service, the reverse when brought up at home "platting or casual field labour."

Mr. F. C. Richards, Manor House, Chenies, says, "I consider the employment of females in agricul-"ture to be very prejudicial to their morals, and to "render them unfit for domestic duties."

Mr. Jas. Gurney, Chalfont, St. Giles, says, "The "effect on females when married of constant field "work is generally injurious to the comfort of their "homes, and the proper care of their children."

WYCOMBE UNION.

Rev. F. A. Faber, Saunderton, says, "We have "thought it makes them bold, but it is better for "their health than close sitting at the lace pillow."

Rev. W. E. Partridge, Horsendon, says, "Evidently "agricultural work is less injurious to morals and "domestic duties than lace work or straw plaiting. "There is not much field work for females in this "parish except in hay-time and harvest."

Mr. H. Gibbins, Bledlow, says, "I don't think "their employment is so injurious to morals as the "want of better cottage accommodation, where male "and female, old and young, sleep in one room."

ETON UNION.

Mr. C. Cantrell, Datchett, says, "It would be far "better if the young unmarried women could be "induced to go to service instead of field work, but "in many cases this is difficult to do. With regard "to married women with large families, I presume "they can find sufficient occupation at home, but "the temptation of earning a few extra shillings to "buy clothes, &c. is very strong. Moreover the "farmers are often desirous of employing them, and "would often be inconvenienced by their absence."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS II. 22. (*l.*)

(*l.*) Taking into consideration the demand for labour in your parish and neighbourhood, and the pecuniary resources of the agricultural labourers, are you prepared to recommend that any restriction should be placed on the employment of females in field work?

If so, would you limit the restriction to females of a defined age, or would you prohibit female labour in the fields altogether, excepting at hay and corn harvest?

56 circulars give no answer.
10 „ answer "No" to the first part of this question.
3 „ „ "Yes."
3 „ „ "That no females are employed."

Others answer as follows:—

AYLESBURY UNION.

The Ven. Archdeacon Bickersteth, D.D., says, "Females are so little employed in field work in this "district that no restriction appears to be required."

Rev. H. W. G. Armstrong, Bierton, says, "The "wages are not high, and it is an opinion that they "must be supplemented by female and child labour. "If it were practicable to avoid I consider that no "mother should be employed in the field."

"As above, *if any plan* to that effect could be arranged it would be most desirable that female labour in the fields should be altogether prohibited, hay and corn harvest *not* excepted."

THAME UNION.

Rev. J. Statter, Worminghall, says, "Considering "the rate of wages of the labourers generally, I think "it would be a great hardship to place any restriction "on the employment of females in this parish.

Bucks.

Mr. Culley.

f.

Rev. B. Morland, Shabbington,—" I cannot see " how at present a woman can be prevented from " working in the field if she has no family, I do not " see that the country suffers from her so doing; on " the other hand, if she has a family she then re- " quires the income which cannot be made up to her " in any other way."

" There are but few who do go out to field-work, excepting for hay and corn harvest, and therefore my opinion is that at present things had be better left as they are."

BUCKINGHAM UNION.

Rev. M. W. Davis, Maids Moreton,—" I should be " in favour of prohibiting field labour for females " altogether, except in hay and corn harvest."

NEWPORT PAGNELL UNION.

Mr. W. Whitworth, Willen, occupier,—" I think " females should only be employed in hay-time and " harvest, when the master is generally present."

Mr. John Yorke, occupier, Olney,—Answers as Mr. Whitworth.

AMERSHAM UNION.

Mr. Wm. Crouch, Amersham,—" I would prohibit " the employment of females under 16 years of age."

Mr. John Werge Howey, Coleshill, says, " No. " Field labour is the only opportunity females have " of earning a little money; young girls at plaiting, " old women at lace making, 12 hours' work, earning " 8*d.* per day. Field labour strengthens their con- " stitution, earning 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* per day."

" No. They earn twice the amount at field labour, and are very anxious to get work, but won't expose themselves to the weather, as in the northern counties."

WYCOMBE UNION.

Mr. H. Gibbins, Bledlow, says, " I think the re- " striction should only extend to females under 10 " years."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS II. 22. (*m.*)

(*m.*) 1. Taking into consideration the demand for labour in your parish and neighbourhood, and the pecuniary resources of the agricultural labourers, are you prepared to recommend that any restriction should be placed upon the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed in farm labour?

(*m.*) 2. If so, please to state the age below which you would recommend that boys should not be so employed.

To first part of question—

18 circulars answer " No."
12 „ „ " Yes."

To second part of question—

5	circulars	answer	" Not under	8 years."
3	„	„	„	9 years.
1	„	„	„	9 or 10 years.
14	„	„	„	10 years.
1	„	„	„	10 or 11 years.
1	„	„	„	12 years.
1	„	„	„	13 years."

BUCKINGHAM UNION.

Mr. Thomas Barge, occupier, says, " No; in some " cases it would be a great hardship on the parents."

Mr. Ridgway, occupier, says, " Not under 10, except " for a few weeks bird keeping "

NEWPORT PAGNELL UNION.

Mr. W. Hawkins, Emberton, occupier, says, " I " find there are at this date (July) but two boys " under 10 at work in this parish, so that a restriction " to 10 years would make very little difference."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS II. 22. (*n.*)

(*n.*) Do you see reason for recommending that the distance to which children and young persons should be allowed to go to work in farm labour should be restricted according to age?

If you should think some restriction of distance in reference to age desirable, do you approve of the following, which assumes that boys under 8 years of age would not be allowed to be employed at all?

No boy of 8 years of age and under	10	To be taken to work beyond a distance from his or her home of	1 mile.
No girl under the age of	13		
No boy of 10 years of age and under	11		2 miles.
No boy of 11 „ „	12		
No boy of 12 „ „	13		
No young person of 13 „ „	14		3 miles.
No young person of 14 „ „	15		
No young person of 15 „ „	16		4 miles.
No young person of 16 „ „	17		
No young person of 17 „ „	18		

Have you any modification to propose in the above table?

47 circulars give no answer.
19 „ answer " No."
8 „ „ " Yes;" and generally approve the table.

Other circulars answer as follows:—

AYLESBURY UNION.

Rev. A. Isham, says, " Fourteen should come under " the category of 2 miles, and 3 miles ought to be the " maximum for young agricultural labourers."

Mr. J. K. Fowler, says, " I think neither child nor " grown-up person should have to go 3 miles to their " work."

WINSLOW UNION.

Mr. Wm. Neal, occupier, says, " No boy under 10 " should be employed; lads of 16 I would not attempt " to control."

BUCKINGHAM UNION.

Rev. R. P. Greaves, Tingewick, says, " Boys are " of little use here under 11; up to 14 they should " not have to go more than two miles to their work; " lads under 18 ought not to have to walk even three " miles to their work."

Mr. Thomas Attwood, occupier, Leckhampstead, says, " I consider 10 years of age sufficiently early " for any child to go out to field labour, for the fol- " lowing reasons, viz., the development of his strength " and to allow time for education."

NEWPORT PAGNELL UNION.

R. Walpole, Esq., J.P., says, " I object to these " distances even for grown men, the walk home at " night after the day's labour must unfit them for " their next day's work and lessen their value to their " employer."

AMERSHAM UNION.

Mr. J. Werge Howey, says, " Two miles is suffi- " cient at any age."

WYCOMBE UNION.

Rev. W. Partridge, says, " One mile each, being " for all ages, would be more desirable."

ETON UNION.

Rev. S. F. Marshall, says, " The table should be " lessened throughout by one mile."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS II. 22. (*o.*)

(*o.*) Do you see reason for recommending that any restriction should be placed upon the hours of work of children and young persons employed in agriculture; and if so, what amount of restriction would you propose?

40 circulars give no anwser.
20 „ answer "No."
1 „ „ 8 hours.
1 „ „ 10 hours.

Other circulars answer as follows:—

AYLESBURY UNION.

Rev. J. Thornton, Aston Abbots, says, "I think "that all young persons ought to have the opportunity of being educated, which at present they "have not, and young children, especially females, "are cruelly confined to plaiting, to the great injury of their health and neglect of mental training. "*Compulsory education* will alone remedy the evil."

Rev. A. Isham, Weston Turville, says, "Restriction is required to bring them under education."

Rev. R. C. Burton, Cublington, says, "Children "should be obliged to attend school for a certain "number of days in the year."

THAME UNION.

Rev. B. Morland, Shabbington, says, "When "young persons go to work I think they must remain "out the regular hours; for instance, a boy at plough "must remain with the team until they leave off "work."

BUCKINGHAM UNION.

Rev. M. W. Davies, Maids Moreton, says, "In "reply to the above questions, I have tried by gentle "compulsion to keep all the children at school up to "the age of 9. I could not do so any longer, out of "regard for the parents' resources. They would "not, *as a rule, allow their children* to go to work "too far from home, nor to work above their strength. "I have found the parents generally very careful of "their children."

Rev. H. Drummond, Leckhampstead, says, "I "think some restriction very desirable. The 'usual "'hours' are sometimes completely disregarded, and "I hear of little boys under 10 kept from between "5 and 6 a.m. to 11 p.m."

Mr. John Linnell, Addington, says, "Very little, "as I consider that the discipline they are under "when at work is beneficial, that the habit of labour "is best acquired when young, that they are far "better at work than being contaminated by the "evil talk in the village street, and I do not think it "possible for persons with families of six or eight in "number to provide sufficient food for them without "their earnings, particularly while provisions are as "dear as now."

NEWPORT PAGNELL UNION.

Mr. J. Yorke, occupier, Olney, says, "I see none, "because there are many light works to which the "time of boys in the afternoons is given that fit "them for future life."

Mr. W. Hawkins, Emberton, occupier, says, "Boys "over 10 who attend evening school might with "little inconvenience leave work a little earlier, say "4 in the winter months."

AMERSHAM UNION.

Mr. C. Metcalfe, Latimer, says, "No boy or girl "should work more than 10 hours a day."

WYCOMBE UNION.

Rev. W. G. Partridge, says, "Women from 8 a.m. "to 5 p.m. except in hay-time and harvest."

Mr. Chas. Brown, landowner and occupier, says, "The hours should be from 6 to 4."

Mr. Henry Gibbins, landowner and occupier, says, "For children under 10 years of age, 8 hours in "summer, 6 hours in winter. No limit for older "persons."

Mr. Owen Peel Wethered, says, "I would apply "the provisions of the Factory Act as to hours as "nearly as possible."

ETON UNION.

Rev. S. F. Marshall, says, "I am of opinion that "the hours should be restricted to 8 hours under 14, "and 10 under 17 years of age."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS III. 23 to 26

III. AS TO REQUIRING SOME AMOUNT OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN THE CASE OF CHILDREN EARNING WAGES BY EMPLOYMENT IN FARM LABOUR.

23. The Commissioners being instructed to inquire to what extent, and with what modifications the principles of the Factory Acts can be adopted in reference to children employed in agriculture, "especially with a view to the "better education of such children," your opinion is invited on the following points:—

24. The three modes by which the prescribed amount of school attendance of children employed in trades and manufactures is obtained are—

By the Factory (7 Vict. c. 15. ss. 31–9).
1. By half day at school and half day at work.
2. By alternate whole days at school and whole days at work.

By the Printworks Act (10 & 11 Vict. c. 70. ss. 2, 3, 26).
3. By school attendance for a certain number of hours during the preceding six months.

26. You are requested to state which of such modes of enforcing some amount of school attendance would seem most applicable to the circumstances of your parish and neighbourhood; or whether a combination of one or more of them would better meet those circumstances; or whether any other mode that you might wish to suggest appears to you preferable.

Forty-three circulars give no answer.

[*Note.*—In giving the answers to this question the answers given by occupiers of land are distinguished from those given by clergymen for parishes.]

Three occupiers and one clergyman answer, none of these modes are applicable to farm labour.

Two clergymen and one occupier prefer the second mode.

Two occupiers and one clergyman consider the third mode the only one applicable, and think night-school attendance sufficient after 10 years of age.

The Ven. Archdeacon Bickersteth says, "I doubt "much whether either of the plans 1 or 2 would "answer in agricultural districts. The principle of "the Printworks Act (plan 3) might, I think, be applied with advantage with some modifications, such "as the substitution of 12 for 6 months."

Seven clergymen and four occupiers express themselves very much in the same words as Archdeacon Bickersteth, and to the same effect, most of them considering that after 10 years of age sufficient school attendance could be given in three or four winter months.

Other circulars answer as follows:—

AYLESBURY UNION.

Rev. C. Erle says, "I am unable to say what would "be the most effectual method. The boys are taken "from school when they are wanted for work, and "their education is consequently very incomplete."

Mr. John Treadwell, occupier, says, "First and "second modes totally inapplicable to farm labour. "Boys here go to night school in winter, having a "school in the village provided by the Duke of "Marlborough."

THAME UNION.

Rev. E. Boys, Oakley, says, "I would suggest the "half day at school and half day at work as preferable, and it should be compulsory. Parents keep "their children from school to work on their allotments."

Bucks.

Mr. Culley.

f.

WINSLOW UNION.

Rev. H. F. Ralph says, "The first mode would, I "think, be best in a lace-making place."

Mr. Wm. Hinton, speaking for Three Claydons, says, "Most of the boys in these localities who do "farm work are able to go to school in the winter "months, except carters' boys, and these would not "probably be employed at all if they did not go "regularly."

Mr. W. Neal, Winslow, occupier, says, "I think "it would be immaterial to the employer whether "the boys were employed half days or whole days, "as he would have to keep double the number. In "either case it would depend more in which way the "discipline of the school could be best kept up."

BUCKINGHAM UNION.

Rev. W. F. Norris says, "I have heard it suggested, "and am inclined to recommend such plan, that the "best half-time system would be effected by insisting "on school attendance for half a month, *i.e.*, the "farmer taking the boy to work for the other half, "on distinct understanding that he was at school the "first half. This would come to his employing two "boys alternately, each producing in turn his cer-"tificate from a master."

Mr. Thos. Barge, occupier, says, "The two first "modes are impracticable; boys would be useless for "either half or alternate days."

Mr. Thos. Attwood, occupier, says, "I consider "every facility should be given for the education of "the children until they reach the age of 10 years, "as by that time, under the training of a competent "person, they have every opportunity of acquiring "sufficient knowledge to fit them for the duties of "their station in life."

NEWPORT PAGNELL UNION.

Rev. J. W. Irving says, "I feel a difficulty in "answering this question after consulting with my "farmers. I should prefer the alternate day system."

Rev. R. C. Green says, "We have some labourers "with eight or nine children, and I don't see how "they are to feed their families unless they can put "them out to work early. In such cases we lose the "girls often at 7 or 8, and they learn lace; the boys "at 8 or 8½. The most *suitable* mode of enforcing "education here for boys would be to require attend-"ance regularly during the six winter months, but "I do not know whether it is possible, or, in the long "run, desirable. *See* a pamphlet by Rev. H. Brand-"reth, 'Wastethrifts and Workmen,' Longmans, "1868. The case of girls is different; the half day "system would be far best for them."

R. Walpole, Esq., J.P. and occupier,—"I prefer "No. 3, as interfering less than 1 and 2 with the "occasional and intermittent work required of boys; "but I do not see how the rule is to be enforced on "the parents. No bench of magistrates would en-"force a penalty, and the rule does not touch em-"ployers. If it can be enforced it should apply to "the winter months and to boys under 11 and girls "under 15. Night schools are very useful, and "ought to be encouraged by Government, and grants "should be given to both day and night schools, where "the results are satisfactory, whether the teacher is "certificated or not."

W. G. Duncan, Esq., J.P., landowner and occupier, and Chairman of Board of Guardians, says, "I con-"sider half at school and half at work simply ridicu-"lous; alternate days at school and work not prac-"ticable. Educate the children up to 9 years of age, "and then they will have learnt to read and write "sufficiently to educate themselves afterwards."

Mr. W. Whitworth, occupier, says, "I think if "the Poor Law Board were *at once* to send a circular "to every union recommending the guardians to "cease giving out-door relief to any orphan children, "or to widows who neglected to send their children "to school if there is one convenient, and also recom-"mend them to pay their schooling, it would have "a very beneficial effect on the labouring poor."

Mr. John Yorke, occupier, Olney, says, "I think "night schools are best calculated to meet the con-"dition of the boys."

AMERSHAM UNION.

Mr. John Werge Howey, Coleshill, says, "In this "hamlet straw platting of mere children is a source "of great benefit to poor labourers. Allowing chil-"dren to learn lessons half the day, and platting the "other half, would be some inducement to send them "to school."

Mr. Jas. Gurney, occupier, says, "I beg to suggest "that under 10 years of age it might be well to place "restrictions on their employment during four winter "months."

WYCOMBE UNION.

Mr. H. Gibbins, landowner and occupier, says, "Under 10 years parents should be compelled to "send children to a school; above that age a certain "amount of attendance at school should be enforced "up to the age of 13 years by certificate."

ETON UNION.

Rev C. Whateley says, "I do not see how any "restrictions can be made. It would be hard on a "father of a large family to prevent his obtaining all "he could by his boys' earnings."

Mr. C. S. Cantrell, Datchett,—"In my own neigh-"bourhood I think boys might be compelled to attend "school during the winter months, when farm work "is slack, but in the spring, summer, and autumn "months their earnings, say 2*s.* or 3*s.* per week, con-"tribute materially to aid the family income, and it "will be impossible to keep the boys at school. "Evening schools in winter are very beneficial to "the boys and young men."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS III. 27.

27. How far is the school attendance affected by the distance that the children have to go to school?

19 circulars
47 „ from parishes say "Not at all."
3 „ „ „ "Very little."

Others answer as follows:—

AYLESBURY UNION.

Mr. E. Bennett, occupier in a hamlet of Wingrave, says, "About two miles to Wingrave. A good many "don't go."

Rev. C. Shilson, Halton,—"A good many come "from a distance."

Mr. W. Mason, Fleet Marston, says,—"No chil-"dren live in the parish."

Rev. R. C. Burton, Cublington,—"There is no "parish school in the parish."

Rev. H. W. G. Armstrong, Bierton,—"The chil-"dren in the hamlets are often prevented by rough "weather in winter."

BUCKINGHAM UNION.

Mr. Thomas Barge, Hillesden, says, "Some of the "cottages are necessarily a considerable distance "from the school. In such cases the attendance "depends on the weather."

NEWPORT PAGNELL UNION.

Mr. W. G. Duncan, landowner and occupier, Brad-well, says, "Our school is in the village, and no child "has a quarter of a mile to come; but the parents "keep their children away from school on all sorts "of trumpery pretexts."

Mr. R. Walpole, J. P., Hanslope, says, "In wet "weather materially; but our parish has two ham-"lets, situated respectively half a mile and one mile "from the parish church, which is close to the school, "and these distances are detrimental in fine weather "and wet."

Mr. John Yorke, Olney, says, "The fact of the "distance must interfere much with the privilege of "their attending school."

WYCOMBE UNION.

Rev. F. A. Faber, Saunderton, says, "In summer "not at all; in winter little children are unable to "go."

Rev. W. A. Partridge, Horsendon, says, "Parents "do not like sending their children when they have "far to go, say over a mile."

Rev. F. B. Ashley, Wooburn,—"This parish is "about six miles by three, and the attendance is "affected by weather and illness."

Mr. Owen Peel Wethered, Great Marlow,—"Only "in a very slight degree in our parish, as there are "outlying schools."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS III. 28.

28. How far is the school attendance affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents?

19 circulars give no answer.
21 „ answer "Not at all," or to that effect.
12 „ „ "Considerably," or to that effect.
9 „ „ "Slightly" or "Somewhat."

Other answers as follows:—

AYLESBURY UNION.

The Ven. Archdeacon Bickersteth says,—"The "payment is very small, and, excepting in a few cases "of gross neglect or great poverty, is no impediment "in the way of the children's attendance. In the "National schools of the Aylesbury district alone "upwards of 100*l.* was paid in weekly pence in 1867."

Rev. T. J. Williams, Waddesdon,—"Very considerably. During the past winter many young "men from 16 to 20 years were out of work, and the "cost of keeping them prevented the parents from "being able to pay for the younger children."

Rev. A. Isham, Weston Turville,—"Not at all as "to inability to pay school fees. But the rule is, "when the plait trade is brisk, few children at school; "when it is dull more come, but irregularly."

Rev. H. W. G. Armstrong, Bierton,—"The parents' "resources being small they send many of their children, from 3 years of age, to straw platting schools."

Rev. J. Thornton, Aston Abbots,—"This is, of "course, a difficulty, especially in large families; but "if the men were more temperate there would be "little difficulty, since work is plentiful and wages "fair."

Mr. J. K. Fowler, Aylesbury, says, "I believe "there is not a labourer in regular work but who "could afford, if he pleased, to pay something towards "his children's schooling."

Mr. J. Henley, Dinton,—"Depends on the age of "the family."

Mr. W. Crook, Stone, says, "None at all, for when "there is a large family the charitably disposed pay "for their education generally in most agricultural "villages."

WINSLOW UNION.

Rev. A. M. Preston, Winslow, says, "Not much in "the case of boys, as there are 20 free scholars "chosen from the sons of the poorest labourers; but "these are the most irregular in attendance. But "the attendance of the girls is seriously affected, the "temptation to go to straw plaiting schools being "great."

Rev. H. F. Ralph, Little Horwood, says, "This "does not appear to be a hindrance, with the small "payment for schooling, excepting the temptation to "earn money at the lace pillow."

Mr. W Hinton, Claydon, says, "Parents are generally glad, when the families are large, to get "employment for a boy at 3*s.* or 4*s.* per week. But "when this cannot it appears, excepting some cases "where parents are careless, to be generally managed "to pay the 1*d.* or 2*d.* per week per head."

NEWPORT PAGNELL UNION.

Mr. W. G. Duncan, J.P., Bradwell, says, "Our "labourers are well paid and well off, and cheaply "educated; yet we find difficulty in getting many "children to school."

Mr. R. Walpole, J.P., Hanslope, says, "Not at all "until the boys are able to do field work and the "girls to make lace. The parents generally are ready "to send their children to school, and pay 2*d.* a week "for it, until they are tempted by the gains of labour."

Rev. T. P. Williams, Little Brickhill, says, "Children often detained from school by reason of the "poverty of their parents, or by their desire for "beer."

Rev. J. P. Langley, Olney,—"Directly the children can earn anything, or be of any use at home, "they are, in many instances, kept away from school. "The consequence is great irregularity of attendance "and early removal."

Rev. J. W. Irving, Broughton, says, "Not at all. "The payment is 2*d.* each per week, or 1*s.* 6*d.* per "quarter. To induce attendance, children who are "present four days in the week are allowed to pay "1*d.* per week into a clothing club, and to every 1*d.* "a ½*d.* is added, thus giving them, if they are regular "for the quarter, 6*d.* out of 1*s.* 6*d.* back."

LEIGHTON UNION.

Rev. W. G. Hamilton, Ivinghoe, says, "There are "but few who could not afford to pay for their children's schooling if they were inclined."

AMERSHAM UNION.

Rev. E. T. Drake, Amersham, says, "More than "it ought."

Mr. John Werge Howey says, "The adult labouring "class, as a rule, can neither read nor write. Their "wages are, first class farm labourers averaging 14*s.* "per week. Out of this house rent 1*s.* 6*d.* per week, "firing, clothing, living upon bread at 8½*d.* or 9*d.* "per quartern loaf, what can they do to educate their "children?"

WYCOMBE UNION.

Mr. H. Gibbins, owner and occupier, says, "Generally the poor have large families, and I think it is "the duty of the State to educate its children as much "as to enforce obedience to the law."

ETON UNION.

Rev. C. Whateley, Taplow, says, "Not at all. "Some of the poorest are paid for by gentry and a "small charity. The weekly charge prevents none "from attending."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS III. 29.

29. Are any efforts being made for the industrial training of girls, in connexion with elementary education, with especial reference to preparing them for their domestic duties?

36 circulars give no answer.
22 „ say "No."
4 „ „ "Yes," but give no particulars.
17 „ sewing in school.

Others as follows:—

Mr. E. Stone, Wootton, says, "The girls are taught "sewing and household work."

Rev. B. Morland, Shallington, says, "They are "taught to be good needlewomen, and all the school "girls get situations when old enough."

Mr. John Yorke, Olney, says, "None now. Lately "an institution was in being from which very satisfactory results ensued."

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CIRCULAR QUESTIONS III. 30.

30. Have you any remarks to make on the subject of cottage accommodation, in regard to its effect on morality or education; or on the health and comfort of the labouring poor?

46 circulars give no answer.
36 witnesses answer as follows:—

AYLESBURY UNION.

The Ven. Archdeacon Bickersteth, Aylesbury, says, "The cottage accommodation in Aylesbury was very bad indeed when I came to reside here in 1853. Since that date, and particularly during the last 10 years, it has greatly improved, and is still improving daily."

Rev. T. J. Williams, Waddesdon,—"I can make no suggestions, but do most heartily regret the evil effects, both on morality and education, arising from too little and too deficient cottage accommodation."

Rev. A. Isham, Weston Turville,—"Many cottages have only one room, in which parents and grown up sons and daughters sleep. The effect is injurious on health and morality."

Rev. W. H. Young, Oving,—"I do not think the cottage accommodation sufficiently bad to be injurious to health, but it must have a debasing moral effect."

AYLESBURY UNION.

Rev. C. Erle, Hardwick,—"Our cottage accommodation is in some instances defective, cottages very old and dilapidated. Lately there have been 12 new cottages in the course of erection, which though small are an improvement on the older ones."

Rev. R. C. Burton, Cublington,—"Most of the cottages in this parish afford fair accommodation, but several are *very bad*, having only one bed-room for a family of seven or eight people."

Rev. H. W. E. Armstrong, Bierton,—"It is a matter of general pastoral experience, that whenever the cottage accommodation is not what it ought to be, the morality, education, health, and comfort of the inmates suffer. Bierton stands fairly in this respect, and there are but few lodgers."

Rev. J. Thornton, Aston Abbots,—"Our village has been almost entirely rebuilt within the last 15 years, and the cottages are very good, and to most a quarter of an acre of land is attached."

Mr. E. Stone, Wotton, says, "Not in this parish; but in the surrounding villages, generally, the cottage accommodation is very inadequate, and undoubtedly tends greatly to retard moral improvement."

Mr. J. K. Fowler, Aylesbury, says, "I think as a rule the poor are badly housed, but worse even in towns in the country. If the cottages are bad in the country, at all events the labourers get fresh air, but in Aylesbury the cottages are bad and very miserably supplied with water."

THAME UNION.

Rev. Jas. Statter, Worminghall,—"Most of the cottages have two bed-rooms, some few have three, four or five have only one, and two of these are inconveniently crowded. Cases of gross immorality occur, but I hardly know whether more from the crowded than the uncrowded houses."

Rev. B. Morland, Shabbington,—"The cottages are extremely bad; they are nearly all freeholds, belonging to the occupiers, originally taken from the waste lands, for which not even a quit rent is paid, built with mud, with but one bed-room and one sitting room, and in many instances not a foot of outlet. I consider this to be the greatest bar to improvement which has to be contended with in this parish, nor do I see any way of improvement, for if new cottages were to be built the poor would rather live where they are rent free than pay a rent for a comfortable house. The morality must suffer under these circumstances."

WINSLOW UNION.

Rev. C. H. Travers, Stewkeley,—"The crowding of families into cottages with inadequate accommodation cannot fail to be destructive of all self-respect and injurious to morality, and subversive of all benefits otherwise to be derived from education, as well as affecting health and comfort."

Rev. A. M. Preston, Winslow,—"Generally the want of sufficient accommodation is very disastrous in its effect on the morals."

Mr. W. Hinton, Claydon,—"I have no doubt that both morally and physically improved cottage accommodation is more healthy, which improvement has been effected hereabout."

Mr. W. Neal, occupier,—"Some of the cottage accommodation is very limited. The cottages in this town are chiefly let and built as a commercial speculation. Over-crowding affecting the physical powers of the females, especially the bad influence, being corrected in the males by their open air occupation, and the division of the sexes not being attainable in the sleeping apartments, the consequence is that many of the girls become mothers at a very tender age, say 16 to 18, and it being so general, it is hardly looked on as a disgrace by their own class. They are enabled to get married soon after they are 20."

BUCKINGHAM UNION.

Rev. W. F. Norris, Buckingham,—"I have long felt the insufficient cottage accommodation is one of the greatest hindrances to the welfare of the labouring poor; and health, comfort and education suffer for want of a change in this respect."

Mr. T. Attwood, occupier, Leckhampstead,—"I think some of the cottages are much too thickly inhabited by their occupiers taking in lodgers, &c.; others are too small for the requirements of the families who occupy them, as there are but very few that have more than two bed-rooms, and in several of them the whole family have to sleep in the same room."

Mr. Thomas, Barge, Hillesdon,—"I consider cottages that have not sufficient sleeping accommodation act injuriously both on the health and morals of the inmates."

NEWPORT PAGNELL UNION.

Mr. W. G. Duncan, J.P., owner and occupier,—"I find that if a labourer or artisan can crowd his house with a lodger or two, he will do it, even if he has to huddle all his young children into the same bed-room with himself and wife. Rents, owing to beer propinquity to Wolverton station workshops, are high, from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* a week; wages average from 10*s.* to 17*s.* a week."

Mr. R. Walpole, J.P., Hanslope,—"I have about 60 cottages under my control, and allow no lodgers without my consent, which is never given unless there is decent room. No other owner in the parish enforces a similar rule. That crowded cottages affect the morality, health, and comfort of the labouring poor is a fact that cannot admit of dispute, and it is, I think, a corollary that such crowding interferes most prejudicially with even a desire to educate."

Rev. G. W. Tomkins, Olney,—"The defective arrangements for sleeping which are to be observed in the cottages of the poor have a bad effect both on health and morality."

Rev. R. C. Green, Loughton,—"Some of the cottages have one bed-room, some two; the effect on morality (in large families) is bad. The health

" is pretty good. In this country coal is dear (1*l.* " per ton) and poor people like a *small* down-stair " room, which can be made cozy in winter; hence " cottage-builders have built accordingly, — small " rooms below and above. Some of these small bed- " rooms, where the roof is of slate and flattish, are " very close in summer. The poor are rather un- " willing to pay a good price for a good cottage. If " you gave them a bed-room chimney, they would " probably stuff it up."

Mr. F. Coales, Chicheley,—" Bad cottages, bad " morals."

Rev. J. P. Langley, Olney, says, " The cottage " accommodation is in many cases insufficient, owing " to the poverty of the parents, who cannot afford " to take a larger house. This state of things has " necessarily a bad effect on morality, health, and " comfort. Many are too poor to pay for their " children's schooling. The lord of the manor " gives 10*l.* per annum to send such children free " to the National school."

Leighton Union.

Rev. G. W. Hamilton, Ivinghoe,—" There are " many cottages where there is insufficient accom- " modation for the family; which does, most un- " questionably, affect the morality, and the health, " and comfort of the inmates."

Rev. W. Roberts, Northall, Eddlesborough,—" The " cottages are sufficient in number for the popu- " lation, but the bed-room accommodation is very " poor, elder girls (12 to 25) oftentimes sleeping in " same room, either with parents or grown up sons."

Amersham Union.

Mr. Metcalfe, Latimer,—" I should think the cot- " tage accommodation has a great deal to do with " the morality and also the health of the people. I " should think there is nothing so likely to improve " the condition of all labourers as good cottages; it " stimulates them."

Mr. J. Werge Howey, owner and occupier, Coles- hill,—" As a rule cottages have two rooms. Male " and female, from children up to 14 years, huddle " together to keep in warmth; certainly not condu- " sive to decency or morality; frequently one blanket " for the lot of children."

Mr. James Gurney, Chalfont, St. Giles,—" There " are several cottages in this parish injurious to " health and morals."

Wycombe Union.

Rev. F. A. Faber, Saunderton, says, " The mixing " of sexes from want of sleeping accommodation is " greatly against the morality of our poor."

Rev. W. E. Partridge, Horsendon, says, " I pay " much attention to the lodgings of my labouring " people. I have 12 or 14 cottages, and I prevent " herding in dormitories as much as I can; such " herding is destructive to decency and morals."

Mr. O. P. Wethered, Great Marlow,—Many of the " cottages both in town and parish of Marlow are so " small and badly adapted for families as necessarily " to exercise a prejudicial effect upon both morals " and health. The Nuisances Removal Act (if its " provisions as to over-crowding, &c. are firmly " carried out by the local authority) affords a " remedy in a great measure."

Mr. H. Gibbins, Bledlow, says, " Generally very " bad. I find in proportion to the insufficiency of " of accommodation, so is the degradation of those " who inhabit the cottages. Respectable and well " instructed labourers live in the best cottages, the " worst and most ignorant in the worst cottages. It " cuts both way—'*Ignorance is the fountain of* " *vice.*'"

Eton Union.

Rev. S. F. Marshall, Farnham Royal,—" The cot- " tage accommodation at present existing I consider " to be highly prejudicial to morality, as well as to " the health of the labouring poor. It is really im- " possible for feelings of delicacy to be preserved " when such numbers are herded together without " distinction of sex."

Rev. R. J. Rogers, Burnham,—" No doubt the " smallness of the cottages, and the general insuffi- " ciency of cottage accommodation in the parish, " cause great over-crowding, and this is attended by " the worst consequences to health and morality."

Circular Questions III. 31.

31. How many cottages per hundred acres are considered sufficient for the accommodation of the persons employed on the land in your parish?

34 circulars give no answer.

In north Bucks, *i.e.*, in Aylesbury, Thame, Winslow, Buckingham, Newport Pagnell, and Leighton Unions,—

Where the cultivation is chiefly arable,—

5 witnesses say - - -	4
1 witness says - - -	3 to 4
1 " " - - -	3

Mr. W. M. Hawkins, Emberton, says, " About one " man to 25 acres, and one boy to 50 acres are em- " ployed, taking arable and pasture together."

Where the cultivation is described as mixed, or half arable,—

2 witnesses say - - - -	8
2 " " - - - -	4
2 " " - - - -	$3\frac{1}{2}$
2 " " - - - -	3
1 witness says - - - -	$2\frac{1}{2}$

Where the cultivation is described as chiefly pasture,—

1 witness says -	5
3 witnesses say - - -	3 to 4
5 " " - - -	3
5 " " - - -	$2\frac{1}{2}$
5 " " - - -	2

The Chilterns, Amersham, and Wycombe Unions.

Where the cultivation is described as chiefly arable,—

1 witness says - - - -	6
4 witnesses say - - - -	4

Where the cultivation is described as mixed, or half arable,—

1 witness says - - -	4 to 5
1 " " - - -	3
1 " " - - -	2

South Bucks, Eton Union.

Where the cultivation is described as chiefly arable,—

1 witness says - -	5 or 6
2 witnesses say -	4 or 5
1 witness says - -	4
1 " " - -	10 cottages to 700 acres.

For the whole County.

Chiefly Arable.	Mixed.	Chiefly Pasture.
1 says - 6	2 say 8	1 says - 5
1 says 5 or 6	1 says - 4 or 5	3 say - 3 to 4
2 say - 4 or 5	2 say - 4	5 say - 3
10 say - 4	2 say - $3\frac{1}{2}$	5 say - $2\frac{1}{2}$
1 says - 3 to 4	3 say - 3	5 say 2
1 says 3	1 says - $2\frac{1}{2}$	
1 says 10 to 700 acres.	1 says - 2	

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As an illustration of this question, on 12 farms in North Bucks, containing 1,530 acres arable and 2,037 acres pasture, in all 3,567 acres, the aggregate staff of adult men employed was stated by the different occupiers to be 121 men, and the aggregate want of cottages as stated by the same gentlemen was 112, being a requirement of over 3 and less than 3¼ to each 100 acres where the cultivation is a quarter more pasture than arable. On four farms in Wycombe union, where the cultivation was 840 acres arable to 185 pasture or chiefly pasture, the ordinary staff of adult men was stated to be 37, and the number of cottages required 32, being as nearly as may be the same proportion of cottages per 100 acres as was required in North Bucks, where the cultivation was rather less arable than pasture, viz., over 3 and less than 3¼. On a farm in Eton Union 12 men, 10 of whom were married, were employed on 270 acres, and would therefore require 10 cottages where the proportion of arable to pasture was 210 to 60 acres.

Circular Questions III. 32 and 33.

32. Is there that proportion of cottages in the parish?
33. If not, what is the proportion?

27 circulars give no answer.
2 „ answer "Too many."
39 „ „ "Yes."
3 „ „ "Yes, but bad ones."
4 „ „ "Nearly or hardly."
5 „ „ "No."

Mr. C. Cantrell, Datchett, says, "There are very "few cottages on the farms, and they chiefly belong "to small speculation proprietors."

Rev. W. F. Norris, Buckingham, says, "Our farms "are singularly without cottages on their fields."

Circular Questions III. 34.

34. Are the cottages conveniently situated with respect to (*i.e.*, not more than a mile from) the farms on which the work is to be done?

21 circulars give no answer.
41 „ answer "Yes."
13 „ „ "Generally."
6 „ „ "No."

Rev. W. H. Young, Oving, says, "As we have too "large a labouring population many have to seek "their work in other parishes."

Circular Questions III. 35.

35. Is there a sufficient number of cottages with two bedrooms, or three bedrooms, and a sitting room, for the larger families?

22 circulars give no answer.
23 „ answer "Yes."
33 „ „ "No."

Others answer as follows:—

Mr. J. K. Fowler, Aylesbury, says, "There are "plenty of houses but no good ones."

Rev. B. Morland, Shabbington, says, "There are "only six cottages with more than one room."

Rev. D. Watkins, Thornborough, says, "All have "sitting rooms and most have two bedrooms, some "few have three."

Mr. O. P. Wethered, Great Marlow, says, "In the "town but not in outlying parts of the parish."

Circular Questions III. 36.

36. Are the cottages crowded, either with members of the family, or with lodgers?

25 circulars give no answer.
18 „ answer "No."
22 „ „ "Some with families."
12 „ „ "Yes."
2 „ „ "No lodgers allowed."

Others answer as follows:—

Rev. A. M. Preston, Winslow, says, "Crowded "generally and occasionally with lodgers."

Mr. R. Walpole, J. P., Hanslope, says, "Both "with families and lodgers; cottages are at a pre-"mium."

Mr. O. P. Wethered, Great Marlow, says, "If they "are a local authority remedies it."

Circular Questions III. 37.

37. Give a general description of the cottages in your parish in respect of,—1. Construction (including size of rooms, ventilation, and drainage). 2. Accommodation (including number of rooms in proportion to the family, water supply, garden, outhouses, &c.) 3. Ownership, *i.e.*, whether by landowner, or by tradesmen with whom the tenants are obliged to deal, or by other person or persons. 4. Rent.

The answers to this question will be found in the general evidence at the head of the evidence from the respective parishes.

Circular Questions III. 38.

38. If there is deficient cottage accommodation, is any progress being made towards increasing it?

58 circulars give no answer.
9 „ answer "Yes."
2 „ „ "Very little."
8 „ „ "No."

Others answer as follows:—

Rev. A. Isham, Weston Turville, says, "It has "been deficient, and private enterprise has increased "it."

Rev. J. Statter, Worminghall, says, "Progress is "intended."

Mr. W. Hinton, Claydon, says, "Mr. Morrison, "Mr. Hubbard, Mr. Dodge, as well as Sir H. Verney, "who is the largest owner, have all been making "great improvements."

Rev. C. H. Travers, Stewkley, says, "Better cot-"tages are being built, *but not for the poor*."

Rev. J. P. Langley, Olney, says, "Yes; but the "rent is high, 2*s.* per week and upwards."

Circular Questions III. 39.

39. Is the Union Chargeability Act (28 & 29 Vict. c. 79., March 1866) having any effect in causing an increase of cottage accommodation?

55 circulars give no answer.
25 „ say "No."
1 „ says "Yes."

Mr. W. Hinton, Claydon, says, "It has caused a "little increase in the small villages, I believe."

Circular Questions III. 40.

40. By the Act 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114., July 1864, the Enclosure Commissioners are authorized to advance public money for the improvement of land, including by s. 9. "The erection of "labourers' cottages, * * and the improve-"ment of and addition to labourers' cottages."

Have you any remarks to make upon this Act in regard to any additional facilities, or any reduction of cost, that might cause greater progress to be made in supplying the want of good cottages?

79 circulars give no answer.
Others answer as follows:—

The Ven. Archdeacon Bickersteth, says, "It appears to me that the provisions of this Act might "be extended with advantage."

Mr. J. K. Fowler, Aylesbury, says, "I think many "old cottages could be greatly improved at a cheaper "rate than by building new ones."

Rev. R. C. Green, Leighton, says, "I think all "cottages should be certified by the State, and im- "proper ones not allowed to be built."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS III. 41.

41. Can you suggest any mode by which good cottage accommodation could be provided on self-supporting terms, and involving no disadvantage to the tenant.

62 circulars give no answer.
8 „ say "No."
Others answer as follows:—

The Ven. Archdeacon Bickersteth, says, "I do not "think it possible to build labourers' cottages so as "to make them remunerative as an investment. The "real gain is of another kind, namely, the improve- "ment in the social condition and comfort of the "labourer."

Rev. A. Isham, Weston Turville, says, "The cost "of an airy three-room cottage substantially built "must entail a rent too high for the agricultural "labourer, if it is to be remunerative. I do not see "how this is to be met, except by some regulation "that all cottages certified to be built for a benevo- "lent purpose towards the agricultural poor should "be exempt from all taxes paid on the materials used "and all after taxation, general and local. If a "cottage which now costs 125*l.* could be brought "down to 100*l.*, and the rent fixed at 4*l.* 10*s.* clear "of all taxation, the poor would be greatly benefited. "4*l.* 10*s.* ought to be a maximum rent."

Mr. J. K. Fowler, occupier, Aylesbury, says, "I "think on all large farms a certain number of cot- "tages should be built, and let with the farms, a "stipulation being made that the tenant should not "charge the labourer more than a fixed sum."

The Rev. C. H. Travers, Stewkley, says, "I be- "lieve that if landowners would erect suitable cot- "tages for the labouring class they would find it easy "to let them at a remunerative rent, while the im- "proved moral condition of their labourers would be "permanent advantage to both."

Mr. John Linnell, bailiff, Addington, says, "The "principle is not sufficiently recognized that cottages "ought to be provided for labourers on the land as "well as shedding for the stock, and let with the "farms, a nominal rent being charged by the tenant "of the farm; the labouring class would not then be "left at the mercy of speculators and small trades- "people, as is too often the case."

Mr. Thos. Barge, occupier, Hillesdon,—"When the "parish is in small holdings there are great difficul- "ties in the way of the poor obtaining good cottages. "If people of small means build, they expect to get "5 or 6 per cent.; that brings the rent too high. "Only country gentlemen and large landowners will "be satisfied with 2 per cent."

Mr. Thos. Ridgway, Bourton, occupier, says, "Cottage building being unremunerative as a specula- "tion, the only means to secure better dwellings for "the labouring classes would appear to be a kind of "mutual understanding between the parties prin- "cipally concerned, viz., the landowner, tenant, and "labourer, each endeavouring according to his cir- "cumstances to aid and assist. The landlord should "build, the tenant take with his farm, and the "labourer, with a garden provided (a boon he seldom "enjoys in a town), pay a fair rent for same; by "some such means as this I think eventually it would "prove of benefit to all parties. But this is a sub- "ject on which a great deal might be said and more "written."

Mr. R. Walpole, J.P., Hanslope, says, "A good "cottage will never command a remunerative rent, "and a bad cottage, meaning thereby a cottage defi- "cient in accommodation, may be remunerative, but "would be disadvantageous to the tenant."

Mr. W. Whitworth, occupier, Willen, says, "No. "But if you wish to prevent pauperism you must "*educate the children* and give them *better cottages* "*in some way*, or you will never keep them out of "workhouses and jails, and send every person to jail "or the workhouse who is found begging."

Mr. John Werge Howey, landowner and occupier, Coleshill, says, "I cannot suggest any, except "capitalists build and are satisfied with 1½ per cent. "per annum."

Rev. W. E. Partridge, Horsendon, says, "Land- "owners should as much as possible endeavour to "keep the cottages under their own control and not "let them in all cases with the land, or at least retain "the power to repossess them on short notice."

Rev. S. F. Marshall, Farnham Royal, says, "I "believe that better cottage accommodation for the "agricultural labouring class would be provided "without disadvantage to the tenant if it were "enacted that no rent could be recovered by legal "process for any cottage or house that did not fulfil "certain conditions essential to morality and health "of the occupants."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS IV. 42 and 43.

IV. As to the NUMBERS of CHILDREN at SCHOOL and the NUMBERS employed in FARM LABOUR.

42. It would be of great assistance towards forming a correct judgment upon the question of requiring some amount of school attendance in the case of children earning wages by employment in farm labour if you could furnish the Commissioners with precise information, or with an approximate estimate, relating to the points embodied in the following tables.

43. Approximate Number of Children of the Agricultural Labouring Class in attendance at Elementary Schools.

In Summer.

On the Register of some School.				In average Attendance.			
Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.	
Under 10 Years of Age.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.

Tables A. and B. will show the nature of the returns given in answer to this question. Tables C., D., and E, are summaries of A, and B.

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School Return.—A.

Approximate Number of Children of the Agricultural Labouring Class in Average Attendance at Elementary Schools in the following Parishes in Buckinghamshire, as given in Returns.

Parish or Hamlet.	Population.	Acreage.	Summer.				Winter.				Notes.
			Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.		
			Under 10 Years of Age.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	
Aylesbury Union:											
Aston Abbots	311	2,180	17	0	15	0	17	0	15	0	—
Aylesbury	6,168	3,200	25	5	14	7	28	6	14	7	National school only.
Bierton	691	2,470	32	6	9	1	28	7	8	3	All except small dame's school.
Oving	436	911	19	3	14	3	18	3	15	4	Only school.
Waddesdon	1,786	6,010	67	6	69	6	82	7	66	7	All schools in parish.
Weston Turville	724	2,450	18	4	5	7	18	4	5	7	Only school; 10 go to another parish.
Winchendon, Upper	220	1,184	12	0	7	3	10	0	7	3	Only school.
Thame Union:											
Ickford	437	1,249	18	0	9	2	19	0	11	2	A small Wesleyan school besides.
Shabbington	371	2,138	18	2	22	5	20	3	26	6	Only school.
Worminghall	354	1,469	20	6	15	5	20	6	15	5	Only school.
Winslow Union:											
Three Claydons	1,477	8,016	27	15	93	24	43	20	93	24	All schools.
Stewkley	1,453	4,330	78	2	30	0	60	3	24	0	Labouring class only.
Winslow	1,890	1,800	24	2	20	6	24	2	20	6	National and free schools.
Buckingham Union:											
Addington	111	1,268	9	0	6	0	9	0	6	0	Labouring class only.
Adstock	385	1,130	18	0	16	2	22	0	16	2	Only school.
Beachampton	272	1,492	8	1	6	3	8	1	6	3	Dame school.
Leckhampstead	428	2,522	21	3	2	0	21	2	2	2	Only school.
Newton Pagnell Union:											
Brickhill, Great	290	2,333	34	8	30	7	35	9	30	6	Only school.
Chickeley	265	1,620	10	0	10	0	14	0	10	0	Only school.
Emberton	624	1,860	34	1	10	0	37	1	8	0	Only school.
Hanslope	1,791	5,540	40	1	30	3	48	2	38	3	A small dame's school besides.
Leighton	386	1,495	27	0	27	0	27	0	27	0	—
Amersham Union:											
Chalfont, St. Giles	1,217	3,690	32	6	26	9	34	11	26	9	60 children at infant school besides.
Coleshill	531	2,810	19	0	20	3	14	0	12	6	—
Wycombe Union:											
Bledlow	1,189	4,130	20	0	20	0	20	0	20	0	—
Horsendon and Ilmer	124	1,192	18	4	15	10	14	3	20	6	Only school.
Princes Risborough	1,050	2,000	41	0	47	7	41	0	47	7	—
Eton Union:											
Farnham Royal	1,378	2,910	39	3	45	7	39	3	45	7	—
Taplow	811	1,920	5	2	9	1	4	2	8	1	—
Total in average attendance	—	—	750	80	641	121	774	95	640	126	
Total on register of same schools	—	—	1,000	118	807	170	920	140	755	174	

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School Returns.—Table B.

The following are Returns of Schools which could not be included in Table A. of Bucks Schools, which is composed only of Schools where both Boys and Girls attend, and where all Particulars asked for in the Circulars of Inquiry are given.

Parish.	Population, 1861.	Acreage.	Average Attendance. In Summer. Boys. Under 10 Years of Age.	In Summer. Boys. Between 10 and 13.	In Summer. Girls. Under 10.	In Summer. Girls. Between 10 and 13.	In Winter. Boys. Under 10.	In Winter. Boys. Between 10 and 13.	In Winter. Girls. Under 10.	In Winter. Girls. Between 10 and 13.	Notes.
Aston Clinton - -	1,108	3,640	30	10	—	—	49	19	—	—	Boys' school only; girls not given.
Cublington -	288	1,212	4	3	4	3	Not given.				Private school; no National school.
Halton - - -	147	1,452	12		33		Not given.				—
Hardwick - -	708	3,200	42		64		Not given.				All schools in parish.
Oakley - - -	420	2,250	16		32		16		32		Labouring children.
Little Horwood - -	449	1,950	About 40 children.				—	—	—	—	—
Swanbourne - -	603	2,510	22		—	—	33		—	—	—
Maids Moreton - -	543	1,260	50 almost all under 10 years of age.								—
Thornborough - -	694	2,530	15	0	8	2	Not given.				Another small school.
Little Brickhill - -	432	1,047	40, all under 10				40, all under 10				—
Broughton - -	155	1,020	23				23				Schoolmistress away.
Ivinghoe - -	1,849	5,252	28	11	35	14	On register only given.				There is another school.
Northall (Eddlesborough)	—	—	27	10	16	4	Not given.				Two other schools in Eddlesborough.
Latimer (Chesham) -	—	—	50	12	120	30	60	12	110	40	Number on register.
Little Missenden -	1,109	3,173	27	3	25	10	Not given.				—
Saunderton -	232	1,590	12	0	15	0	These attend Risborough National school.				—
Wooburn - -	2,245	2,850	72		28		No return.				—
Olney - - -	2,298	3,140	56		20		No return.				There is also a British school.

School Returns.—Table C.

Summary of Tables A. and B., where the particulars are stated in the returns given.

Summer.

—	In average Attendance. Boys. Under 10.	Boys. Between 10 and 13.	Girls. Under 10.	Girls. Between 10 and 13.
Average attendance in summer in all returns where both boys and girls are given -	823	96	694	140

School Returns.—D.

Total boys in average attendance at schools as compared with girls at same schools where the circulars give such particulars.

In summer.

Total boys under 13 - - - 1,117
" girls " 13 - - - 1,011

School Returns.—E.

Total children of both sexes in average attendance in summer at all of these schools where such particulars are given.

Children under 10 - - - 1,587
" between 10 and 13 - 246

Circular Questions IV. 44.

44. Approximate number of children of the agricultural labouring class neither at school nor at work.

65 circulars give no answer.
3 " say "None."
1 circular says "Not many."
2 circulars say "All not at school are plaiting."
1 circular says "All not at school are making lace."

Others answer as follows:—

Waddesdon, population 1,786, "About 20 between "8 and 13 years of age."

Worminghall and Shabbington, population 725.
5 boys between 8 and 10 summer and winter.
7 girls " " " "
6 boys " 10 and 13 " "
4 girls " " " "

Winslow, population 1,890.
About 8 or 10 between 8 and 10 years.
" 3 or 4 " 10 and 13 "

Swanbourne, population 603,—"2 boys between "8 and 13."

Emberton, population 624,—"3 boys between 8 "and 13."

Chalfont St. Giles, population 1,217.
About 100 boys between 8 and 10 years in summer.
" " " 10 and 13 " "
" girls " 8 and 10 " "
" " " 10 and 13 " "
About 150 of each class in winter.

Coleshill, population 513.
In winter about 20 boys between 8 and 10 years.
" " 12 " " 10 and 13 "

Bledlow Ridge, "20 boys and as many girls between "8 and 10 years out of about 150 children of all "ages."

Risborough, population 1,050,—*Mr. C. Brown*, says, "A few do not attend school through the neglect "of their parents, there are three schools in the "parish, one in each hamlet supported by private "benefaction."

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CIRCULAR QUESTIONS IV. 45.

45. Approximate number of young persons of the agricultural labouring class growing up with insufficient education.

Where numbers are given in answer to this question they are as follows :—

—	Population.	Males.	Females.
Aston Abbot	311	30	30
Oving - -	436	15	12
Singleton -	386	11	4
Emberton -	624	27	12
Northall	—	15	15
Coleshill - -	531	31	17
Horsenden and Ilmer	124	5	—
Chalfont, St. Giles -	1,217	200	200
Bledlow	1,189	100 Male and Female.	

Other circulars answer as follows :—

Rev. A. Isham, Weston Turville,—" Many females " cannot write their names, and some males, but the " number is greatly diminished."

Rev. B. Morland, Shabbington, says, " Very few of " the boys are sufficiently educated, I may say none, " as they are taken away so young, but the difficulty " is how to keep them longer. Females are much " better educated, sufficiently so for me to get them " all out to service."

Rev. Jas. Statter, Worminghall, says, " All would " depend upon what was considered to be the " meaning of the word insufficient; there are " certainly many young persons imperfectly educated, " I mean not sufficiently for their condition in life."

Rev. Wm. Hinton, Claydon, says, " Very few " males without elementary education, but cannot " state a number. I should think no females, as " girls attend school better."

Rev. M. D. Maulden, Swanbourne, says, " They " are for the greater part backward, the habit of " straw plaiting preventing much real school work " being done by the girls. There is a plaiting school " attended by about 20 girls over 11 years of age. " They plait the greater part of the day, having " half an hour's schooling in the morning and an " hour in the afternoon for five days per week; a " regular child can get about a day and a half's " schooling per week."

Rev. D. Watkins, Thornborough, says, all can read, most of them can write, and many of them can cipher a little.

Rev. M. W. Davies, Maids Moreton, says, " The " generality know how to read; those who do not owe " it commonly to the neglect of their parents, who " would not use a good school, when placed within " their reach."

Rev. R. M. Russell, Beachampton, says, " The " greater majority of the 19 males employed on the " 10 farms."

Mr. Thos. Barge, Hillesden, says, " Till within a " recent period the means of education were very " scant in this parish. Some of the labourers are very " unlearned, but it is different now with the children; " they have the opportunity of attending a good " school. Being a scattered village there is no night " school, but in lieu of that, books are found them " after they leave school."

Rev. W. J. Hamilton, Ivinghoe, says, " I cannot " state; many attend the *Sunday* school who do not " come *daily*, and in fact, have very little teaching " except what is obtained there."

Rev. T. P. Williams, Little Brickhill, says, " As " scarcely any children remain at school, even so " long as to nine years old, the education of *all* is " insufficient."

Rev. J. P. Langley, Olney, says, " Some cannot " read or write; the education of almost all is very " insignificant."

Mr. Francis Coles, Chicheley, says, " All can read " and most of them can write."

Mr. W. G. Duncan, J. P., Chairman of Newport Board of Guardians, Bradwell, says, " In all parishes " you will find parents who neglect their children's " education and morals. There are very few young " persons in this parish who cannot read."

Mr. C. Metcalfe, Latimer, says " The education of " the girls is much better than that of the boys, as " the boys are sent out to work soon."

Rev. F. H. Ashley, Wooburn, says, " All have " been to school, but some insufficiently educated."

Mr. Charles Brown, Princes Risborough, says, " About three families in 20 neglect daily education, " owing to the children's going to work or negligence " of the parents."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS IV. 46 to 51.

46. Is there an evening school in your parish?
47. How many weeks in the year is it open? At what periods of the year?
48. How many nights per week?
49. How many hours per night?
50. What is the number of scholars?

On the Register.		In average Attendance.			
		In Winter.		In Summer.	
Under 12.	Above 12.	Under 12.	Above 12.	Under 12.	Above 12.

51. What are the subjects of instruction?

46. Is there an evening school in your parish?

Circulars from 37 parishes answer that they have night schools.

The following parishes have night schools for both boys and girls :—Aylesbury, Cublington Adstock, Thornborough, Emberton, Olney, and Wooburn.

Waddlesdon and Princes Risborough have each three night schools, and Hardwick two for boys.

47. How many weeks in the year is it open, and at what periods?

In Emberton and Bledlow the schools are open throughout the year for boys and girls, and in Olney throughout the year for girls only.

In 6 parishes the schools are open above 20 weeks.
" 14 " " " for 20 weeks.
" 10 " " " less than 20 weeks.
" 5 parishes the number of weeks is not stated.

All these are open in winter or spring only, and all for from 12 to 24 weeks.

48. How many nights per week?

In Cublington 6 nights for boys and 2 for girls.
" In Emberton 5 nights.
" Aylesbury 4 nights for boys and 2 for girls.
" 3 parishes 4 nights.
" 11 " 3 "
" 17 " 2 "
" 1 parish 1 night.
" Waddesdon 2 schools for 2 nights, and 1 school for 3 nights.
" Risborough 2 schools for 3 nights and 1 school for 2 nights.

49. How many hours per night?

1 school is open for 3 hours.
2 schools are open for $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours.
14 " " 2 "
24 " " $1\frac{1}{2}$ "
1 school is open for 1 hour.

50. What is the number of scholars?

The following table shows the nature of the answers to this question.

—	On the Register.		In average Attendance.			
			In Winter.		In Summer.	
	Under 12.	Above 12.	Under 12.	Above 12.	Under 12.	Above 12.
Emberton	10	28	10	28	6	14
Cublington	15	19	13	15	—	—
Oving	3	27	2	15	—	—
Aylesbury, Boys	0	45	0	25	—	—
" Girls	0	90	0	70	—	—
Bierton	0	28	0	14	—	—
Waddesden	1	70	2	34	—	—
Upper Winchendon	5	12	5	10	—	—
Ickford	4	16	4	16	—	—
Worminghall	7	18	5	9	—	—
Swanbourne	0	40	0	31	—	—
Adstock	20	32	16	22	—	—
Leckhampstead	4	21	4	11	—	—
Chalfont St. Giles	6	34	5	30	—	—
Coleshill	0	18	0	6	—	—
Buckingham	0	10	0	10	—	—
Taplow	2	7	2	5	—	—
Wooburn	0	72	0	49	Boys and girls.	
Aston Abbotts	—	—	0	12	—	—
Winslow	—	—	0	30	—	—
Thornborough	35		25		Boys and girls.	
Risborough	50		30		—	—
Aston Clinton			13		—	—
Halton			20		—	—
Hardwick			25		—	—
Two Claydons			31		—	—
Little Horwood			30		—	—
Loudwater			30		—	—
Stewkley			50		—	—
Chickeley			17		—	—
Ivinghoe			19		Boys and girls.	
Northall			13		—	—
Saunderton			8		—	—
Little Missenden			18		—	—
Farnham Royal			29		—	—
Olney	30		12 Boys.		—	—
"	40		30 Girls.		—	—
Bledlow	"Sometimes none; never more than 8."					

51. What are the subjects of instruction?

Wherever there are night schools for girls sewing is taught.

In all night schools reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught.

In five cases Scripture teaching is added; in two cases dictation and letter writing are added; in two cases geography, and in one history.

The following notes are given in answer to the question 46:—

Rev. A. Isham, Weston Turville, says, "An evening school attended by about 20 of all ages was open in the winter of 1866 to 1867 for about 12 weeks in winter; but for want of a superintendent it was not opened in 1867 to 1868."

Rev. R. W. Russell, Beachampton,—"There is no evening school. Except an evening school is restricted as to age it appears to encourage indifference towards the day school, and encourages an earlier removal from school to work."

Rev. W. E. Partridge, Horsendon, says, "I don't affect night schools in general. Much mischief frequently follows unless a strict surveillance in all cases is exercised to and from school after dark."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS IV. 52.

52. Do you consider that the evening school adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school?

52 circulars give no answer.
2 " answer "Yes."
1 circular answers "Very fairly."
1 " " "To a certain extent."
1 " " "Not altogether."
20 circulars answer "No."

Others as follows:—

Rev. T. J. Williams, Waddesdon, says, "Not adequately, certainly; but it is a great help to those who use it regularly."

Rev. H. W. E. Armstrong, Bierton, says, "It might do so if regularity of attendance could be secured."

Rev. J. Thornton, Aston Abbots, says, "No; being quite voluntary it is not attended."

Mr. W. Hinton, Claydon, says, "Yes; it is appreciated fully."

Rev. G. W. Tomkins, Lavendon, says, "It does much good."

[*Note.*—The return of the night school in Lavendon was accidentally omitted from the Table of Night Schools. It is open for six or seven weeks, and for six nights per week, and has about 30 scholars. There is no return of a day school.]

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS IV. 53.

53. What do you find to be the principal difficulties in the way of maintaining an efficient evening school?

41 circulars give no answer.

Several witnesses give more than one source of difficulty. The following table shows the proportion in which the different causes of difficulty are named in 35 answers:—

Weariness or indifference of the young	15	times.
Want of teaching power or funds	13	"
Indifference of parents	5	"
Want of schoolrooms	5	"
Beer-houses	3	"

One circular answers that there is no difficulty.

Others answer as follows:—

Rev. A. Isham, Weston Turville, says, "The want of a master to conduct the male department. And with regard to the female department, the girls will not leave their plait for education; if they would, the want of a mistress."

Rev. W. H. Young, Oving, says "I do not approve of evening schools for girls in a village. It does not answer for young men, except in the winter. I find the young men who have learnt very little ashamed to come with boys who have left school lately, and therefore know more than themselves."

Rev. R. C. Green, Loughton, says, "It is dependent almost entirely upon me. A young man helped me gratuitously last winter for one hour per night, but I wanted more help, and should like to be able to remunerate the helpers for their services. The school ought to be open five nights instead of three; but I could not undertake this myself, and it appears to me absurd to expect a day master or mistress to undertake it. At present the great burden is the backwardness of the pupils; this evil will probably diminish as the influence of a good day school extends itself, a thing which we have only lately succeeded in getting. Several of the *younger* boys are too tired and sleepy to do much work at a night school. I take them at 9 when I know that they have left the day school."

Mr. R. Walpole, J.P., Hanslope, says, "The want of a paid male superintendent and master, and of voluntary teachers. The National day school is under Government inspection, and is a mixed girls' school, therefore under a mistress, who is not fitted by her sex to be a paid teacher of young male persons in an evening school. The mistake made by Government is, laying down the principle of payment by results, and then neglecting to follow it up by recognizing uncertificated teachers. I think the system of Government inspection very good, but that it is too confined in its operation; and I have also no hesitation in saying that, for the purposes of giving a sufficient education to the children of the agricultural labourers, it requires too high a qualification for the teachers, and imposes too high a standard upon the taught. I am sole manager of the school in this parish, and speak from observation. The Government does not seem to know the difference that exists between

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"the life of a child in a comparatively sparsely "populated district and that of one who is born and "bred in the hotbed of a manufacturing town. I "believe that inquiry of experienced persons, such "as Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools, will show "that a child of 7 years who pays his 2*d.* a "week for his schooling in London is equal in "intelligence and quickness to one of 9 in an "agricultural district paying the same amount; and "I think that until this difference is recognized and "acted on Government inspection will not do the "good that it might."

Rev. W. F. Norris, Buckingham, says, "The class "of persons for whom night schools are intended "will not come to the school. Their primary educa-"tion generally has been much neglected, and they "themselves have no desire or inclination to learn "anything more than they already know. Many "come to school for a night or so, but lack that "perseverance which is essential to improvement. "Consequently they give up the effort, and seek "some more pleasant mode of passing their evenings. "A constant excuse for not attending school is, that "their fathers got through the world without learning "and they are content to do the same.

"I consider that there is no lack of teaching power "or disposition in school managers to render any "assistance they can."

GENERAL EVIDENCE FROM BEDFORDSHIRE.

Bedfordshire.

EVIDENCE from 52 parishes in BEDFORDSHIRE, giving the ANSWERS to the CIRCULAR QUESTION III.-37.—("Give a general description of the cottages in your parish in respect of,—1. Con-"struction (including size of rooms, ventilation and drainage). 2. Accommodation "(including number of rooms in proportion to the family, water supply, garden, out-"houses, &c.). 3. Ownership: *i.e.*, whether by landowner, or by tradesmen with whom "the tenants are obliged to deal, or by other person or persons. 4. Rent.") And other evidence, including that of labourers, their wives and children, &c.

WOBURN UNION.

1. Aspley Guise - Pop., 1,435 - Acr., 1,936.

Cultivation mixed.

1*a.* *Rev. H. M. Erskine* says, "The condition of "cottages varies very much according to ownership, "the worst are those which belong to small pro-"prietors, farmers, and small tradesmen, who are "either unable or unwilling to lay out anything in "their improvement; some have but *one* bedroom "for the whole family; few, if any, have more than "two; the rent ranges from 3*l.* to 6*l.* a year.

2. Battlesden - Pop., 143 - Acr., 1,096.

Cultivation mixed. All cottages have an allotment of 40 poles.

2*a.* *Mr. Geo. Harris* says of the cottages, "They "are of brick and thatch, old cottages, but have been "recently put into repair and made comfortable by "the landowner, who is the owner of the cottages."

3. Chalgrave - Pop., 961 - Acr., 2,330.

Allotments, 17 acres of glebe let in allotments, eight of 20 poles, and 10 between 40 poles and 5 acres. Rent, 3*l.* per acre.

3*a.* *Rev. J. M. Hamilton* says of the cottages, "In "most cases their is only one downstairs room, 10 or "12 feet square, with fireplace; this is used as kitchen "and living room; behind this is a small room (with-"out fireplace), about 10 feet by 6. Above these are "two bedrooms, the staircase reducing the size of the "smaller one. Out of 118 cottages, 60 belong to "small yeoman farmers, 37 to small tradesmen, 11 "to men in humble circumstances, and 10 to the "large landowners." Rent of cottages, 4*l.* to 5*l.* 5*s.*

3*b.* *Mrs. Mitchell*, "I was applying for relief "when I saw you last, sir, at Woburn, because my "husband was out of work; he is hoeing wheat now, "and his eldest boy is with him, that boy cannot "read nor write; four of these six have never been "at school, and I can't say any of 'em can read or "write; they plait sometimes as late as 10 at night, "but then they rest four or five hours in the day."

[NOTE.—These children were very ill clad, wretched, and sickly looking, and the parents had been accused of ill-treating them, which however the woman vehemently denied.]

3*c.* *Mr. John Ayre*, occupier: "I pay men 12*s.* "per week, they get nothing extra except in hay-"time and harvest."

4. Eversholt - Pop., 885 - Acr., 2,130.

Cultivation mixed. Eighteen acres let in allotments, of which 44 are of 20 poles let at 40*s.* per acre.

4*a.* *Rev. W. S. Baker*, speaking of the cottages, said, "This is an open parish, supplying labour "to other parishes; there are some very good and "some very bad cottages."

Visited a block of four cottages recently built by the Duke of Bedford, such as those described by Mr. Stephenson for Woburn, the centre cottages have two bedrooms upstairs, and the end cottages three each, the walls are 14-inch solid brick walls, and plastered, which, with the very perfect offices for each cottage and common oven, will make the cost very great, certainly more than 800*l.* for the four.

4*b.* *Mrs. Kean*, living in one of these cottages, has brought up 10 children, the youngest of 11 years is still at school, and none of her children have left school under 10 years of age; her husband has 14*s.* per week.

4*c.* Visited also three old mud cottages built in 1801, and in bad condition, rooms very low and small as usual in old mud cottages; in one of these, with two small bedrooms, a family of nine, father, mother, and seven children, eldest children girls 18 and 16, and boy 15.

5. Harlington - Pop., 557 - Acr., 1,841.

Ten acres of gardens and allotments. Cultivation half arable.

5*a.* *Mr. John W. Foll* says, "The cottages gene-"rally consist of two rooms below and two small "rooms above, but many have not more than one "bedroom. Ventilation and drainage very fair; "water supply good; generally belong to landowners, "a few to tradesmen."

5*b.* *Arthur Cox*, has never been at any school, is 8 years old, and cannot read nor write.

[NOTE.—There is no school at Harlington, and children attend Westming school.]

5*c.* *Charles Denton*, labourer, with four children, has been out of work six days, and is now applying for relief; eldest child 6.

5*d.* *Mr. J. W. Foll* estimated the addition to the ordinary labourer's wage of 11*s.* per week to be by piece work and extra wage in haytime and harvest, 2*s.* per week for the year, which, allowing 1*s.* a week is 52*s.* per year as the value of beer allowance, which make the cost per week of such a man 14*s.* for the year; eight pints of beer are often allowed in long days in harvest.

6. Hockliffe - Pop., 416 - Acr., 1,000.

Four acres of small allotment. Cultivation chiefly pastoral.

6*a.* *Rev. J. S. Newmann* says of the cottages, "Ventilation and drainage in some cases imperfect; "in several instances only one bedroom; water has "to be fetched from a distance; more privies needed. "Ownership generally satisfactory. Average rent, "4*l.*"

6*b*. *Mrs. G. Turney*, herself, husband, and seven children in a cottage with only one sitting and *one small* low bed room; eldest girl 20, eldest boy 17; husband earning 11*s*. per week and son 7*s*. per week. Her husband was in one benefit club for 25 years, and then they found it was insolvent, and he and some others started a new club at the same public house, which he still subscribes to. There are four such clubs, one at each of the public houses in the village. There are one or two houses like hers, but none worse for large families.

7. Hulcote and Salford - Pop., 335 - Acr., 1,800 Cottages, 51.

Cultivation mixed. Forty-one allotments under one acre.

7*a*. *Rev. B. C. Smith*, of the cottages, says, "They "are mostly wattle and daub, or lath and plaster; "the rooms are low, of medium size, and I do not "think the drainage very bad *generally* speaking. "In consequence of the miserable state of repair "that they are in the ventilation is *abundant*. There "is no deficiency of water; the gardens are small, "some have none, but they have allotment ground; "outhouses bad. Some families are much crowded. "The cottages belong to lessees under All Souls "College, Oxford, *i.e.* those in *Salford*, not those in "*Hulcote*. Three out of the five in Hulcote belong "to me; the other two to the Rev. G. G. Harter of "Cranfield. Rent 1*s*. a week generally, though some "few are let at 2*s*. 6*d*. per week.

7*b*. *Joseph Laing*. Has 11*s*. per week; lives in a very bad cottage with a daughter 18, and two sons 13 and 5; living room very low and small, and one very small bedroom.

Cottage next it same size and in same bad condition. John Laing, in a similar cottage near these two, has also 11*s*. per week.

8. Husborne Crawley - Pop., 535 - Acr., 1,520.

Allotments, 65 allotments of 20 poles; rent, 40*s*. per acre.

8*a*. *Rev. V. S. C. Smith* says of the cottages, "The "houses generally contain two rooms below, two or "three above stairs; size, 9 feet square; water supply, "outhouses, &c. in good proportion; the rent 1*s*. 2*d*. "to 1*s*. 4*d*. per week. There are a few exceptional "houses where the rent is about 4*l*. per annum, with "for the most part one room below and one or two "above. The Duke of Bedford owns about seven-"eighths of the houses; the rest chiefly belong to "small non-resident tradesmen."

A new and very good school recently built by the Duke of Bedford with Moule's earth closets in operation, which seem to answer very well.

8*b*. *Charles Bowler*, labourer, "I worked for the "duke may be a dozen years ago at 1*s*. 4*d*. a day, "8*s*. a week, then we were raised to 9*s*., and then "10*s*., and there we stuck for a good many years, "and then the new railway raised us to 11*s*., and "now I believe they pay 12*s*., but many a farmer "round pays no more than 11*s*."

9. Milton Bryant - Pop., 352 (1861), now (309); Acr., 1,508.

Allotments, 46 allotments of 20 poles. Cultivation one-third arable.

9*a*. *Rev. H. Cobbe* says of the cottages, "Two "storied, brick-tiled or slated. Living room about "12 square yards, with one small room behind and a "bedroom over each. Ventilation and drainage "fair. Water supply very good; garden and out-"house close to cottage, and allotments near at "hand. Landowner. Every cottage except nine "belonging to charity trustees, and three belonging "to another landowner are upon one estate. Gene-"rally 2*l*. 12*s*. per annum."

9*b*. *Mr. Lewis Burnell*, occupier, pays his ordinary labourers 11*s*. per week, horsemen 12*s*. with no increase except in haytime and harvest.

10. Potsgrove - Pop., 298 - Acr., —.

Allotments, 40 of 20 poles each, at 40*s*. per acre.

10*a*. *Rev. J. G. Bulman* says, "The cottages vary "much; some of them are fairly comfortable, others "are very deficient in accommodation In one, in "which there are (I think) seven persons, there is, for "instance, only one small bedroom under the thatched "roof, in addition to the room, by no means large, "on the ground floor.

"There is sufficient water supply from a good well "in the village.

"Some of the cottages are owned by tradesmen. "The cottagers tell me they are *requested*, but deny "that are *compelled* to deal with them. I leave "you to estimate the value of this distinction. I "ought to add that these cottages are about the best "in the village."

10*b*. *Mr. Joseph Paxton*, occupier, says, "It is "admitted that the cottage accommodation in agri-"cultural districts is in a very unsatisfactory state. "Generally speaking, the class seem to delight in "being huddled together. There ought to be three "bedrooms in cottages where large families exist. "The system of 'earth closets' is so remarkably "simple and so very beneficial to health that when "in operation it is a great boon."

10*c*. *Mr. William Stopp*, occupier, pays men from 11*s*. to 13*s*. per week; employs no boys under 10. Thinks wages are increased on an average 1*s*. per week for the year by piece work.

10*d*. *Mr. J. Hill*, occupier, says, "I employ no "boy under 10, and see no reason why they should "be employed so young if it were not for the poverty "of the parents; I pay men from 11*s*. to 13*s*. per "week."

10*e*. *Mrs. Bunyan*, Sheeplane, hamlet of Potsgrove, "I have four children, three are at school, the "eldest 10; they are not fit to go to work till they "are 12. My husband has 11*s*. a week regularly "now he is draining, and may get 13*s*. by the piece. "We have an allotment of 30 poles, but we had our "name down a long time before we got it. I find it "very difficult to keep my children at school, but "I think it is my duty to keep them out of the plait "school."

10*f*. *Mrs. Bodsworth*, living in a very bad cottage, rent 1*s*. per week (this cottage not fit for any one to live in).

10*g*. *Mrs. Neal*, husband and five children; is a very wretched cottage with one very small bedroom, rent 1*s*. 2*d*. per week.

11. Ridgmont - Pop., 1,029 - Acr., 2,238.

Allotments, 15 acres, let in 110 allotments. Cultivation, two-thirds arable. National and British schools.

11*a*. *Mr. J. Crouch*, occupier, Ridgmont, says of the cottages, "The cottages in this parish are for the most "part substantially built and well ventilated. Rather "less than two-thirds of the cottages are owned by "the labourers themselves, small tradesmen, &c.; "more than one-third are owned by the Duke of "Bedford, the principal landowner. I believe the "average rent is about 3*l*. 10*s*. per annum."

11*b*. *James Wait*, Bickerings Park, Ridgmont, a farm labourer in charge of a gang of 14 boys twitching, boys between 8 and 11 years, and receiving 2*s*. per week, "I have 11*s*. a week and do piece work oc-"casionally; these boys are here because their parents "can't afford to keep them at school; they'll work "here or elsewhere till autumn, and then may be "some of them will be sent to school."

11*c*. *Charles Tuck* (one of gang):
How old are you?—"In my 11" (10).
Can you read and write?—"A little."
Can you spell your own name?—"Yes" (spelling it).

11*d*. *Phineas Juff* (one of gang):
How old are you?—"In my nine" (8).
Can you read and write?—"Not much."
Can you spell your name?—"No."

11*e*. *Mr. Henry Readman*, guardian for Ridgmont, "We shall pay 5*s*. rates this year; the workhouse "(Woburn) is full of able-bodied men whose families "are receiving out relief; 18 came in one day about "three weeks ago, having amongst them about 60 "persons composing their families."

Bedfordshire.

Mr. Culley.

f.

12. Tilsworth - Pop., 348 - Acr., 1,213.
Cultivation mixed.

12*a*. *Rev. Joseph Simpson* says, "There are 55 cottages in the parish, of which 23 have one bedroom, 30 two bedrooms, 2 three bedrooms; 32 cottages are occupied by farm labourers in regular employment.

"A great many old cottages built of wooden frames, lath and plaster, and thatched; some, aud those bad ones, of brick and slate, built by tradesmen; some cottages freehold or copyhold on the waste.

"Drainage very bad, and a great many nuisances.

"Rent of cottages about 3*l*. 10*s*. per annum. Many old cottages belong to landowners."

[NOTE.—The cottages in Tilsworth are in many cases as bad as they well can be, and overcrowded in five or six instances visited by the Assistant Commissioner; two extremely badly situated cottages by the side of a pond, belonging to one of the landowners. There is no school, and only seven boys were reported as attending the Wesleyan school in Tebworth, about two miles; what should be the school, a very small building, is used as a plait school.]

12*b*. *Mr. J. H. Simpson*, speaking of the state of the parish, said "About the time the boys voices begin to crack they are just beginning to be able to read the Psalms easily. The girls are hard worked by their parents as long as they are young, and when they get a little older and can keep themselves they care nothing for their parents or anybody else; they get married when they can, utterly unable to keep their house, and between their bad management and the bad cottages, no wonder the husbands go to the beershop. The people in this parish are honest and docile."

12*c*. Two boys leading teams at Tilsworth, 13 years old each of them: Neither of them can read or write, one never had been at any day school, the other had been a short time at Wesleyan school at Chalgrave.

13. Tingrith - Pop., 226 Acreage, 962.
Allotment, 10 acres, 50 allotments. Cultivation mixed.

13*a*. *Rev. T. Tangueray*, says of the cottages, "Brick and tile or stones and tile. Ventilation good if the tenants do not fill up the chimneys; drainage good. The largest room about 15 feet square, the smallest perhaps 13 feet square. Supply of water ample, from a public tap. Garden to each cottage besides allotments. No crowding in rooms. Landowner. No shops or shopkeepers. Rent about 1*s*. per week."

13*b*. [NOTE.—Tigrith is a small close parish in which the cottage accommodation is well looked after, but it is said to depend on the neigbouring open parishes for a good deal of its labour.]

14. Toddington - Pop., 2,433 - Acreage, 5,600.
Cultivation, mixed.

14*a*. *Rev. John Clegg*, of the cottages, says, "The dwelling houses are many of them in a most lamentable state, and totally unfit for human habitations. Artificial drainage is bad, in fact I think the place is almost devoid of any drainage. Ventilation is very bad. There is plenty of good spring water in the place. The houses are owned for the most part by tradesmen or small owners, very many of whom live out of the parish."

14*b*. Copy of letter, dated March 13th, 1868, from Rev. J. Clegg to George Culley, Esq.

DEAR SIR,

I WAS sorry that I missed you on Tuesday. The straw plait trade is very bad now, otherwise you would have seen those small rooms crammed to suffocation with little children. On perusing the paper of questions which you forwarded to me I find I shall be unable to answer any question satisfactorily, for this reason, the questions have reference to women and children employed in agriculture. There are no women employed in this parish in agricultural labour, and no more boys than are generally employed in any ordinary country parish. In answer to your question concerning the apparently low state of morals in this parish, the causes are (in my opinion) want of education; the bad state of many of the houses of the poor; the great number of public houses; and the straw plait. There are two schools in the parish, both under Government inspection, one Church of England, the other Wesleyan; with the latter of course I have nothing whatever to do, of the former I know a good deal to my cost, as I could not possibly keep it in its present efficient state without the help of my own personal friends. The squire is the chief subscriber in the parish, and three farmers help me; the attendance of the children is so irregular that our grant is small in comparison with the expenses. The moment straw plaiting improves in value a great number of the children are taken away from the school and made to plait. The average attendance at the National school is 100. The introduction of any system by which a regular attendance of children at school could be ensured would be a boon to the parish. The houses in the parish are many of them in a wretched state, and belong to a variety of persons, many of them living out of the parish. We harbour here the outcast poor from many other parishes, where the houses have been pulled down and the inhabitants consequently obliged to seek shelter elsewhere. In such houses there is, as you may suppose, very little regard for decency, in fact none, and it is a wonder to me that there is not more immorality than there is. There is also a great deal of drunkenness in this parish. I think there are 13 or 14 public houses in the place, and many of the labourers spend their wages regularly at them, while their wives and families maintain the house by straw plaiting. There is not so much poverty as improvidence; money is spent as fast as it comes, and families, to my knowledge, have been starving this last winter where the husbands were earning 20*s*. to 25*s*. a week nine months ago by working on the railway. The people here are quite alive to the *Poor Law*, and know that as soon as they have spent all and have no work the parish must keep them, and it is quite amusing to watch the systematic way in which they proceed. I think I may safely say that the present *Poor Law Act* does quite its share towards producing a low state of morals here. I trust that what I have stated may prove of service to you in making your report to Her Majesty's Government.

Believe me, dear Sir,
Faithfully yours,
JOHN CLEGG.

14*c*. Copy of a letter, dated March 25th, 1868, from Mr. Thomas Magor to George Culley, Esq.

DEAR SIR,

As no women or girls are employed in this district, and no boys at an age when such work would be injurious to them, I shall confine my observations to what in my opinion is the primary cause of the peculiar wretchedness of this district, viz., the straw plait manufacture, and secondly, the evils arising to a great extent from it: 1. Defective education. 2. Drunkenness. 3. Evils of the present Poor Law Act. 4. The tally system. 5. The mismanagement of clubs and friendly societies. 6. Overcrowding of villages.

The straw plait manufacture.—At from 3 to 5 years of age children of both sexes are sent to the plaiting schools, which for the most part are conducted in labourers' cottages quite unfit for the purpose (an exception may be made in favour of the village of Harlington, where there are two schools, both well managed and the children taught the rudiments of reading and writing, and sewing in case of girls). In these schools, with the above exception, the children are crowded together almost as thickly as they can get for about eight hours; during summer imperfect ventilation is procured by opening the door, but as any amount of cold so benumbs the fingers as to unfit them for plaiting, during winter fresh air is carefully excluded, so that the atmosphere is sometimes sickening. At the age of 10 or 12 most of the boys exchange plaiting for farm work, but

resume plaiting when severe weather or a scarcity of work prevents them labouring in the fields. Many of the girls as they grow up exchange plaiting for bonnet sewing at certain seasons of the year. From the fact of the girls being engrossed from early childhood by plaiting, they grow up as a class very ignorant of domestic economy, they can neither cook, make or mend their clothes, which are usually bought of some material which will not wash, and is worn until it drops to pieces. The profits of the plait trade are very fluctuating; in prosperous times a good workman can earn from 1*s.* to 3*s.* daily, but at the present time, when the trade is very depressed, very little can be earned. In my opinion the operation of the Factory Act would ameliorate many of these evils, but females' education must be made to embrace instruction in domestic economy, before much good can be done.

Drunkenness.—Most of the men are intemperate. The causes are the aggregation of the cottages in villages, the wretched condition of the cottages, often deficient in all sanitary conveniences, the entire absence of a proprietary considering themselves in any way responsible for the moral or physical well being of their tenants, and lastly the very defective legislation respecting public houses. To remedy this state of things I would especially recommend the erection of a sufficient number of cottages on each farm to accommodate its own labourers, saving them the labour of a long daily walk with the public house at its finish; sanitary matters should be regulated by a central board instead of a local one, often interested in keeping up local abuses, and the landlords of public houses should incur a certain amount of responsibility for harbouring drunken men, while licences should be much more sparingly issued.

The tally system.—With the establishment of the county court a race of tradesmen arose whose dealings were chiefly among the needy; for a weekly payment varying in amount goods below a certain value can be obtained, the trader trusting to the county court and to a charge of from 20 to 40 per cent. above cost price for repayment. These tallymen, by appealing to the vanity of the women and their extreme ignorance of all economy, contrive to get them as much in debt as may suit their purpose, so that the wages of these poor people are always spent in anticipation. No debts below 5*l.* should be recoverable in the county court. Traders should receive no encouragement to trust people with weekly wages, who after a time would learn the value of ready money payments.

The mismanagement of clubs and friendly societies. —Most of these clubs are held in public houses; the working expenses are unnecessarily heavy. The members are not secured against fraud. They are not sufficiently assisted in times of distress by the Poor Law, and it is found almost impossible under the present regulations to provide a fund for aged members.

Overcrowding of villages. — Toddington seems formerly to have been a much more important place than at present, but as the prosperity of the town decreased the number of inhabitants was kept up by the origination of the plait trade. The women and children in past years could earn sufficient money to keep the household, while the men spent their own earnings too frequently in drink. For generations they have borne a bad character; most of them agricultural labourers, and always being in greater number than the surrounding farmers required, they have kept down the price of labour, have prevented landlords or farmers from building cottages on each farm, and have often to walk a distance of four or five miles to and from their work to a cottage presenting none of the features of what a home should be; no garden, these house generally consisting of two wretched rooms utterly insufficient for the purposes of decency.

Evils of the present Poor Law system.—In the parish of Toddington, with a population of 2,433, 542 persons have been relieved by the parish from the 1st of October 1867 to 11th March 1868. I consider the present poor law system altogether bad; no distinction is drawn between the man struggling with adversity, the able-bodied loafer, and the drunken and dissipated. Severe labour tests should be imposed upon those who are known to be bad characters, while those who are sick or otherwise helpless should receive more tender consideration.

You will excuse this hasty and imperfect report, as I am much pressed for time.

Believe me very truly yours,
THOMAS MAGOR.

14*d.* *Mr. W. Horsley*, registrar of births, marriages, and deaths, "This place (Toddington) I should say "has no equal; we have the refuse of Harlington, "Sundon, Chalgrave, Tingrith, and all round us; "about 100 new cottages have been built here lately, "but they didn't pull the old ones down, so there they "are with such people in them, not fit for pigs to live "in scarcely. All these houses, or nearly all, belong "to small freeholders, and the gentry round about on "whose land these people work pay no heed to them. "Why they used to pull down houses at all the places "round and drive the people here."

14*e.* *Mrs. Edwards*, husband a farm labourer. Herself, husband, her mother, and five children have only one bedroom; living in a very wretched house, for which they pay 4*l.* a year. Has two children who go to plaiting school half day and National school half day.

14*f.* *Mrs. Garner* and seven children in one very small bedroom, about 8 feet square and very low.

14*g.* *George Purser*, 20, can neither read nor write; has done no work since last harvest, when he got 30*s.* a week in the Fens; is in the Beds militia. "No "recruiting serjeant for the regulars ever comes near "here."

14*h.* *Charles Purser*, 16, can neither read nor write; has been often in the workhouse, but has never been taught to read; is not doing anything just now.

15. Woburn - Pop., 1,764 - Acr., 4,196.

Allotments, 10 acres in 78 allotments; average rent, 53*s.* 4*d.* per acre.

15*a.* *Mr. C. Stephenson*, Woburn Park Farm, says, "All cottages of modern construction are brick "and tile, or slate; one bedroom, 12 ft. square, and "two are 8 ft. by 12 ft.; lower rooms, 12 ft. square. "Ventilation by chimney and windows; when ven- "tilators are put in, they have invariably been "stopped up by the occupiers. Drainage, part into "main sewers and part into cesspools, cleaned out "once a year. Accommodation, one sitting room "and one large scullery; about one half the number "have three bedrooms, and the remainder two. "Water is supplied to all, spring from wells and rain "gathered in tanks. All cottages have small gar- "dens attached independent of their allotments. "Outhouses include wood barn, privy, and ashbin, "and one large oven to each block of cottages; a "small kitchen range in each cottage, which has "oven and boiler. Tenancies held direct from the "owner. Rent, 1*s.* 2*d.* and 1*s.* 4*d.* per week."

15*b.* [NOTE.—This description applies to blocks of cottages built in many parishes by the Duke of Bedford, and is raferred to in describing the cottages in those parishes. The cottages are for the most part built of brick, but in some parishes, as in Oakley, they are of stone. The blocks consist of two, three, or four cottages, as may be required, four being the most usual number, in which case the outside cottages have three and the inside two bedrooms each.—G. C.]

15*c.* *Mrs. Burnage*, Woburn, husband a farm labourer, works at Speedwell, and gets 11*s.* per week; "Sometimes gets a bit of piece work, but seldom, "say 5*s.* or 10*s.* for the year, putting by harvest." Has five children, two of 4 and 6 years at infant school. Girl of 8 stops at home to work. Girl of 11 goes out to nurse a baby and earns 1*s.* per week. "12*s.* a week is all we have to live on, and bread

Bedfordshire.

Mr. Culley.

f.

"costs me 7*s.* a week." Has an allotment of 20 poles.

15*d.* *John Willesden*, farm foreman, Woburn. Has one son, 10 years old, at school in Woburn. The clergyman wants him to remain at school, but he is afraid he may have him there till he loses the opportunity of learning his business as a farm labourer. "You know, sir, I began work at 8, and no "doubt lost a good deal by not remaining at school "longer, but I consider that I learnt some things "between 8 and 10 at work which has helped to "make me what I am, a foreman of a small farm. . . . "I pay a regular labourer under me 11*s.* per week, "with no piece work or any extra pay, except in "haytime and harvest. I can get as many men at "11*s.* per week as I like, and I consider *that* the "regular wage of the district."

15*e.* *Mr. Lewis*, Hundreds Farm, Woburn. Farms 80 to 90 acres. Pays horsemen 14*s.* per week; pays another man 12*s.* per week. The man at 12*s* per week would make 2*l.* in the year by piece work, besides haytime and harvest.

15*f.* *Mr. C. Stephenson*, Woburn Park Farm, says of the wages, "Wages nominally 11*s.* or 12*s.* per "week, but 22 men upon this farm have averaged "2*s.* 7*d.* per day during 1867; this of course includes "all piece work, and the usual beer allowance is also "commuted and paid in money. Lads 14 to 17 "years of age earn 1*s.* 3*d.* per day."

15*g.* The following TABLE gives the names, numbers in families, number of bedrooms, rent of cottages, ownership of cottages, quantity of garden or allotment, and distance from work, in the case of 14 (all the) married labourers working on a farm in Woburn Parish.

Name of Labourer.	Family.	No. of Bedrooms.	Rent of Cottage.	Owner of Cottage.	Garden Ground.	Distance from Work.
			s. d.			
Sinfield -	Wife and 4 children, 12 to 1 years	One bedroom -	1 10	Mrs. Circuit -	2 poles	1 mile.
Newbury -	" 5 children, 10 to 1 "	Two bedrooms	2 6	Miss Cobbe -	- -	"
Oliver -	" 1 child - - -	" " -	1 2	Duke of Bedford	40 poles	"
Sedgwick-	" 4 children, 15 to 2 "	" " -	1 9	Mr. John Cook -	5 "	"
Foulkesk -	" 3 children, 9 to 2 "	One bedroom -	1 6	Mr. W. Gurney	4 "	"
Smith -	Wife, family away - - -	Two bedrooms	2 3	Mrs. Mahon -	20 "	"
Keetch -	" " - - -	Three " -	1 4	Duke of Bedford	15 "	1¼ mile.
Hurst -	" " - - -	Two " -	1 2	" "	1 "	1 mile.
Henley -	" " - - -	One bedroom -	1 2	" "	- -	"
Brown -	Wife, no family - - -	Three bedrooms	1 4	" "	8 poles	1½ mile.
C. Clarke-	Wife and 6 children, 17 to 7 years	" " -	1 4	" "	1 pole	¼ of mile.
Burgess -	" 4 children, 17 to 6 "	Four bedrooms	1 4	" "	20 poles	On farm.
Ward -	" no family - - -	Three " -	2 6	" "	40 "	"
G. Clarke	" 3 children, 20 to 14 "	Two "	1 6	" "	40 "	1¼ mile.

15*h.* *Mrs. Newbury*, 18, Cobbe's Row, Woburn. Husband a farm labourer working on Birchmore farm, and getting 11*s.* per week. Pays 2*s.* 6*d.* a week rent for a bad cottage in a very narrow and dirty street; no land attached to cottage. "We can't get "one of the duke's houses; there is always a many "crying out for them; they're cheap and good, and "we have no chance. . . . . We often say as we "would like a piece of land, but there ain't much "chance for us here in Woburn; there is only one "field for all Woburn. I have five children; the "eldest 10, a girl, I must keep at home to mind the "baby when I get a bit of washing or such like. If "I'm not to send my boy to work in his 10 (at 9 "years old) I think we must starve. My husband "gets no great work, and has not done for two years; "we have nothing but bread and dripping and some-"times dry bread to eat, and may be a penn'orth of "turnip tops on Sunday."

15*i.* *Mrs. Holmes*, 10, Cobbe's Row, Woburn. Husband an able-bodied labourer (described by the relieving officer as a bad lot from Toddington) in the workhouse. Family, his wife and five children, receiving out relief, six loaves and 4*s.* per week. Pay 2*s.* 6*d.* a week rent for bad cottage and no ground. Eldest child of 11 and three others at school. Wife pays schooling, and does straw plait to make up their living. "I can do a score of plait a day, and get 4*d.* "a score, and have to pay 1½*d.* for straw. . . . . We "eat rice and bread, vegetables is out of character; "sometimes I get a penn'orth of turnips"

BEDFORD UNION.

16. Biddenham - Pop., 350 - Acr., 1,556.

Cultivation is mixed; about two-thirds arable, one-third grass. Sixty-three labourers' cottages.

16*a.* *Mr. Wm. Golding*, says, "The cottages are "constructed of stone and tiles; and many of them "of oak frames, studded, and lath and plaster, and "rough cast, and covered with thatch; the latter "are very strongly built cottages. The living rooms "average about 12 ft. by 10 ft., some larger and "some smaller; the bedrooms about 10 ft. by 7 ft., "some much larger and others a very little smaller. "Nearly all the cottages have three sleeping rooms, "all good water supply and drainage. Each has a "garden attached, varying from 15 poles up to 1 rood, "which produces enough to pay the rent. The land-"lord pays all rates, taxes, &c., and for all repairs, &c. "The Right Hon. Lord Dynevor's trustees are the "owners. Annual rent 25*s.* up to 3*l.*, according to the "size of cottage and its accommodation. In addition "to the home garden as above described, each cottager "has an allotment averaging about one rood, and for "which he pays about the same rent as the farmers "are charged for their occupation; I consider these "allotments most beneficial in helping the parents of "large families to bring them up respectively, and "they have proved a great preventative to crime; "in the event of any of the occupiers being convicted "before a bench of magistrates they forfeit their "allotment, we have had but here and there a case "of forfeiture; the men would suffer anything rather "than forfeit their allotment."

This description applies also to Bromham.

16*b.* *Mr. Charles Howard*, says, "Our village is "considered very pretty, the cottages being generally "described as 'truly rural.'"

[NOTE.—Mr. Howard then describes the cottages very much as Mr. Golding.]

16*c.* *William Hockle*, 11 years old, "keeping "crows;" is in field from 6 to 6, with 1¾ hour rest. Was at school till he was 7; can read and write now.

16*d.* *Arthur Baxter*, at work; left school at 7½, but goes to Sunday school; can read a little.

16*e.* *Joseph Macom*, 10, left school at 9; can read and write; is helping shepherd.

16*f.* *Julia Brockett*, 16, lace making; works from 8 or 9 a.m. till "whiles," 10 p.m., with 2 hours rest; earns 2*s.* 6*d.* a week.

[NOTE.—This girl at work in a very low cottage; rooms not above 5 ft. 6 in. to 6 ft., I should think.]

17. Bromham - Pop., 361 - Acr., 1,700.

17*a*. *Rev. J. A. Coleridge* says, "As a rule our "cottages are above the average, some few are still "very bad. They are thus constructed" (here follows a description similar to that for Biddenham, belonging to the same owners, and having the same allotment system and moderate rent for cottages).

18. Bletsoe - Pop., 412 - Acr., 2,187.

Cultivation, two-thirds arable; one-third grass.

18*a*. *Mr. John Thomas* says, "The cottages are "thatch and plaster and brick and slate; rooms "small, drainage good generally; water supply, "garden ground, &c., good. They belong to the "landowner and rents are moderate."

19. Cardington - Pop., 1,419 - Acr., 5,060.

19*a*. *Rev. E. J. Hillier* says, "The cottages are "most of them the property of the landlord, who is "careful in the management of them, and they are "let at low rents to labourers on the estate."

19*b*. *Mr. John E. Bodger* says, "Good accom-"modation in every respect, with a rood of land for "the cottages. Rent low. My men have each a "rood of land, and I consider that quite sufficient "for a labouring man. The late Mr. Whitbread was "asked to give an acre and refused."

19*c*. [NOTE of Assistant Commissioner.—Visited one bad cottage in Cardington, in which Mrs. Peck lives; cottages generally good.]

19*d*. Here is an industrial school for girls, the only one, I believe, in the county of Bedford, of which the report is as follows:—

"CARDINGTON INDUSTRIAL DAY SCHOOL FOR GIRLS.

"THIS school is the only one of the kind in the "county of Bedford; and as an experience of eight "years has now been gained, it is thought that a "statement of the method pursued, the expense "incurred, and the advantages resulting, may be to "some persons suggestive and serviceable.

"If a girl goes out to domestic service without "special training, she generally begins at low wages, "in a place of an inferior kind; but from this in-"dustrial school the girls have obtained at once a "good start in life, in superior families, at wages "of about 10*l*. a year.

"In the Cardington Industrial School girls are "admitted between the ages of 7 and 17. Instruc-"tion in the elementary branches of education—"reading, writing, and arithmetic—and in the Bible "and the formularies of the Established Church, is "here given as in the parochial school. Plain "needlework and cutting out are also taught; and "the elder girls are instructed in the use of a sewing "machine.

"To this instruction is added the special training "in the work of a cook, a housemaid, a laundress, "and a dairymaid; the elder girls taking weekly "turns to act in these capacities.

"Practice in all ordinary kinds of cooking is "obtained in the following ways: 1st, soup and "other articles of food are frequently prepared for "poor sick persons; and, 2ndly, a dinner in winter "and a meat tea in summer, with a varying bill "of fare, is given to the whole school once a week; "which dinner or tea, however, any girl may forfeit "through her own fault.

"The milk for the dairy is bought of a farmer. "One girl acts as dairymaid, and she takes her "pail to the milking. The butter is sold at market "price.

"The buildings consist of an ample school room, "furnished with a Flavell's cooking range, a mistress's "house, a dairy, a pantry, and a scullery furnished "with washing trays and other appliances.

"When any girl, at the age of 17, after con-"ducting herself well, goes out to service, to a "place approved of by the patrons of the school, "she is presented by them with an outfit of clothing.

"All the girls who have hitherto gone out to "service from the school in this way have obtained "good places, and have given satisfaction in them; "and those who have left the school before the age "of 17 have obtained better places than they could "otherwise have expected.

"The chief employments of women and girls in "this county are lace making and straw plaiting. "As the wages of farm labour are low, parents "cannot afford both to pay the weekly twopence, "which is the small school fee required, and also to "lose what their children could earn at the lace pillow "or at plaiting straw. Therefore these manual em-"ployments are adopted into the work of the school. "A certain number of hours a day are devoted to "these occupations, and a teacher is engaged to "superintend the girls so employed. This arrange-"ment is found to leave the girls time enough for the "other school work, and it leaves the mistress more "free to attend to the domestic training; and those "girls whose parents wish them to do more work "than can be done in the allotted time may remain "after the regular school hours to complete it.

"The entire training in all its branches (except "the instruction in lace making and straw plaiting), "is carried on by one competent trained but not "certified mistress, who has also had some ex-"perience in domestic service. It is considered "to be a decided advantage that she does not hold a "certificate, as she is able to devote to the industrial "training of the elder girls all the time and energy "which certified mistresses are bound to give to the "instruction of pupil teachers.

"The total expenses of the school at present are "about 70*l*. a year. The number of girls is limited "to 30, which is found to be as many as can be "supplied by the population of Cardington proper, "which by the last census was 572; some girls are "admitted also from hamlets belonging to Cardington. "It may be remarked, however, that in a large "parish a school of double the number could probably "be maintained at proportionally small extra cost. "The cost would also be dimished if the industrial "part were an annex to the parochial school, instead "of being, as this is, a separate establishment."

"April, 1868."

20. Clapham - Pop., 502 - Acr., 1,948.

Cultivation chiefly arable.

20*a*. *Messrs. J. & F. Howard* say of the cottages, "The construction is generally inferior, the soil is "generally porous, and the river very near, so that "there is little or no artificial drainage. Ownership "by men of moderate means who have built or "bought cottages as an investment; a few belong to "the landowners. Rents are moderate, from 3*l*. to "4*l*. a year. We hold strong opinions on the de-"sirability and even the duty of landowners pro-"viding sufficient accommodation for the labourers. "We should even be glad to see some compulsory "enactment to provide for parishes where the cottage "accommodation per hundred acres is much below "the requirements."

21. Cople, Pop., 565 - Acr., 2,109 - Cottages, 102.

Allotments, 96, containing 17 acres, let at 40*s*.

21*a*. [Nearly all the cottages belong to the Duke of Bedford, and are good, constructed as those described by Mr. C. Stephenson for Woburn, with good offices and a rood of ground as allotment. Most of the farms have a block of cottages attached to the farm-steading. Speaking of such a block, Mr. Amos Warwick, bailiff to Mrs. Brimley, farming 300 acres, said, two were quite enough as long as they were kept in the landlord's hands.]

21*b*. *Mrs. Facey*, living in house built on waste, for which she pays quitrent, 5*s*. Self and five children in one small bedroom; three younger, two at school; gets 3*s*. and 3 loaves from parish. "I wouldn't "have any of my children leave school before 11 or

Bedfordshire.
Mr. Culley.
f.

" 12 if I could help it, and none of them have left " before 10, but betimes we might have starved if " they couldn't work at it before 10 when they " was'nt at school."

21*c*. *Joseph Eastwell*, 15 on Mr. Purser's farm topping and rooting mangold; can read a little but cannot write.

22. Goldington - Pop., 609 - Acr., 2,735.
Cultivation mixed.

22*a*. *Mr Ulysses Paine* says of the cottages, " Some newly built with good accommodation, others " mud and stud. Drainage and ventilation bad, rooms " small, short in number for a family; water good, " with garden accommodation. Landowners' rent, " 3*l*. 10*s*. per year."

22*b*. [Assistant Commissioner's note.—Some cottages built of mud and stud in a very bad state belonging to a small freeholder, rent 1*s*. 2*d*. to 1*s*. 4*d*. per week, with no garden.]

22*c*. *Mr. Newmann* (a farm labourer) with five children in a very bad cottage. Three children at school, no child at work; he receives 12*s*. per week, which is " the usual pay."

22*d*. Very good schools with large attendance of very young children. Some good blocks of cottages belonging to the Duke of Bedford.

23. Kempston - Pop., 2,191 Acr., 5,000.

Cultivation chiefly arable. Some good and some very poor cottages.

23*a*. Copy of a letter addressed to Rev. Jas. Fraser by Mr. Chas. Howard in which reference is made to Kempston.

Dear Sir,

We have no gang system in this part of the country; it is therefore thought by most of those to whom I have spoken that no legislation is required for fixing the age at which boys should go to work; my own opinion is that no boy should go to work until he is 10 years of age; up to that time he should go to school. I fear this will not be accomplished except upon the compulsory system, and yet I cannot see my way clear to carry this out in our rural districts, where in outlying places the schools may be miles from the children. *There is a parish adjoining this one, the largest in Bedfordshire, where cottages and farm homesteads are miles from either the church or school.* The alternate system of one day at school and the other at work will never answer. It will be far better to keep the boys altogether at school up to 10 years of age, arranging for rather a long holiday in the hay and corn harvest. After this age, if lads could go to winter evening schools, much good would result to them; at least such has been my experience in this parish. The time has doubtless arrived when our children ought not to be allowed longer to remain in ignorance. On every farm our best men in every sense are those who have had some educational advantages. On a better education depends the well-being of our rural population; only let this be enforced, more commodious cottages must follow, or the rising race of labourers will refuse to live in such as they now have. That curse of our labourers, the beer shop, will then have fewer attractions, and consequently our gaols fewer inmates. England will find in the long run that money spent in the education of her children is the truest economy.

Yours truly,
Charles Howard.

23*b*. Copy of a letter from the same gentleman Culley, Esq., Dated April 13th, 1868.

My dear Sir,

The parish alluded to in my letter to Mr. Fraser is Kempston, which is the largest parish in the Bedford Union. It commences at Bromham Bridge and joins the parish of Houghton Conquest near Ampthill. There are several " ends " (hamlets) at a long distance from either church or schools. I have ere now found girls very useful in picking twitch, and perhaps may again. In fine warm weather it is " an " agreeable change from the lace pillow " and no doubt does them a deal of good.

My dear Sir,
Yours very truly,
Charles Howard.

23*c*. Copy of letter from the Rev. H. J. Williams, Vicar of Kempston, to G. Culley, Esq., Dated April 24th, 1868.

My dear Sir,

With reference to your letter respecting a statement which has been made respecting the great distance there is from the parish church and schools to some part of this parish, I would endeavour to explain that few parishes in the county with so scattered a population and so wide an acreage, nearly 5,000, are so well provided with both as ours. The parish church, though it has but seven houses besides the vicarage around it, is in the centre of the acreage. Some of the scattered farms and cottages are from a mile to a mile and half distant, and one farm which stands alone is 2 to 2½ miles. The schools for this part of the parish are close to the church, and though there are scattered groups of cottages over a considerable area, the main body are from a quarter to one mile distant. There is one group of 10 cottages near Bromham and Biddenham where several of the children go to school from their parents having been connected with these parishes though the distance is not the objection, as the children of two of these families come regularly to our school; indeed, I do not find that there is any difficulty for boys or girls of 5 or 6 years old coming on the other side of the parish towards Bedford, where the chief part of the population is concentrated, and in the midst of them we have three day schools for boys, girls, and infants, as you may see by the returns, and they are well attended, besides an evening school, as well as a Sunday school for this part of the parish situated about 1¼ mile from the parish church and schools, which embrace all the population of the village properly so called. There are no large groups of cottages at any distance from this part of the parish except two or three cottages attached to two separate farm houses, one at about half, the other at a mile distance. You will see from this statement that, considering the large area of the parish, we have our schools placed as conveniently as practicable and for the accommodation of the people. I should mention that a new church is building in the populous part of the parish and will be opened next month in place of the service which has been carried on for some years in the licensed school room. To suppose that a school can be placed in the midst of every half dozen of cottages in so scattered a population is preposterous and impossible. I hope this statement will prove satisfactory.

Believe me,
My dear Sir,
Yours truly,
H. J. Williams.

23*d*. *John Costin*, labourer, Kempston, working for Messrs. Howard: " I live in Kempston and have " a little girl in my charge, but no children of my " own. I would not object to my children being " taught the church catechism, at least most of it. " I send the little girl to the Kempston church " school, where the catechism is taught. Up to two " years ago the Wesleyans were not admitted to the " Kempston school unless they would attend the " church Sunday school; there is no such stipulation " now, the Wesleyan scholars attending their own " Sunday school."

23*e*. *Thomas Eates*, working for Messrs. Howard: " I don't object to the church catechism except those " parts about baptism. If they would omit the " baptismal parts my children can learn it all. I " have no objection to the belief or duty to God and " your neighbour."

23*f*. *George Freshwater*, working for Messrs. Howard: "I bring up my children as Baptists. "They are learning the church catechism at school, "only they can't answer the baptismal questions. I "don't at all object to the church catechism, but I "believe the Baptists, as a body, would, even to the "non-baptismal portion."

23*g*. *Mrs. Lack*, Kempston: "My husband is a "farm labourer, works piece work just now; I don't "know what he earns, he is not one as tells his wife "what money he gets; I know what I get from him, "and it ain't scarcely enough to buy bread, let alone "sending my girl (10 years old) to school; she must "work, she must; if the Queen means to do any "good to us she had best begin by putting down "them alehouses; they makes gentlefolks' fortunes, "they do; look at this, captain; and they won't put "them down, but the Queen might, or leastways "shorten their hours. It's Saturday night till 12 "o'clock, and they ain't well out o' church a Sunday "till they're in again. Them alehouses is our curse, "they are."

This woman's daughter is 10 years old, is employed in lace making, and can neither read nor write.

23*h*. *Wm Purser*, 10 years of age, keeping crows; can read and write a little. Was at school two years ago. Has been "keeping crows" on Sunday for three weeks; will go to church next Sunday.

23*i*. *Joseph Cave*, leading team, 10 years old, can read and write a little; was at school till he was 8. Can spell "Cave."

23*j*. Two men (catch workmen hoeing wheat) get 4*s*. per acre. Can earn, "may be," 2*s*. 6*d* a day if the weather is good.

23*k*. *Mrs. Garner* (living in a good cottage belonging to Mrs. Barnard).

	per week. s.	d.
Husband a farm labourer (horse keeper), gets, starting at 4 a.m. -	14	0
Boy 18 gets - -	8	0
Boy 13 „ - - -	4	0
Boy 9 } for three or four week just Boy 8 } now dropping potatoes -	2	0
Girl 15, making lace four days, at sewing school two days. Works from 7 a.m. till 10 p.m. - -	2	4
Girl 10, lacemaking - - -	1	0
Whole family (just now) -	33	4

Upon which she has to keep husband and self and nine children. The boys 8 and 9 will go to school again as soon as potato dropping is over.

24. Knotting.

Knotting - Pop., 185 - Acr., 1,724.

Cultivation, mixed. Allotments, 26 of 40 poles each; rent per acre, 26*s*. 8*d*.

24*a*. *Mr. Geo. Hine* says of the cottages, "New cottages, with two or three bedrooms, built of brick and "tiled, with good offices, but requiring bigger barns for "wood, &c. Old cottages, brick and thatched, with "low rooms, old farm houses converted. All my men "have 40 poles of ground and can grow five bushels "of wheat on half of it. The good cottages belong "to the Duke of Bedford.

24*b*. *James Arber* (living in a poor cottage with no conveniences): Has 14*s*. per week as a horse keeper; has nine children from 1 to 14 years; two girls "twitching," just come home, both can read and write, "We have no schoolmaster, but I teach them." [Both girls told the Assistant Commissioner they liked twitching better than the lace pillow.]

24*c*. *Elijah Wiggins*, lives in a very low cottage with two rooms upstairs, his wife, wife's mother and sister, and three children in house. No outhouses.

25. Melchbourne.

Melchbourne - Pop., 251 - Acr., 2,573.

Cultivation mixed.

25*a*. *Mr. E. Campion*, says of the cottages, "Cottages good and rooms of moderate size;

	ft.	ft.
"Two bedrooms to each, about	12 by	11
"Living room - -	12 „	12
"Wash house - -	8 „	6

"Ventilation and drainage good.
"Water supply good.
"Garden and outhouse to each cottage.
"Each cottage an allotment of 40 poles.
"Rent, 50*s*. per year.
"All cottages property of landowner."

25*b*. *Rev. R. P. Bent*, after describing cottages, &c. much as Mr. Campion, says, "In fact the whole parish "belongs to Lord St. John. A large proportion of "labourers working on the farms in Melchbourne "live in the adjoining parishes."

25*c*. [The cottages visited by the Assistant Commissioner were thatched cottages with larger and loftier rooms than in most of the thatched cottages in the county.]

26. Oakley.

Oakley - Pop., 443 - Acr., 1,500.

Cultivation, chiefly arable. Allotments, 10 acres divided into 99 allotments.

26*a*. *Mr. John Horrell*, of the cottages, says, "The "parish of Oakley is, with the exception of a few "cottages, the property of the Duke of Bedford; the "cottages have most been built within the last 12 "years; some built of brick and tiles and some of "stone and slate. Water supply good, small gardens "and outhouses to each cottage. Rent 56*s*., 60*s*., "and 70*s*. per annum, according to number of family "and number of rooms required."

26*b*. [Note.—For description of these cottages see Mr. C. Stephenson's description for Woburn. The new cottages here visited by the Assistant Commissioner are very good; struck him as having too much window and too large panes of glass.]

26*c*. *Ellen Warwick*, 19, lace making, can read but cannot write was never at any day school; work from 7 a.m. till 9 p.m., with two hours rest in middle of day. *Mary Ann Cockings*, working with her, 17 years of age, has never been at school, and can neither read nor write.

26*d*. *Mrs. Jane Hulett*: "All my children, eight of "them, are able to read and write, and have been "regular at school up to 9, some of them up to 13; "my boys went to night school, or they would soon "have forgotten to write and the girls went to sewing "school."

27. Ravensden.

Ravensden - Pop., 477 - Acr., 2,185.

Cultivation mixed; 75 acres glebe let in allotments, half to eight or nine acres each.

27*a*. *Francis Wythes, Esq.*, landowner and occupier, says of the cottages, "Some are very bad as to venti-"lation and drainage and water supply. Ownership, "some by tradesmen; some on the waste (and claim "ownership themselves), these are very bad. Rent, "50*s*. to 80*s*."

27*b*. [Note.—Mr. Francis Wythes told the Assistant Commissioner that he had employed men in most parts of England, and that for the work done he considered that Bedfordshire men were paid higher than in any other county in which he had employed men. That he had employed cheaper men at 18*s*. per week in the north than the Beds men at 12*s*.]

28. Renhold.

Renhold - Pop., 513 - Acr., 2,077.

Cultivation mixed.

28*a*. *Rev. Leigh Spencer* says, "All cottages have "from half to two acres of allotment; all have gardens; "nearly all keep pigs; water supply most inadequate; "chiefly using pond water for all purposes. Owner-"ship, chiefly landowner."

28*b*. *Mr. G. Wallis*, says, "The cottages are badly

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"off for water in summer, as there are no springs "or wells."

[NOTE.—The Assistant Commissioner visited several poor cottages with very small bedrooms in high-pitched thatched roof, with windows almost on the floor.]

29. RISELY.

Risely - Pop., 1,026 - Acr., 2,980.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

29*a*. *Rev. R. N. Durrant*, describing the cottages, says, "Construction.—Brick and tile or lath and plaster "rough cast with thatch. Average size of rooms, "13 feet by 13 feet; ventilation is either close or "drafty; drainage is defective, either as securing "cleanliness or freedom from damp.

"Accommodation.—One living room, two bedrooms, "a dip-well with good water to each cottage or one "between two cottages, a small garden, with fre-"quently one rood of allotment ground at 40*s*. per "acre, and almost every cottage has its small 'barn' "or outhouse.

"Ownership is mostly by landowner, hardly in any "case by tradesmen with whom tenant is obliged to "deal.

"Rent varies from 3*l*. to 5*l*., but mostly below the "maximum."

29*b*. The Assistant Commissioner did not see any very bad cottages in Risely, although there are a good many old ones.

30. SHARNBROOK.

Sharnbrook - Pop., 872 - Acr., 2,318.

30*a*. There are a great many very bad and very high-rented cottages in this village belonging in some instances visited by the Assistant Commissioner to one of the chief landowners of the parish, and in others to small freeholders. A great want of an energetic inspector of nuisances.

3*b*. *Mrs. Allen*. Husband a farm labourer; living in a very small cottage very much out of repair, and paying 3*l*. a year rent. "I have five children; one "of 7 is at school, a boy 12 is at work. I'm no "scholar, but I would have my boy of 12 at school "if I could afford it; I have another little 'un as "should be at school, but there is so little pay "coming in."

30*c*. *Mrs. Bone*. Husband a farm labourer. Pays 4*l*. a year for a miserable cottage of four rooms; largest rooms 10 ft. square by 6 ft. high (next cottage in same state), altogether out of repair. Has six children, three boys, 16, 14, and 8, at work; two girls, 10 and 6, at school.

31. SOULDROP.

Souldrop - Pop., 276 - Acr., 800.

31 *a*. *The Rev. G. D. Newbolt*, of the cottages, says, "Almost all the cottages in this parish belong "to the Duke of Bedford, who is careful that the "accommodation shall be as good as possible." There are 33 allotments belonging to chief landowners, and some part of glebe is let in larger allotments.

SWINESHEAD.

32. Swineshead - Pop., - Acr., .
Cultivation chiefly arable.

32*a*. *Mr. John Smith*, of the cottages, says, "Cot-"tages very bad; many built of lath and plaster, "with wood frames, and thatched. Some belong to "principal landowners, and many to small free-"holders. Drainage very bad. Rent about 1*s*. 3*d*. "a week."

32*b*. No school nearer than Pertenhall. No resident clergyman.

32*c*. *Mrs. Howe*. One bedroom and one living room. Has four children, eldest 10; no child at school. Her cottage in very bad state, as also two or three mud and thatch cottages near it. No drainage, and many nuisances.

32*d*. *Mrs. Pickering*. One bedroom. Five children, eldest a boy 17, a girl 14. Pays 1*s*. per week for a very bad cottage without barn or privy.

THURLEIGH.

33. Thurleigh - Pop., 666 - Acr., 3,300.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

33*a*. *The Rev. B. Trapp*, of the cottages, says, "They are generally built of clay and thatched. No "drainage or water supply. Ventilation bad; so "much of fresh air outside that they prefer closed "windows. An energetic medical man once broke a "hole in the thatched roof to secure some fresh air for "his patient, the opened window being closed as soon "as he left. Out of about 110 cottages, more than 50 "are built on the waste land at the side of the road, "and belong to the occupiers. The principal land-"owners have none, or next to none, on their estates. "The rents are low, generally about 50*s*. per annum. "One person has built lately four good cottages of "four rooms each, with water supply and all con-"veniences, which would let in Bedford for 8*l*. or "10*l*. a year; here he gets 4*l*. a year, which is con-"sidered enormously dear. The cost of building is "greater than in Bedford, though land of course is "cheaper."

33*b*. [NOTE of Assistant Commissioner.—Of 110 cottages, 52 belong to occupiers and are built on waste; these are generally in a bad state, some have only one room for all purposes, and some two rooms; some of these occupiers pay 1*s*. quit rent, others pay nothing. One landowner of about 830 acres has four cottages (very poor ones), and another who owns 550 acres has no cottage to represent it, though very good farm offices. The water supply is by means of holes dug to catch rain water on the road side.]

33*c*. Speaking of these cottages, one of the landowners said to Assistant Commissioner, "No man "without the Bank of England at his back could "afford to buy up, pull down, and rebuild cottages on "waste as at Thurleigh. No doubt it was a neglect "on the part of the owner of the estate to allow "these cottages to be built on the road side, but the "thing is beyond remedy."

33*d*. *Reuben Darlow*, farm labourer. Has two sons and two daughters, all grown up, who sleep in one small bedroom with himself and wife. Had six of them at home last year. Has 1½ acres of allotment. "It's t'much, nearly."

33*e*. *Joseph Gammon*, age 10, keeping sheep. Gets 4*s*. per week; cannot read nor write.

33*f*. *William Sykes*, horsekeeper. Gets 12*s*. a week and two meals. Would rather have that than 14*s*. a week, but has to work from 4 a.m. till 7 or 8 for it. He says, "My house has but one bedroom, "very small; I have two children."

33*g*. *George Gammon*, farm labourer. Has an allotment from Mr. Trapp of 36 poles; pays 8*s*. a year for it. He thinks he could manage half an acre if his master would help him by giving him horses for one day.

TURVEY.

34. Turvey - Pop., 1,093 - Acr., 4,000.
Cultivation mixed.

34*a*. *Rev. W. B. Russell* says, "During my 35 "years residence at Turvey the village has been "almost entirely rebuilt, and the cottages in general "may be called model cottages, affording suitable "accommodation for families. Size of rooms, from "12 feet square upwards. Ventilation and drainage "good. Good water supply and sufficient outbuild-"ings. Belonging to landowners almost entirely; "rent 1*s*. per week and upwards."

34*b*. [NOTE of Assistant Commissioner.—This is a very nice village, almost altogether new, and yet picturesque. There are good schools, a reading room for the labouring class, and a parochial meeting room. I saw no bad cottage in this village.]

WILLINGTON.

35. Willington - Pop., 290 - Acr., 1,648.

Allotments, 46 allotments of 20 poles each.

35 *a*. *Rev. Augustus Orlebar* says of the cottages, " They are the Duke of Bedford's model cottages."

35*b*. *Mr. Henry Purser* says, " Very many of the " young men have left us in consequence of the want " of cottage accommodation, and many more will " leave us for the same reason."

35*c*. [NOTE.—There are 48 cottages in the parish, generally good ones.]

35*d*. *Mrs. Purser*. Husband, farm labourer. Husband has 11*s*. or 12*s*. (wife doesn't know which) per week; three boys, one of 12 years earning 4*s*. 6*d*. per week, one of 10, 2*s*. 6*d*. per week, and one of 8, 2*s*. 6*d*. per week. Has three girls lace making, each earning 2*s*. 6*d*.; two other children not earning anything, one of 5 at school; boy of 8 can neither read nor write. "I wouldn't send him to school " unless I am obliged to; they say as now we shall " be obliged to now this new school is built." [NOTE. —A new school built by the Duke of Bedford, the present attendance at the old school being about 8 or 10.—G. C.]

[NOTE.—This family is getting in about 29*s*. per week to keep a family of 10. Clergyman thinks they should be able to live on 26*s*. 6*d*., and send boy of 8 to school. The cottage very dirty, with only *two* bedrooms.]

AMPTHILL UNION.

36. Ampthill - Pop., 2,144 - Acr., 1,928.

36*a*. *Mr. H. Swaffield* says, " The cottages are " good, principally belonging to landowners. There " are upwards of 58 acres let in allotments of less " than one acre. Rent, 3*d*. to 7½*d*. per pole."

" Good schools."

[NOTE.—There are 162 allotments of about 20 poles each, belonging to one landowner.]

37. Cranfield - Pop., 1,591 Acr., 3,933.

Chiefly arable.

Allotments, 65 acres let at moderate rent to 106 tenants.

37*a*. *Rev. H. H. Birley*, says, " The older class of " cottages are small and insufficient in accommodation, " but they are gradually disappearing. There is not, " so far as I am aware, any case of ownership by " tradesmen with whom the tenants are obliged to " deal. Mr. Harter, the only resident large land- " owner has recently purchased and pulled down " some of the worst cottages and has built new " ones provided with all desirable conveniences."

" Good schools."

37*b*. *Mr. Prentice*, occupier and guardian, while discussing the educational question at the Ampthill Board meeting, said, " I never had any education till " I was 14, and I know what it is to have to begin " then. I have a boy on my farm now of 15, who has " never been either at school or church; the un- " educated will not send their children to school, and " you must compel them; let the boys be kept at " school till 9 years old, and then compel them to go " to night schools."

38. Flitton - Pop., 597 - Acr.,

Allotments, 140 acres, let to 219 tenants by one landowner. Average rent, 55*s*. per acre. The allotment system was adopted in this parish when, under the old Poor Law, the rates had risen to 18*s*. in the pound. A large farmer gave up his farm and it was divided into allotments and let to the labourers.

38*a*. *Rev. A. Browne* says, " The cottages are " mostly of brick, with living rooms and washing " place, with two rooms above, and in some half dozen " cases of newly built cottages an additional garret " or two over all. Rooms average 11 or 12 feet " square at the least. Most cottages have gardens " attached. Drainage little or none, as is common in " the country with detached tenements; ventilation " good enough in the day time, but closer in bed- " rooms than need be, were not poor people generally " under great apprehension of fresh air in the night. " The great majority of cottage dwellings in the " parish belong to the Countess Cowper. Rent with " garden varies from 3*l*. to 5*l*.

" National school."

39. Flitwick - Pop., 780 - Acr., 2,100.

39*a*. *Major J. H. Brooks* says, " There are three " classes of cottages in the parish :—

" 1st. The old-fashioned thatch roof, single and " double.

" 2nd. The wayside freehold hovels.

" 3rd. The blocks of new cheap brick dwellings.

" The former are the most frequent and are the best. " The second are simply execrable, and mere pigsties; " the last are in some cases good, but the rooms are " usually too small; a dwelling room and two bed- " rooms is in general the sum of a family's accom- " modation. The water supply is good; the rent at " an average may be set at 4*l*. a year; many cottages " are, however, of lower rent, I have built two " cottages myself this year, on a very good principle, " with a third story, at the above rent.

" Schools well attended."

40. Maulden - Pop., 1,563 - Acr., 2,500.

Allotment, 38 acres let in 186 allotments, belonging to one landowner.

40*a*. *Rev. Charles Ward*, says, " Many *old* cottages " have but two rooms, those generally of a fair size; " nearly all new ones have four, the two front ones of " a fair size, the two backs ones smaller. Parts of " the village badly drained, or the drains not properly " looked to. Many of the new cottages are built on " speculation by tradesmen and other small proprietors " at from 4*l*. to 4*l*. 10*s*.; very little garden; the " old cottages from 3*l*. to 5*l*.; garden plots are let " separately in several different and convenient parts " of the parish."

40*b*. " Straw plaiting is allowed in National school " three days per week."

40*c*. *Mr. George Street* says, " Some occupiers of " cottages are required to deal with the owners who " are tradesmen, but not as a rule. . . . Many of " the best labourers have regular work and decent " homes, and are generally well conducted; a con- " siderable number depend upon jobs amongst gar- " deners and others during the summer, and live as " they can during winter, these are for the most part " not nearly so well off or so respectable as those " who have regular work. This being an open " parish, it contrasts most unfavourably with those " belonging principally to the Duke of Bedford and " other noblemen. . . . Some of the cottages are " small and bad, and are occupied by the refuse of " other parishes. Piece work, a good deal done in " this parish on larger farms, dibbling peas, beans, " and wheat, singling turnips, &c., a good man may " increase his wages from 11*s*. to 13*s*. throughout the " year by piece work. I pay ordinary labourers 11*s*. " per week. Shepherd and horsemen 13*s*. per week. " A number of men are now begging work of me at " 2*s*. per day, who in summer work for market " gardeners. My best workmen began work at 8 " years of age."

40*d*. [NOTE.—A boy " crow keeping." " I be a " comin' to my seven (*i. e.*, nearly 7 years old); I " can't read nor write. I was at school once, some " time ago."]

41. Millbrook - Pop., 430 - Acr., 1,700.

Allotments, 10 acres in 68 allotments, belonging to chief landowner; rent 40*s*. per acre.

41*a*. *The Rev. Harvey Vachell* says, " My parish " entirely agricultural. Wages about 11*s*. per week. " Boys as early as 12 and 14 can and do earn from " 2*s*. 6*d*. to 3*s*. per week. They are taken away " entirely from school when once they can obtain a

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" fixed place ; till then they attend irregularly when " not at work ; as soon as they can earn for them- " selves they get out of both parental or scholastic " restraint, and the only hold we have over them is " the slight moral restraint of the Sunday school, " which is of course stronger or weaker, as we are " or are not successful in our efforts for their " spiritual good. A fearful lock has been put on our " attempts to get the lads under restraint on Sundays " by the Duke of Bedford's systematic withdrawal " of all pecuniary support to schools (Sunday) on " his property. My school is thus situated. The " straw plait is the prevailing work of the girls, and " bonnet sewing of the young women. Straw plait " schools, of which I have two in my parish, draw " away girls from even the early age of 6 or 7. I " have seen from 12 to 15 in the plait schools. No " out-door work is done by girls or women. No gangs " are employed of either sexes, except in early spring " for a short time 10 or 12 boys are under a labourer " for 'twitching.' I believe compulsory education " could never be applicable in my parish. Put the " screw upon the parents and they would at once put " all the boys to plait—aye, even though it pays as " miserably as it does now. As regards night schools, " I began one this winter, although rather late. I " am not in a position to speak therefore with any " confidence as to its in any way advantageously " supplementing the extremely deficient education " (I may say even gross ignorance) I find prevailing " amongst young men, women, and farm boys. If " permitted to see and work here another winter, I " shall begin earlier and probably have two evenings " instead of one for instruction. My predecessors " were here for a very short time, but both of them " found evening schools very unsatisfactory. A " neighbouring clergyman, however, has succeeded " so well, it encourages me to hope for better things. " . . . . All the cottages are the Duke of Bedford's. " Most of them new, and model cottages for room, " for convenience, and cheapness. All have gardens ; " all hire at a low rent as much allotment ground as " they can well manage."

42. Pulloxhill Pop., 703 - Acr., 1,576.

Cultivation mixed. Allotments, 51 acres let in 148 allotments by one landowner at 50*s.* per acre.

42*a.* *Rev. D. Wheeler* says, " A few of our cot- " tages are too confined in their accommodation ; " most of them are built of brick, of modern construc- " tion, and with few exceptions have two or three " bedrooms. Drainage such as is usual in the country. " Water from wells. Ownership, small proprietors. " Rent from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* per week. I should " say that the cottage accommodation in this parish " is upon the whole good."

43. Silsoe - Pop., 713 - Acr., 2,067.

Allotments, 22 acres, let in 86 allotments. Average rent, 72*s.* for very good land. Cultivation mixed.

43*a.* *Mr. H. Trethewy* says, " There are 90 cot- " tages for labourers. Brick and slate or tile ; rooms " vary very much in size ; ventilation and drainage " good. There are five rooms to about six or seven " persons. Ownership, landowner. Rent, 50*s.* to " 3*l.* 10*s.* with small garden."

43*b.* *Mr. Trethewy* told me (G. C.) that on Lady Cowper's estate now they build two, three or four cottages attached to the farm steading, and *let with the farm.* (The farmer having entire control of the cottages.) This supply of cottages he considers necessary as a substitute for the old plan of having a certain number of single men lodging in the farm house, to which there are many obvious objections, and which as a custom is entirely given up. Mr. Trethewy has never known any evil result to the labourer from this arrangement, considers that the horsekeeper, cowkeeper, and shepherd on a farm are or ought to be in the same position as a groom or other domestic servant, and that this cannot be the case where the cottages are not let to the farmer and under his control.

44. Shillington - Pop., 1,788 - Acr., 5,256.

44*a.* *The Rev. J. A. Frere,* says, " The older cot- " tages are built of lath and plaster ; none are now " so built, but with brick, and slated. The ven- " tilation generally not good ; drainage, decidedly " *bad.* I suppose as guardians we have issued from " 20 to 30 summons for nuisances in the last two " years, so I hope things are not so bad as they were. " There is very deficient water supply and a great " want of garden ground ; in a considerable part of " the village proper there is absolutely *none.* The " outhouses (privies) are deficient in number in my " opinion. The cottages belonging to larger land- " owners have good gardens, and a good many of " those run up by builders have small ones." . . . .

" A good many boys are kept from church by " field keeping and also by horse keeping. My own " idea is that in the latter case the difficulty might " be met by sharing the extra work and pay between " two lads where now one is retained for this work, " and giving them the alternate Sunday free."

Two church schools in parish.

45. Westoning - Pop., 800 - Acr., 1,760.

45*a.* *Rev. J. W. C. Campion* says, " Most of the " cottages belong to the landowner and have been " much improved and enlarged. A few belong to " tradesmen ; nearly all have gardens and outhouses. " Rent from 1*s.* to 2*s.* per week.

45*b.* [Note.—The cottages let at 1*s.* are very small and rooms low; let to widows and single couples ; two rooms about 10 by 8 feet and very low on ground floor in the case of one visited by Assistant Commissioner and occupied by a widow. Cottages at 2*s.* good.]

45*c.* [Note.—There is a good school at Westoning drawing children from neighbouring parish of Harlington, where there is no school.]

45*d.* *Mrs. Whittington* (two rooms and two bedrooms). Husband a cowkeeper, gets 11*s.* per week and no piece or extra work except in harvest. Three children ; eldest girl, 14, at home plaiting, earning now about 1*s.* per week, can write very imperfectly ; boy 5 years old at school, for whom she pays 2*d.* per week.

45*e.* *Mrs Elliot.* " Husband has 12*s.* per week " and gets no piece work or extra wage ; occupies a " good cottage, with garden of 20 poles attached."

45*f.* *Mrs. Chance* has a girl 14 at home plaiting, who cannot write, and can only earn 1*s.* a week just now at plait.

45*g.* A boy, twitching, 9 years old, cannot read or write much, was at school up to last Christmas.

Biggleswade Union.

46. Arlesey - Pop., 1,401, increasing - Acr., 2,303.
National mixed school.

46*a.* *Rev. R. F. Scott,* " The cottages as a rule " are good, fair size, and fairly ventilated. Dwelling " room 12 feet square ; back kitchen, 10 feet by " 9 ; two rooms above the same. Average rent, " 4*l.* 10*s.* The drainage of the village is very bad ; " the water supply is now in most parts of the village " fairly good ; there are but few gardens ; about " 25 acres (more or less) are, I believe, let out in " roods to the poor ; a great many of the cottages " are very badly off for outhouses. The ownership " of the cottages at the north end of the village are " in hands of the squire and tradesmen and small " farmers ; at the south end (the most populated), in " the hands of tradespeople and small farmers. I do " not think the tenants are obliged to deal with their " landlord."

46*b.* [Assistant Commissioner's notes.—A great many cottages with one room, some very bad ones. Seven in a row very bad thatched cottages with *one* bedroom. In one of these Joseph Houghton lives with wife and seven children under 13 years of age. No

furniture except two wooden chairs and a small table; four children sitting on floor round a fire, nearly naked, mother with very little poor clothing on; another family of seven in same row, three of children above 15. They pay 1*s.* 6*d.* a week for these cottages, which are about as bad as can be. There are three sets of coprolite works, three brickyards and a cement work at Arlesey, which have caused a great increase of population during the last few years, especially in summer, when many houses are crowded. A good many straw cutters in Arlesey, who buy and cut straw, clean and sell it either at market or to villagers, who buy it for plait; men can earn sometimes 12*s.* to 14*s.* per week as straw cutters. Coprolite employs a good many men, many of whom are strangers; brickyards also employ a good many men, especially in summer. Coprolite works employ some boys leading horses; brickworks also employ some boys. Rents for cottages very high. Land round very good.]

47. Biggleswade - Pop., 4,631 - Acr., 4,310.

Cultivation, arable and market garden. Boys' and girls' National schools and boys' British schools.

47*a.* *Rev. C. G. Douton* says, "The crowded state "of the cottages, a want of thorough good drainage, "and bad ventilation must be excessively injurious to "health; no serious epidemic has as yet broken out "amongst us, but what the consequences would be "should such a case arise it is impossible to say. "The cottages are the property of landowners and "tradesmen, and the rents are from 4*l.* 10*s.* to 6*l.* per "annum."

47*b.* Copy of report presented to Biggleswade Board of Guardians in February 1867 by *Mr. Edwin Blunden.* The report was as follows:—

"GENTLEMEN,

"I HAVE now completed my inspection of the dwelling houses of the town of Biggleswade I have examined 930 houses. Of these I find 670 with good water, 150 with bad water, 109 without any water at all. In the 109 houses without water the inhabitants are either obliged to beg it from their neighbours or get a supply from the pump near the gasworks.

"Where the water is bad, it mostly arises from the closeness of the drains, privies and pigstyes to the wells of the houses. There are 30 houses in Langford Street, near the gasworks, where the wells are impregnated with offensive matter from these works, and which renders the water unfit for drinking or for cooking purposes. The pigstyes are generally very close to the dwelling houses, and the accumulation of manure is usually kept close to the stye. And these necessarily occasion very offensive stench not only to the houses themselves, but to the neighbourhood in which they are situated.

"I found 796 of the houses clean, and 134 were in a very dirty and offensive condition.

"Many of the houses have no back doors to them, and the general run of cottages are very ill ventilated, and a large proportion of them are in a very bad state of repair.

"I found 12 houses in a state totally unfit for habitation; there are many others in a wretched state, although not quite so bad as those specified in the table.

"Ninety-five of the houses were reported to me as being infected with bugs and other noxious vermin.

"As to drainage, I found 85 houses without any drains, and in 197 other houses the drains were most offensive and defective.

"In 110 instances where pigs are kept the pigstyes were in a most filthy state, some of them being in small barns with little or no ventilation, and in these barns there were often box privies in a very offensive state, with very imperfect, if any, drainage.

"I found 205 very offensive privies, and 12 houses without any at all.

"In five houses I found privies actually under bedrooms constantly occupied by persons at night.

"I may say generally the privies attached to the houses of poor persons are in a very filthy state, and many are in such a state of repair as to render them absolutely unfit for use; many as I have before remarked are placed in the small barns in which pigs and wood and straw are kept.

"I found 179 cottages occupied by 851 inmates, and for these only 37 privies are provided. I was told repeatedly that many of these occupiers experienced great personal inconvenience for want of privy accommodation. And in three instances there were no less than 45 persons to one privy, and it frequently happened that they had to watch one another going to and fro that they might get their turn.

"In two instances new wells have been sunk, and many have been emptied and cleansed.

"In my inspection of the houses I inquired the number of inhabitants to each house, the particulars of which I have entered in my report book. I found the dwellings of the labouring classes generally very much overcrowded. Forty-five of the most overcrowded dwellings contained only one bedroom, and these bedrooms were occupied at night by 301 persons. Thirty-nine houses containing five bedrooms were occupied at night by 336 persons. In 18 of the houses with one bedooom, and in 17 houses with two bedrooms, I found men and their wives with adult children of both sexes sleeping in the same room, and in a few cases I found the sons and daughters with their husbands and wives occupying the same bedroom with their parents. I found also widows with adult children of both sexes between the ages of 35 and 16 sleeping in one room.

"In several of the cottages with two bedrooms, the father, mother, and children were huddled into one room, and the other bedroom is let to lodgers.

"The sleeping rooms are generally very small, and frequently without even the ventilation afforded by a fire-place, and I scarcely need add I found them close and very offensive; the most crowded room I found was occupied by 14 persons, and did not afford more than 77 cubic feet for each person. In the houses with one bedroom, before referred to, there are 12 with less than 150 cubic feet to each inmate, and in no instance in these one bedroomed houses does the area amount to 250 cubic feet for each person.

"In the houses with two bedrooms, before referred to, there are eight with less than 150 cubic feet to each inmate, and only eight with 252 cubic feet to each occupant.

"I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,
"Your most obedient servant,
"EDWIN BLUNDEN, Inspector."

47*c.* [NOTE.—A medical officer of the union informed me that the state of the labourers' cottages and nuisances remained as they were when Mr. Blunden reported, and I certainly saw some of the worst and dearest cottages here that I have seen anywhere in Beds; for instance, three or four in Palace Street (whose floors are one foot below the level of the street) let at 5*l.* per annum, one slightly larger in same street lets at 6*l.*—G. C.]

Market Gardens.

47*d.* *Mr. T. J. Hooper* says, "Market gardeners "employ a large number of boys at particular seasons "of the year, dropping potatoes and peeling onions, "&c. Women are also employed in peeling onions. "The gardeners pay highly for their labour at certain "seasons, but give very little employment in "winter."

47*e.* *Mr. Daniels,* Biggleswade, has about 85 acres of market garden; employs very few boys; had four or five yesterday weeding. Does not grow small onions for pickling, those who do employ a lot of women and children peeling; one man at Sandy sometimes has 200 or 300. No boy is much use to us while he's 10. They should go to school, but they won't unless you compel them, and then the parents will go there (pointing to the workhouse)

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47*f*. *Mr. James Odell*, Manor farm, Biggleswade, occupies a market garden; last year had 10½ acres of small onions, which employed about 130 women and children, chiefly adult women, for six weeks from about the middle of July, peeling in sheds. No boys over 12 years of age work with the women, those who do work are generally little boys working with their mothers. All these women and children work together under a foreman. Women can earn about 1*s*. 6*d*. and children 6*d*. per day, the work is done by the piece (by the peck) varying in price according to size of onions; 6*d*. per peck is an average price. Last year could not get women enough. Some market gardeners grow more onions and employ bands of 200 women and children, who go on peeling in some cases for three months. As a regular staff does not employ more boys than an ordinary famer, but has three or four extra boys in potato dropping season.

Average staff per 100 acres of market garden,—

Summer :	12 men.	Winter : 9 men.
	3 boys.	3 boys.
	5 horses.	6 horses.

To cultivate market gardens would require about eight cottages per 100 acres, besides the extra supply of women and children for onion peeling, &c.

Planting out turnips for seed is done by men.

Women are employed to cut tops off larger onions.

Market gardeners pay labourers 12*s*. per week and horsemen 14*s*. a week, with two pints of beer per day in summer and one pint per day in winter, which would add 1*s*. 6*d*. per week in summer and 9*d*. per week in winter to the weekly wage.

47*g*. Wages earned at onion peeling.

1st boy, age 12, "I go onion peeling with my "mother and sister, we sometimes get 4½*d*. a peck; I "can do more nor a peck, mother can do three "peck."

47*h*. 2nd boy, age 12, "I go onion peeling with "mother and the rest of us, we work together, I can "do a peck easy, mother can do four pecks of tidy sized "ones; we get 4½*d*. a peck sometimes."

47*i*. Examined 11 boys caught for me by Mr. Weale on their way home from farm work at Stratton.

All boys between 10 and 13 years. None of them had been at school after 10. Nine of them could read a little. Two could not read at all. None of them knew the name of the Queen. One knew what was meant by the Queen. Eight could spell their own names, three could not. Ten out of the eleven did not know the name of the county they lived in, and none of them knew the chief town in it.

NORTHILL.

48. Northill - Pop., 1,362 - Acr., 4,120.

Cultivation chiefly arable and market gardens.

48*a*. *John Harvey, Esq.*, Ickwell, Bury, says, "Cottages on the whole pretty good, *i.e.*, good in "Ickwell and Northill, but very bad in Caldecote. "Most of the cottages have roods of ground attached. "One large landowner owns part of the cottages, the "rest belong to small owners. Cottage rent varies "from 2*l*. 10*s*. to 7*l*. per annum."

SANDY.

49. Sandy - Population, 2,118 Acr., 4,010.

A good deal of the parish occupied by market gardeners.

49*a*. *Rev. John Richardson*, describing the cottages, says, "Two sitting rooms and two or three bedrooms, "size 10 by 12. Water supply tolerably good. "Very small gardens. Outhouses convenient. All "kinds of owners. Tenants usually deal with land-"owners."

49*b*. *Mr. Charles Pope*, guardian for Sandy, says, "Some of the gardeners employ a large number of "women and children in summer and autumn, from "the end of July to October, in peeling onions; they "also employ a number of boys at other times "dropping potatoes, &c. The best form legislative "interference can take in this district, if it is neces-"sary to interfere, is to prevent the children working "up to 10 and then leave them alone."

49*c*. [NOTE.—At Sandy examined two thatched cottages with one bedroom and sunken floors, near the vicarage; a man and his wife and five children in one of them.]

49*e*. [At Beeston Green, a hamlet of Sandy, examined four lath and plaster and thatched cottages in poor condition with one bedroom in each; largest family in any of these a man, his wife, and five children, eldest a girl of 16. Number in each of the others, two, three, and four persons.]

50. Southill - Pop., 1,391 - Acr., 6,180.

50*a*. 240 cottages for labouring class.

96 allotments of one rood each, let at 48*s*. per acre.

Rent of cottages about 1*s* per week.

Three schools in parish.

Cottages are generally good, and belong to Mr. Whitbread, the chief landowner.

50*b*. The following account of some boys attending school, but who had been at work, was given to the Assistant Commissioner by Mr. Thomas Stothard, schoolmaster.

Table of boys' work.

Boys name.	Present age.	Age when sent to work.	Employment.	No. of hours employed per day.	Payment.
Frederick Wells	9	8	Potato setting - -	6 to 6	2*s*.
Samuel Stacey -	9	7	Stone picking and field keeping.	"	3*s*.
Walter Massey	9	6	Weeding - -	"	2*s*.
Joshua Finch -	8	7	Potato setting - -	"	3*s*.
Isaac Finch -	6	5	Picking twitch - -	"	3*s*.
John Bond -	7	6	Field keeping, on Sundays as well as week days.	"	2*s*.
Wm. Samuels -	7	6	Cow keeping -	"	2*s*.
Charles Hull -	8	6	Potato picking - -	"	2*s*.
Fredk. Button -	9	7	Pig keeping -	"	2*s*.
Wm. Wheatley	9	8	Potato picking and onion peeling.	4 a.m. to 8 p.m.	2*s*.
Charles Huckle	8	7	Field keeping in summer.	"	3*s*.
Charles Crozeley	9	8	" "	"	3*s*.

LUTON UNION.

51. Barton in the Clay - Pop., 956 - Acr., 2,225.

Cultivation mixed.

51*a*. *Rev. A. Blomfield* says of the cottages, "The "cottages as a whole are better than in most villages, "both as to size and garden ground or allotment "added. The oldest cottages are of wood and brick "mixed, and thatched. The new (of which a good "many) brick and slate. Many are let with *the* "*farms* and belong to the manor. Most of the new "cottages belong to tradespeople, who buy small "portions of land and build cottages for investment. "Rent varies according to size of cottage, but in all "cases is moderate."

52. East Hyde - Pop., 420 - Acr., 1,605.

Cultivation mixed.

52*a*. *Lionel Ames, Esq., J.P.*, says of the cottages, "Brick built cottages, slated, rooms about 12 feet by "10 feet. Mostly with living room, scullery, and three "bedrooms. Plenty of water, with gardens, wood-"houses and privies under one roof for each block. "Chiefly in the hands of landowner. Rent varying "from 1*s*. to 2*s*. per week."

53. Woburn Bench of Magistrates, March 6th, 1868.

Present—C. Hervey Smith, Esq., Carlisle S. Parker, Esq., C. P. Stuart, Esq.

"We do not think that legislation is necessary for "the purpose of fixing the age below which boys "(girls are not employed) should be employed in "labour, either to protect them from physical injury "or to secure for them a satisfactory elementary "education. We consider that agricultural labour, as "it is conducted in this neighbourhood, is conducive "to health, and that the education of farm labourers' "children is well attended to. We no not think "there is good ground for limiting the hours of work "of children employed in agriculture. If the Fac-"tory Act's principles are to be applied to children "employed in farm labour we think that school "attendance for four winter months would be much "better suited to such employment than either a half-"day or alternate day system."

54. Bedford Bench of Magistrates, March 28th, 1868.

Present—Col. Higgins, Chairman, Col. Stuart, M.P., Rev. F. C. G. Passy.

"We think that legislation is not required to fix an "age below which boys (girls are not employed in "the district) should not be employed in farm labour "for the sake of protecting them from physical in-"jury, but we think there should be legislative inter-"ference to secure for them a more satisfactory "elementary education, by fixing an age below which "they should not be employed in farm labour, and "we should recommend 9 as the age to be so fixed, "as being more likely to disarm opposition than 10. "We think the hours of labour of children should be "limited to 10 hours exclusive of time allowed for "meals. Of the Factory Act's modes of interference "with children actually at work, we think the 3rd, or "Prints Works Act, plan of demanding a certain "number of hours of school attendance during the "preceding six months the most applicable to farm "labour, substituting twelve for six months."

55. Luton Bench of Magistrates, April 23th 1868.

Present—Lionel Ames, Esq., Rev. H. B. Smyth.

"We think that no boy (girls are not employed in "the district) should be allowed to be employed "under 10 years of age, and we think the hours of "work should be limited to 10 hours, exclusive of "time allowed for meals, in the case of children em-"ployed in farm labour. If there is any legislative "interference for boys employed between 10 and 13, "similar to the provisions of the Factory Acts, we "think the best plan would be to demand a certain "number of hours school attendance during the pre-"ceding twelve months."

56. Woburn Board of Guardians, March 20th 1868.

Present—19 elected Guardians, Mr. J. W. Foll in chair.

Answers to Assistant Commissioner's questions.

"We think the employment in farm labour is good "for boys, and that as far as physical injury is con-"cerned there is no need of fixing an age under "which boys should not be employed, nor do we "think that as far as this union is concerned there is "any good ground for limiting the hours of work of "children; except in hay time and harvest boys are "not, and should not be employed for more than 12 "hours, including 1½ hours for meals. No girls are "employed in agricultural labour in this union. We "do not want any compulsory scheme of education, "but we think no boy should be employed below "10 years of age. We think the half-day and "alternate day system wholly unsuited to employ-"ment in farm labour, and we object to the Print "Works Act provision as interfering unnecessarily "with our employment of boys between 10 and 13, "and with the ability of a parent to support a family "where the elder children are between 10 and 13."

57. The Assistant Commissioner having asked the Woburn Board of Guardians the following questions:—

1st. What is the ordinary farm labourer's wage in Woburn union?

2nd. To what extent is this wage increased by piece work, hay and harvest wages, beer allowance, and any other allowance or extra wage? That is, how much is the nominal wage of say, 11*s.* per week increased throughout the year?

After a very careful discussion and comparison of payments by several members of the board, the following answers were given.

"The ordinary day labourer's wage is 11*s.* per "week. He should earn by piece work at least 2*l.* "in the year beyond the ordinary wage, say, 10*d.* "per week for the year. He should earn by extra "wages in hay time and harvest 52*s.* in the year, "say, 1*s.* per week for the year, and his beer allow-"ance costs the farmer at least 1*s.* a week for the "year. His whole earnings therefore are worth "13*s.* 10*d.* a week throughout the year."

58. Bedford Board of Guardians, March 28th 1868.

Present—Three ex-officio Guardians, 27 elected Guardians, Mr. G. Hurst, Chairman.

1st. Resolved, "That no legislation is necessary "for the sake of protecting boys (women and girls "not employed in the union) employed in farm "labour from physical injury arising from such "employment, and that there is no necessity for "limiting the hours of work of boys so employed."

2nd. Resolved (only one guardian opposing), "That "legislation *is* required for the purpose of fixing the "age below which boys should not be allowed to be "employed in farm labour, for the sake of securing "for them a satisfactory elementary education, and "that 9 years should be the age so fixed, provided "there be no restriction in hay time and harvest."

3rd. Resolved, "That if the Factory Acts princi-"ples be applied to labour in agriculture, attendance "at night schools should be deemed sufficient after "10 years of age."

[Note. The above resolutions are taken from the Assistant Commissioner's note book.]

59. Ampthill Board, April 2nd 1868.

20 Guardians present, Rev. J. W. C. Campion, Chairman.

The board were of opinion that no legislation is required for the purpose of fixing an age below which boys should not be employed in farm labour for the sake of protecting them from *physical injury*, and that there is no good ground for limiting the hours of work for children.

As to education the board resolved as follows:—

Mr. Crouch moves "That legislation is necessary "for fixing the age under which boys should not be "employed in farm labour, in order to secure to them "a satisfactory elementary education, and that such "age should be 10 years."

Seconded by Mr. Eames, and carried by a majority of 9 to 8 votes; Mr. Prentice's amendment "That "the age be fixed at 9 years," being lost.

Mr. Street proposes and Mr. Crouch seconds the resolution, "That this board desires that the Govern-"ment should take measures for the encouragement "of free night schools for boys alone above 10 years "of age; and if that should be done they think no "further legislation would be necessary with respect

Bedfordshire.
Mr. Culley.
f.

"to such boys, *i.e.* boys above 10 years." (Carried *nem. con.*)

60. Biggleswade Board of Guardians, April 22nd, 1868.

25 Guardians present, Charles Barnett, Esq., Chairman.

Resolution, "We do not think that legislative interference is necessary in this union, either to protect children from excessive labour in agriculture or to secure for them better elementary education; but if it is found necessary to legislate for the whole country upon this subject we are of opinion that such interference should be confined to children under 10 years of age, beyond which no interference is considered necessary, but that Government aid ought to be extended to night schools." (Carried *nem con.*)

61. Luton Board of Guardians, May 18th 1868.

15 Guardians present, Mr. C. S. Benning, Chairman.

Resolved that, "We are of opinion that legislation is necessary to secure for children employed in agriculture a satisfactory elementary education; that no children should be so employed under 8, and for six months in the year only between 8 and 10, and that after 10 all legislative interference should cease."

This Board is of opinion that it is undesirable to interfere with the hours of labour of children employed in agriculture.

62. Parish Meeting held at Turvey, April 6, 1868. Present:

Chas. Longuet Higgins, Esq., J.P., Chairman of Bedford Board of Guardians.
The Rev. W. B. Russell, and five other gentlemen.

"The meeting were unanimously of opinion that no boy should be allowed to be employed in farm labour under 10 years of age, chiefly for the sake of securing a better education; that the hours of work for boys should be limited to 10 hours exclusive of time allowed for meals; that Government grants to night schools should be extended to children from 10 years of age, and that a certain attendance at night schools should be required from children earning wages."

Medical Evidence.

63. Extract from a letter to Geo. Culley, Esq., from Mr. H. Veasy, F.R.C.S., M.O. Woburn Union.

"In a physical point of view early field labour conduces to natural growth and general development, by expanding the chest, exercising the muscles, bone, and ligament to their proper use, quickening all vital action with free supply of its best support in pure air; inuring to hardness and the compensatory blessings of ready digestion and sound sleep by constant exposure and moderate fatigue, beyond which nature's sway provides her best restorative. Indeed neither farm men nor boys are unduly tasked in time or degree, though but ill-fed and under paid; whence the main reason for early service, which conducive as it may be to health greatly prejudices moral training and mental culture. Sunday schools in part supply the want, but much of the good derivable from this source, fails for the lack of rudimentary preparation. Greatly then is it to be desired that no lad under 13 should be regularly hired to outdoor work without a schoolmaster's certificate that he can read, write, and do the first rules in arithmetic. Under 10 years no boy should be legally hired, and if agreement could be made compulsory for suitable education during the least occupied season of the year until he attain a certificate, possibly enough might be taught to make him equal for his vocation in husbandry."

64. Memorandum sent to Geo. Culley, Esq.

"B. L. Hawkins, M.R.C.S., a surgeon in practice at Woburn in Bedfordshire, also Poor Law medical officer during the last 9 years for six parishes around, the male inhabitants of which for the most part are engaged in agricultural pursuits. Does not find that the employment of the young in sheep-minding, team-leading, and bird-keeping prejudicial to their health, but on the contrary they come more under the doctor's care when they are withdrawn from out-door work or sent to school. Does not find that boys engaged whilst young on farm and field labour compare unfavourably (in a physical sense) with boys otherwise employed."

65. Mr. C. P. Stevens, surgeon, Biggleswade, M.O. of Union.

"Neither girls nor boys should be employed in agricultural labour under 14 years of age. The hours of labour of boys and girls so employed should not exceed 6 to 8 hours. Proper meal times should be secured by legislation. The distance to which children should go to their work should be fixed according to their age. It is not necessary to provide by legislation that females should be protected from unhealthy or unsuitable employment in agriculture. The defective state of the education of the young found at work is to be attributed to the poverty of the parents, to the indisposition of the parents to forego the weekly sum that may be added to the family earnings by the child's labour, and to the low moral tone of the parents. Deficient cottage accommodation is a cause of this low moral state, and no progress is being made in providing better accommodation."

66. Mr. Thompson, surgeon, Biggleswade District, M.O.

Does not know of any employment in the district in field work injurious to children or women. Does not think the cottages are very bad in Biggleswade. The worst he knows are in Langford.

67. Extract from letter to Geo. Culley, Esq.

Mr. R. Tomson, surgeon, Luton, says, "I cannot speak disparagingly of our agricultural population in a physical point of view, because in that respect they contrast most favourably with our town population, and further the labourers are as a whole longer lived than their employers. I have examined recruits both for the regular army and the militia now some years, and as far as my recollection serves me, it is quite the exception to reject an agriculturist, while the tendency is rather the other way with candidates from the town. Most of the *very old* people amongst the paupers are from the agricultural districts. I think that although a little more animal food might be agreeable, yet, if they were better educated the agricultural labourer would be one of the finest races in the world. It is really lamentable to witness as I have done a most intellectual man carrying off the champion cup for ploughing or other marks of distinction, not able to write his name. But all education must be useless or worse, if some law be not made respecting the homes of the poor. As I think most of our moral feelings are acquired, or at any rate developed by exercise, it is quite impossible to expect chastity or even decency amongst a population where the sexes have been obliged to mix indiscriminately from the date of their birth until the time of their leaving home, and where the privy accommodation is nil or simply disgusting. I have had nearly 22 years experience amongst the poor, and I am satisfied that a wide field is open for future cultivation, politically, morally, and religiously, and that the eyes of the governing classes are only just opening to their duties respecting the poor."

RELIEVING OFFICERS' EVIDENCE.

68. *Mr. Matthews*, relieving officer, Woburn, gave the following evidence:—"Woburn Union, contains "(according to the census of 1861), 11,684 in-"habitants.

"The largest number receiving relief at any one "time during the quarter ending Lady-day 1868, "was 992 persons.

"The smallest number during the same quarter, "was 888 persons.

"Largest number of able-bodied men receiving "relief at any one time during the same quarter, "was 164 men.

"Smallest number of able-bodied men, was 125 men.

"About half the relief goes to Toddington. "Before the commencement of the New Midland "line, the ordinary farm labourer's wage was 10*s.* "per week; in consequence of railway work, the "wage rose to 11*s.*, and there remains; and "if piece work is done, such a price is fixed as to "make it difficult for a man to earn much more than "11*s.*, and so the labourers do not much care about "it. If a man falls out of work on Saturday, he "gets relief by the following Friday: the man "Holmes you spoke of is a bad lot, a sample of "Toddington, he is in the house costing 4*s.* a week "to keep, and his family are receiving 8*s.*, *i.e.* "(6 loaves and 4*s.*) out, so that they are getting 12*s.* "a week, and as he could only earn 11*s.* if he was "out, it is not much wonder that a man like that "finds himself in the house; with bread at its present "price, how families can live on 11*s.* a week, and I "believe there are many get no more, I cannot tell."

69. *Mr. Alfred Self*, relieving officer, Biggleswade, "I beg leave to reply to the questions in yours of "the 17th inst. The state of the cottages in some "cases are defective in not having sufficient sleeping "accommodation, several of them possessing only "two rooms, one living and one sleeping room which "is common to the whole family. The state of "education is not in a flourishing condition, but still "is not behind other localities in the county; the "parents as a rule would be willing to send their "children to school regularly up to 10 years of age, "but on account of the smallness of wages and the "uncertainty of work they are quite unable to do so.

"Not having any working in gangs here, the "field work does not prove at all injurious to the "health of the children. The ordinary rate of "wages for an able-bodied labourer is now 11*s.* "per week.

"Considering the amount of idle time that the "young people have in this neighbourhood, and the "slight authority their parents possess over them, "the morality of the district may be considered not "at all below the average."

LUTON UNION.

70. *Mr. C. Maffey*, relieving officer, says,

	Population.
"There are no schools in Studham	882.
" " or Whipsnade	195.

"In my district the cottages are worst in Houghton "Regis, and they are very bad there."

71. *Mr. D. G. Gilbie*, relieving officer, says,

	Population.
"There are no schools in Barton	956.
" " in Streatley	241.
" " in Sundon	438.

"In my district the cottages are worst in Sundon."

70*a*. Earnings of a family, as given by Mr. C. Maffey.

				Per week. s.	d.
Charles Hull, farm labourer,	age 53,	earns		12	0
Mary Hull, wife of Charles	" 42	"		1	6
Frederick Hull, son -	" 13	"		4	0
John Hull, son -	" 7	"		3	0
Ann Hull, daughter -	" 5	"		0	0
Albert Hull, son -	" 3	"		0	0
Total earnings of family -				20	6

71*a*. Earnings of a family, as given by Mr. D. G. Gilbie.

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			Per week. s.	d.
Joseph Mooring, farm labourer,	age 42,	earns	11	0
Jane Mooring, wife of Joseph	" 39	"	1	0
Levi Mooring, son (straw plaiter)	15	"	1	6
Albert Mooring " "	11	"	1	0
Matilda Mooring, daughter "	9	"	1	0
Mary Mooring " "	6	"	0	0
Margaret Mooring " "	4	"	0	0
Total earnings of family -			15	6

(NOTE.—If straw plait was good, the latter family would earn from 20*s.* to 25*s.*—G. C.)

SCHOOL TEACHERS' EVIDENCE.

71. *Miss S. E. Ridley*, Husborne Crawley School.

Average attendance,—

Boys under 10 - -	28	29
" between 10 and 13 -	1	
Girls under 10 - - -	31	38
" between 10 and 13 -	7	

"I consider that if children over 10 years of age "were allowed to attend school during the winter "months it would be sufficient, and far preferable to "their attending alternate days or half days. A "child at 10, if he has attended school regularly, "ought to be able to read well, write with correct "spelling, and do the first four rules of arithmetic. "As this school was only opened in October 1867, "the winter average can only be given, and out of "the 73 children on the books only 13 could write "(even their letters), and but eight work a simple "sum."

72. *Mr. John Assbee*, Woburn British Boys' School. Seven years teacher; 5½ years at Woburn.

"At what age do the children of agricultural "labourers begin to attend your school?—At 6 "years and 10 months.

"At what age do they usually leave?—10 years.

"To what is the bad attendance of these children "to be attributed?—

"*a.* To the poverty of the parents? or,

"*b.* To the indifference of parents?—

"To both."

"I often think laziness and thoughtlessness are the "real sources of the evil. Frequently a child is "kept at home to perform some trifling act, or fetch "some errand, which could just as well be done out "of school hours, had the parent any desire for the "education of the child. Sometimes the child is "assisting in work which could not be performed in "his leisure hours, or he is employed for a few "weeks by another person. A child of 10 years of "age, of average ability, if kept regularly at school "from infancy, would be able to read and write "easily, and work the four first rules of arithmetic. "The whole of this question depends upon the regu-"larity of attendance and proper infant teaching; "without supplying these, the law forbidding em-"ployment will not have the desired effect. The "reason so few children at 10 can come up to the "standard above mentioned is chiefly the irregu-"larity of their attendance, and almost entire igno-"rance at 7. This ignorance is, I dare say, the "result of irregularity at infant school. To the "question, 'Supposing a boy at 10 could read and "'write easily, and work the first four rules of arith-"'metic, what amount of teaching would be required "'between 10 and 13 to keep up (not increase) that "'knowledge?' I answer, 'Either five consecutive "months (say winter months) or afternoons (two "'hours a day), or two days per week.' If a lad "remains absent seven months at one time, he "requires longer to keep up his education, because "he forgets so quickly, whereas if he came in the "afternoons he would never forget. I do not think

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"evening school alone would be sufficient, nor is it "desirable to fill an evening school with such young "scholars. In cases where many agricultural scho- "lars attend, their presence for five winter months "and absence seven summer months would necessi- "tate changes in the staff of a school."

73. *Miss Keen*, St. John's School, Sheeplane, Potsgrove.

"A child of ordinary ability at 10 years of age "would, after attending school from the time that it "was 5 or 6 years of age, be able to read, write, and "use the four first rules of arithmetic with facility, "if that child's attendance had been very regular. "Six months attendance at school between the age "of 10 and 13 would be sufficient to keep up this "amount of education for a child who had been "well taught during the five years' regular attendance "at school."

74. *Miss Hinkin*, Bromham, certificated mistress. (School not under Government.)

"I think at 10 an ordinary child should be able to "read, write easily, and do elementary arithmetic. "I doubt their being able to do so at 9. After 10 "I think attendance during four winter months "would be sufficient to keep up this elementary "education. Boys from 8 come irregularly when "out of work. Some girls come half days, those "who are lace-making, and one or two families who "are plaiting. All children attend this school, and "all Wesleyans in the parish attend church, and "many attend church communion."

75. Cardington School. *Mr. William Mortimer.* Has been master here for 12 years.

"Farm labourers' children generally leave school "between 8 and 9 years of age, and the attendance "after 7 is very irregular. I feel certain that after "a regular attendance from, say 5 to 10, night schools "if fairly attended would be sufficient to keep up the "elementary education gained at 10, *i.e.* reading, "writing, and ciphering."

76. Melchbourne School. *Mr. E. M. Peake*, teacher.

"Our school attendance is very good. All children "in the parish above 4 and under 8 are at school. "The children are generally withdrawn at 9 years "of age, especially boys. If a boy attended school "regularly from 4 to 10 it would not take much "attendance betwen 10 and 13 to keep up the ele- "mentary education obtained at 10—say night and "Sunday schools combined, or better, one day per "week or even half a day per week at school through- "out the year. I would consider the half-day per "week better than night school two days per week."

77. *Miss Eastland*, certificated mistress, National School, Renhold.

"If children attended school regularly up to 10, and "then attended school for four months during the three "following years, there would be no danger of their "losing the power of reading and writing and using "the first four rules of arithmetic."

78. Riseley School. Nathaniel Baxter, 11 years teacher.

"Children withdrawn on an average at 8½ years, "boys for farm labour, girls for lacemaking, if they "began school attendance at 3 and attended regularly "to 10, very little school attendance would be neces- "sary between 10 and 13 to keep up reading, writing, "and arithmetic, say half a day per week or two days "a week at night school. Sunday school alone would "not be sufficient."

79. Turvey. *Mr. Ellis*, 15 years teacher and now retired.

"If a boy went to school at 6 and remained till 10 "he would be able to read and write easily and do "ordinary arithmetic, and this knowledge might be "maintained by regular attendance at night schools."

80. *Mr. Frederick Workman*, certificated teacher, Westoning School.

"I think that an ordinary child of 10 years old "who had been kept regularly at school would be "able to read, write, and work the first four "rules in arithmetic *well*, and that from 10 to 13 "regular attendance at an evening school would keep "up this amount of knowledge.

81. Arlesey National School. *Joseph Allison*, master, certificated teacher. Has been master of this school four years.

"If a child attended regularly up to 10 from 3 years "he or she would be able to read and write and use "the first four rules of arithmetic easily, and between "that age and 13 this state of education would be "kept up by half-time (which, however, could scarcely "be worked with these children), or by 5 winter "months' attendance. I don't think that Sunday and "night school would answer in this parish, as boys "and girls are employed in winter evenings in "cutting straw for plait; even under any circum- "stances I don't think night schools would answer the "purpose."

82. *Miss M. J. Rossiter*, certificated teacher, girls' National School, Biggleswade, five years pupil teacher, six years mistress at Biggleswade.

1. At what age are the girls (*daughters of agricultural labourers*) usually withdrawn from school, and for what purpose?—From 8 years to 11 years, few staying over 11. The attendance is very *irregular* after 8 years of age. The girls are withdrawn for plaiting, field work, and nursing.

If one of these girls were to attend school *regularly* from 4 to 10 years of age, would she be able to read, write, and use the first four rules of arithmetic with facility?—Yes.

What amount of attendance at school between 10 and 13 years of age would enable a girl to keep up the elementary education obtained at 10?—Three mornings weekly.

83. *Mr. George Hogger*, certificated teacher, eight years master of Biggleswade boys' National School.

1. At what age are the children of agricultural labourers usually withdrawn from your school?—From the age of 8 or 9 the attendance is very irregular: at 11 or 12 the children are withdrawn altogether.

If a boy attended school regularly from 4 years of age up to 10 years of age, would he be able to read, write, and use the first four rules of arithmetic with facility?—Yes.

Supposing that a boy could read, write, and use the first four rules of arithmetic with facility at 10 years of age, what amount of attendance at school would be required between 10 and 13 to keep up this attainment?—At least four mornings in the week.

84. Biggleswade boys' British School. *Walter Browning*, master. Has been master for nine years.

"Boys usually withdrawn before 10. Out of 150 "children 100 belong to agricultural labouring class. "If a boy began his attendance at 5, and attended "school regularly up to 10, he would be able to pass "in Standard 3 of the Revised Code. I hardly think "four winter months' attendance would do, better "alternate days or weeks throughout the year (har- "vest excepted); many boys attend my school for "three winter months between 10 and 13. Boys "attend very irregularly after 6 or 7 years of age. "They go out for a month in spring, potato dropping "and field keeping, at 7 years. Later in the year "they go to onion peeling. I was pupil teacher at "Croydon before coming here, and I find the children "here very much more difficult to teach and much "slower than the children in the neighbourhood of "Croydon. This difference of aptitude to learn has

" struck me very forcibly. A good many labourers " in the town do not send their children to school at " all after they leave the infant school. Many children are sent to plait schools. The parents do not " care about their children learning. I am afraid it " would put a serious burden upon many parents if " attendance was made compulsory up to 10. Even " well-disposed parents seem obliged to withdraw " their children from school at 8 or 9."

85. Houghton Regis National School; *Mrs. Tomkins*, nine years teacher.

" Our children come at 3 years of age; their attendance becomes irregular at 8. If children would " attend regularly to 10, they would be able to read " and write very easily, and do first four rules of " arithmetic. Between 10 and 13 years of age three " days a week of school attendance would be desirable " to keep up this amount of education. Even two " days a week would be better than four winter " months."

86. *Mr. Thomas Stothard*, certificated teacher; teacher for 15 years, five years at Southill.

" Boys of agricultural labouring class I believe " might read moderately well at the age of 10, assuming them to be in regular attendance from 5 years " old to 10. Mental capacity in this class excessively " low, home influence being rather against than for " morality. After 10 years, assuming regular attendance from 5 to 10, school attendance during the " winter months of November, December, January, " and February would, with the aid offered by night " school teaching, not only keep up but advance the " education already received."

Allotment System in Beds.

87. Woburn Union Allotment System.

Parish.	Population.	Acreage.	Allotments and gardens between 10 and 40 poles. Allotments.	Gardens.	Total allotments and gardens between 10 and 40 poles.	Total acreage of allotments and gardens between 10 and 40 poles. A. R. P.	Average rent per pole. d.	Total number and acreage of gardens and allotments of the poor under five acres in Woburn Union. A. R. P.	
*Apsley Guise	1,435	1,936	—	7	7	1 1 20	—	1 1 20	7 gardens and allotments up to 5 acres.
Battlesden -	143	1,123	26	—	26	3 1 0	4	3 1 0	26 "
Chalgrave -	961	2,130	9	—	9	1 1 0	6	15 0 20	18 "
*Eversholt -	885	2,119	120	19	139	21 3 4	4	21 3 4	139 "
Harlington -	529	1,815	50	60	110	10 0 38	4	10 0 38	110 "
Hockliffe -	416	1,000	47	17	64	5 1 36	5	5 1 36	64
Hulcote -	71	880	None.		See Salford.			None.	None.
Husborne Crawley.	535	1,520	65	56	121	14 1 33	4	14 1 3	121
Milton Bryant	345	1,480	46	—	46	5 3 0	4	5 3 0	46
Potsgrove -	298	1,385	40	—	40	7 0 0	4	7 0 0	40
Ridgmont -	1,029	2,248	110	—	110	15 0 0	4	15 0 0	110
Salford -	264	900	32	—	32	7 1 0	—	11 3 0	42
Tilsworth -	348	1,510			None.			None.	None.
Tingrith	226	946	50	—	50	9 3 9	3	9 3 9	50
* Toddington	2,433	5,390	about 120	—	120	? 30 0 0	4	133 0 0	197
Woburn -	1,764	3,200	78	38	116	14 3 38	5¼	14 3 8	116
Totals -	11,682	29,603	793	197	990	147 2 18	4¼	258 3 30	1,096 gardens and allotments under 5 acres.

* The returns from these parishes are as accurately given as the information obtained by the Assistant Commissioner will allow, the returns from the other 13 parishes he believes to be strictly accurate.

The principal providers of allotments in the Woburn Union are,—

The Duke of Bedford, who provides	337	allotments of	20 poles or upwards.	
Major Cooper - "	120	"	"	
Rev. J. Clegg - "	77	"	"	
Miss Trevor - "	50	"	"	
Rev. J. S. Neumann "	47	"	10 poles or upwards.	
Lady Inglis - "	46	"	20 "	
Proprietors of Salford "	42	"	"	
Rev. J. M. Hamilton "	18	"	"	

There may be other proprietors of allotments whose names should have appeared in this list, but the Assistant Commissioner was unable to ascertain them. This is probably the case in Eversholt, one of the chief proprietors being absent at the time the returns were made.

The Duke of Bedford's Allotments.

88. The allotments on the Duke of Bedford's estate, which number for Bedfordshire about 1,250, are from 20 to 30 poles, 20 being the ordinary and most approved number, being considered sufficient for a regularly employed farm labourer; the rents vary from 4*d.* to 5¼*d.* per pole, the landlord paying all rates and taxes. Occupiers of allotments on this estate are not allowed to hire allotments from anyone else, a rule very consistent with the position that the quantity allowed is sufficient for the purpose intended.

The parishes for which this estate provides allotments are—

Woburn.	Potsgrove.
Ampthill.	Ridgmont.
Crawley.	Steppingley.
Eversholt.	Cople.
Houghton Conquest.	Knotting.
Lidlington.	Souldrop.
Marston.	Oakley.
Maulden.	Willington.
Millbrook.	

Bedfordshire.

Mr. Culley.

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Wrest Estate.

89. Lady Cowper lets 949 allotments at rents varying from 4*d.* to 7½*d.* a pole (rent in case of allotments, always includes rates and taxes as paid by landowner). The rule of the estate is to allow 40 poles to each cottager; there are however a number of larger allotments in Flitton, which were originally let at a time when the parish became so pauperised that farms could not be let. The effect of dividing a large farm into allotments in this case was very materially to diminish the poor rate. The parishes provided with allotments by the Wrest estate are—

Silsoe.	Lower Gravenhurst.
Clophill.	Harrold.
Flitton.	Carlton.
Pulloxhill.	Blunham.
Upper Gravenhurst.	

Mr. Henry Trethewy, agent for the Wrest estate, read a very able paper on "The allotment system, its "uses and abuses," at the Central Farmers' Club in November 1858, and the opinions he held then are the opinions he holds now (as Mr. Trethewy assured the assistant commissioner), after the experience of many years in the management of estates upon which the allotment system largely prevails. It is difficult to make extracts from this ably arranged paper without destroying to a certain extent its force, but the following extracts illustrate the points in Mr. Trethewy's argument:—

"It cannot be denied that much of the success of "the farmer depends upon the class of labourers he "may have about him, whether steady, industrious, "and skilful, or otherwise. . . . . Any system, "therefore, having a tendency to elevate the moral "character of the labourer and to improve his con-"dition must be worthy of encouragement. . . . . "A desire for the occupation of land is inherent in "the human mind. . . . . Almost every man, what-"ever may be his pursuit in life, attaches himself "more or less to the soil. He feels that he possesses "in his garden or paddock at least one spot which "he can call his own, and where he can indulge his "own peculiar taste. No wonder, then, that the "labourer, whose very existence is identified with "vegetable life, should participate in this feeling. "No wonder that while the greatest portion of his "time is devoted to the cultivation of the crops of "his employer, he should aspire to the occupation of "a small area for himself, independently of its value "and convenience to him. And when we consider "how influential this feeling often is, in diverting "his attention from places and objects having a ten-"dency to demoralization, surely it is the duty of "every one interested in his well-being, so far as is "consistent, to promote his wishes. How many "hours which might otherwise be passed in the ale-"house may thus be spent in profitable occupation? "But here it is possible I may be met by an objec-"tion, which I have sometimes heard made, that if "the labourer does his duty to his employer during "the day he can have little desire to work after-"wards. In other words, that he employs that "strength and exertion on his own land which of "right belong to the farmer who pays him for his "day's work. To this I would reply, that if the "day's work is done (and I apprehend no employer "would keep on a man who habitually failed in doing "it), to restrain him from devoting his leisure hours "to his own pursuits, would be to reduce a labourer "to the lowest degree of serfdom. . . . . In Bed-"fordshire allotments were laid out on the estates of "the Duke of Bedford and Earl de Grey in the year "1829. In that year it appears that on the former "estate in the parish of Maulden, 18 acres were "divided into parcels of from 20 to 40 poles each; "while on the latter estate, in the same year, 30 "acres were set out in parcels of from 1 rood to 2 "roods each. Other proprietors soon afterwards "followed these examples, until garden allotments "became very general. I would, however, here "observe, and I beg particular attention to the "remark, that it is not my opinion that allotments "are suited to all districts; and that it does not "follow that because they answer in one locality, "that they will succeed in another. . . . . I would "merely observe that where labourers live in vil-"lages, as in the midland counties, the system would "be more practicable than in those districts where "they more generally reside on the farms they work "upon. . . . . My experience convinces me that a "rood is sufficient under almost any circumstances; "and the greatest error that has been committed "has been the allotting too much land to one indi-"vidual. To dwell upon the evils arising from such "a proceeding is scarcely necessary, as it must be "obvious that without sufficient capital the occu-"pation of land cannot be attended with profitable "results. Some instances in confirmation of this "view have come under my own observation, and I "can confidently assert that instead of the position "of such men being improved, it has retrograded. "Occupied nearly the whole of their time upon their "own land, they can no longer be classed under the "head of labourers, and they actually injure regular "workmen by throwing their labour into the market "at seasons of the year when the demand for it is "unusually depressed. . . . Every employer knows, "and every man of common sense must feel, that it "is as important to the farmer to have his regular "men at work at all times, as it is to the manufac-"turer or tradesman, and that the business of the "farm could not be carried on without such regu-"larity. I regard it, then, as a fatal error for the "labourer to follow any pursuit that would at all "interfere with the claim of his employer upon him, "for, be it remembered, that it is upon *hired* labour "that the working man must chiefly depend for his "subsistence, and any scheme that has a tendency "to interfere with this, his chief capital, must very "shortly end in disappointment and distress; but "any plan that can be devised which will improve "his condition, without interfering with his free "labour, must be hailed as a great boon. Such, I "believe, the allotment system, properly managed, to "be. . . . . The chief abuse of the system consists "in giving the labourer more land than he can "manage consistently with his usual occupation. "Every scheme must be kept within due bounds. "Every system must have a limit. To extend the "allotment system beyond its legitimate bounds "would have the effect of completely changing its "character, and turning that which was intended to "be an auxiliary into a leading pursuit."

90. On Lord St. John's estate the custom is to allow 40 poles to each cottager as conveniently placed as possible, and at a moderate rent.

Dynevor Estate.

91. The following statement of the allotment on the estates of Lord Dynevor's trustees in the three parishes of Bromham, Stagsden, and Biddenham was sent to the Assistant Commissioner by Mr. Golding, of Biddenham, agent for the estates.

Acreage of the three parishes - - -	6,651
Population of three parishes	1,719
Number of cottages - - - -	225
Number of allotments averaging 40 poles	304

These allotments are in addition to a garden of from 15 to 40 poles attached to each cottage belonging to the estate.

Mr. Golding says, "In addition to the home "garden each cottager has an allotment of about "40 poles, for which he pays about the same rent as "the farmers are charged for their occupation. I "consider these allotments most beneficial in helping "the parents of large families to bring them up "respectively, and they have proved a great pre-"ventative to crime. In the event of the occupiers "being convicted before a bench of magistrates they "forfeit their allotment. We have had but here and

" there a case of forfeiture: the men would suffer " anything rather than forfeit their allotments."

92. *Mr. S. Bailey*, Southill, agent to Mr. Whitbread, said, " Mr. Whitbread gives each cottager an allot- " ment of 40 poles (in one or two cases the 40 poles " are divided between two old men); he lets 95 such " allotmonts at the rate of 48*s.* per acre in Southill " parish, and there are 20 cottages with gardens of " 40 poles attached. This is the custom in all " parishes that Mr. Whitbread has property. Mr. " Whitbread always builds a pigsty as part of the " offices of a cottage, and I consider it a great ad- " vantage to a cottager who has an allotment to " keep a pig."

93. *Mr. G. Harris*, occupier, Battlesden, says, " I " consider the allotment system a great accommoda- " tion to the poor."

94. *Mr. J. Foll*, Harlington, occupier, and Vice-chairman of Woburn Board of Guardians, considers, " An allotment of 20 or 30 poles a great blessing to " a labouring man, keeping him out of the beershops, " and giving him an occupation during the summer " evenings. 20 or 30 poles is as much as a man can " work by spade husbandry in his over hours; I " think 20 poles better than 30."

95. *Mr. Gostling*, occupier, Oakley, and agent for estates in which there are 300 allotments in Leicestershire, said, " I think no labourer, being a regular " farm labourer, should have more than 20 or 30 poles " of allotment ground; if he has it takes away from " the labour which his master has a right to expect; " some farmers will not employ a man who has more " than 20 or 30 poles."

96. *Mr. Prew*, occupier, Sharnbrook, said, " The " allotments here are from 1 rood to 7 or 8 acres, " and one mile from the village, and I believe do " positive harm; no farm labourer ought to have more " than 40 poles, and that near his cottage; I think 40 " poles near the cottage a very good arrangement."

97. *Mr. Pedder*, carter and hawker, Silsoe, has now 4 acres of allotment, formerly occupied only one of 40 poles in Silsoe, " The last year I had the " 40 pole allotment I grew on 20 poles of it 5 bushels " of wheat, on the other 20 poles I grew onions " and potatoes, and that year the gross value of " the produce of my 40 poles would be about 3*l.*" This was on very good land for which he paid 17*s.* rent for 40 poles, leaving therefore 43*s.* as payment for labour due on the allotment; and, therefore, if this labour was all done in extra hours, adding 43*s.* to his yearly earnings.

STRAW PLAITING.

98. Copy of Memorandum by Rev. Joseph Simpson, Tilsworth, April 22nd, 1868.

" The children begin straw plaiting at 4 years " old; if they do not begin young they never " make good plaiters. It is the general practice " for parents to keep their children indoors all " the day at straw plaiting. Children are at straw " plaiting schools about seven hours in the day, and are " generally employed at home about three or four " hours besides, if they have not done the number of " yards set by their parents. At some plait schools " each child gives to book learning three or four minutes " each day, or as much time as is taken up in reading " five or six verses of the New Testament; but at most " plait schools there is no reading whatever. The " position of the body adopted by straw plaiters " for convenience and expediting their work cannot " be conducive to health. A bundle of straw is " placed under the left armpit from which three or four " straws are taken, and placed in the mouth to be " moistened by the saliva; the fingers being all the " time engaged in plaiting, the head is bent forward " each time a new straw is required, which recurs " constantly as the straws are only a few inches in " length, thus a stooping habit is acquired from the " constant bending of the head and cramped position " of the left arm, to say nothing of the injury done " by the constant habit of holding dyed straws in " the mouth. The children often have sore lips, and " then no doubt suffer from the abstraction of saliva " sufficient to moisten many yards of plait per day. " It was formerly the custom to moisten the straw " with water, but the saliva is considered by the " dealers to give it a better appearance, and hence " the present filthy custom. Straw plait carried out " in moderation is a great source of benefit to the " district, inasmuch as it keeps away poverty, but " as at present conducted in the case of children " sadly needs restriction."

99. *Rev. A. Blomfield*, of Barton in the Clay, says, " The girls who plait sometimes separate themselves " from their own families and lodge with other " families. They have very little regard for their " parents; there is little or no feeling of modesty " amongst these girls."

100. *Mr. D. G. Gilbie*, relieving officer, Luton. says, " Plait has been bad, and we have had a terrible " winter; the men, a good many of them, make the " women keep them when plait is good. Scores of " men sell bonnets, plaits, and block hats, and won't " go out to farm work. They have no shame about " applying for relief, and a great many get relief who " don't deserve it."

101. *Mr. T. E. Austin*, clerk of board of guardians, Luton, said, " The men in many rural parishes of the " union will not work in farm labour except in summer, " and content themselves by being supported by the " women and children."

102. *Mr. C. Austin*, clerk of magistrates, Luton, said, " The girls soon become independent of their " parents, and go and lodge in Luton or elsewhere and " leave their parents. The morals of the girls in the " rural parishes is much worse than in Luton itself."

103. *Rev. Frederick Hose*, Dunstable, says, " The " girls who work here for the most part work at " the better class of bonnet sewing, and work in the " manufactories, where very good order is kept, and " there is no such thing as open vice in the town, and " I attribute this to their working in good airy rooms " under proper control, rather than within close " houses or lodgings; their conduct contrasts favour- " ably with the conduct of the girls either in Luton, " where they work principally in their own houses or " lodgings, or in the neighbouring rural villages, " where in summer they walk about the lanes to " plait."

104. *Mr. J. Crouch*, Ridgmont, on this subject, said, " The immorality of the girls here is very great, and " and I attribute it to the plait and lace work, which " is not in its nature an employment sufficient to keep " them out of mischief; in districts where I have " lived where women were employed in farm labour " the feeling of chastity was much stronger than here, " and I attribute the difference to the more wholesome " work."

105. *Rev. A. Baillie Hamilton*, of Ridgmont, also bore strong testimony to the want of chastity amongst the plait girls.

106. *Mr. Henry Whichello*, guardian for Linslade, Leighton, says, " The daughters of farm labourers are " generally employed in plaiting; the sons partly in " plaiting and partly in farm work. In consequence " of the early age (5 or 6 years) at which the children " are usually sent to the plaiting schools they have " no chance of going to any other schools, and conse- " quently grow up without any education. The " plaiting schools, as a rule, are held in a room of a " cottage, and are very much crowded, much to the " injury of their health. The rate of wages may be " taken at 11*s.* per week, and as a child at 12 years " (if sent to a plaiting school at the above age) can " earn 2*s.* 6*d.* a week, it is a great temptation for the " parents to keep them from any other school. As

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"regards their morals I do not think it is much "affected by the plait trade, but the poverty of their "parents has, in my opinion, much more to do with "the want of chastity so prevalent than the plait "trade. It is a not uncommon occurrence for the "whole family to sleep in one room—grown up sons "and daughters. At our last meeting we had the "case incidentally mentioned of a family of ten, "including a daughter with an illegitimate child, all "sleeping in one room."

107. *Rev. J. Clegg*, in speaking of the state of Toddington, says, "The state of pauperism is due to "the straw plait, and I think it would be very unfair "to expect the landowners to bear the burden of "remedying evils caused by straw plaiting."

108. *Mrs. Marsden*, Toddington. Cannot read. Has 15 children who come to her house to plait, 13 girls and two boys. "Plait is so bad I don't believe they "can earn a penny when their straws and schooling "is paid for. They pay me 2½*d.* per week. They "come at 9 some on 'em and stay while 12, then they "come at 1 and stay while 4, and come again at 6 and "stay while 9, some on 'em."

109. *Mrs. Randell*, Toddington, has 23 children plaiting; should get 2*d.* per week each; last week only got "4*d.* for the lot, the parents is so poor." "I don't care, I don't, how soon these schools is "stopped, they can keep me then and I can't keep "myself now." Room, 12 ft. square and low, has had "may be 40 in it when plait was good."

110. *Mrs. Kirby* of Maulden has a plait school, 20 girls between 4 and 14; has had 30 in a room about 14 ft. by 7 ft. and 8 ft. high. "The best "of these girls can plait 1½ score (*i.e.*, 30 yards) per "day, and her plait just now is only worth 2*d.* per "score, and when the straws are paid for and the "schooling (2*d.* per week) there's nothing left."

111. *Joseph King*, Houghton Regis, has a plait school, 13 ft. by 13 ft. 30 children in school between 5 and 11 years. Best can make about 22 yards per day in 5 hours, sold at 4*d.* or 5*d.* per score; straws cost from 1½*d.* to 2*d.* per score.

112. *Mrs. Poulton*, Houghton Regis, has a plait school, about 13 ft. by 8 ft., but about 8½ ft. high. 32 children between 6 and 14 years, who work 5 hours a day with her, and finish their tasks at home if they are not done when they leave her; children pay 2*d.* each per week. The quantity of plait to be done is set by parents, not by her. Most of these children had been either at National or British school.

113. *Mrs. Mooring*, Houghton Regis. A plait school about 10 ft. square and 6½ ft. high. 26 children between 5 and 8 years at work.

114. *Mrs. Warner*, Biggleswade, Palace Street, has a plait school in a tolerably airy large room has 14 children between 6 and 12 at work. Children come at 8½ a.m. and stay till 5½ p.m., or 6 if they have not done their task.

Lace Making.—Lace Schools.

115. *Mrs. Sarah Mitchell*, Oakley, has a lace school. Four girls between 8 and 12, and eight girls under 8. Elder girls pay her 3*d.* a week, little ones 2*d.* Elder girls work at the pillow from 8 a.m. till 5 p.m., and then read two or three verses out of the Bible: "I "can't learn 'em much, I can't read much myself, but "I do the best I can."

116. *Mrs. Buttering*, Turvey, has a lace school, 10 girls from 7 years upwards. Girls work from 7 a.m. till 6 p.m., with one hour's interval for dinner.

117. *Mrs. Howe*, Turvey, has a lace school. 22 girls at work at present; has 32 when she's full; youngest girl 7, average age 11. They work from 7 a.m. till 12 noon, and from 1 p.m. till 5 p.m., or till they finish their task, sometimes 7 or 8 p.m.

118. *Mrs. Neal*, Risely, has had a lace school for 8 years. 10 children at work at present. "Girls can "learn lace making almost at any age, easily at 10, "though not quite so quick as if they came earlier."

119. *Mrs. Hart*, Thurleigh, used to have a lace school of 15, and will have again in summer. Girls between 8 and 16 all pay 3*d.* per week. School hours from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., with one hour for dinner.

"They had'nt ought to begin while they're 9 years "old, but their parents can't afford to keep 'em and "pay their schooling; I have a little one in her 8 "(*i.e.*, 7 years old). I can't send her to school, and "she's been learning at her pillow two years; my girl "of 13 works from 7 till 7, with an hour for dinner." Mrs. Hart has two girls of 16 and 13, neither of whom can write, and were never at school, except Sunday school, after they were 6 years old.

Benefit Clubs.

120. *Mr. Chas. Howard*, of Biddeham, on "Benefit "Societies in Rural Districts."

Mr. Chas. Howard read a very interesting paper on the above subject at a meeting of the Central Farmers' Club (see Journal, November 1867), in which he says, "I find in our small county (Bedford-"shire), and I believe it is only a sample of the "rest, that there are 260 clubs (public house benefit "clubs), or nearly two to a parish." Farther on in his paper Mr. Howard says, "In a discussion in the "House of Lords it was stated *that the Registrar-"General could not satisfy himself of the soundness "of 20 out of 25,000 societies.* If such be the case "legislation will not be commenced too soon. The "permanent success of a friendly society, upon the "principle that union is strength and the many can "help the few, depends on the number of its mem-"bers. If a society be few in numbers, it is clear "that when a large proportion have to throw them-"selves upon the funds, as is invariably the case "when the members become advanced in life, the "failure of that club is inevitable; especially so is "it when the sickness pay is out of proportion to "the monthly payments. Those present who happen "to be members of boards of guardians can bear "testimony to the many pitiful cases which come "before them, of men who have subscribed for 30 "and even 40 years to a club, and after all the club "has failed, and in their time of need have had to "throw themselves upon parish bounty. From a "recent return I find that *there are nearly* 4,000 "*paupers in union workhouses* who have been "members of friendly societies which have been "dissolved or broken up. I confess, after giving the "subject some consideration, that I shall prefer to "see the government grapple with the question of "friendly societies, either by the post office or some "other agency. Until, however, such is the case, "and as it may be years about it, I incline to the "principle of county or district associations."

Public House Benefit Clubs.

121. Copy of letter from J. H. Simpson, Esq., to Geo. Culley, Esq.

Dear Sir, Tilsworth, May 5th, 1868.

I think the only way to prevent great distress among the older members of benefit societies during the next 10 years, would be for the legislature to interfere and pass an act which shall place the benefit societies on a footing with ordinary joint stock companies, compelling the present members to provide a substitute to undertake their liability before they are released from their obligations, and so prevent the young men deserting in a body, and thus leaving the old men to provide for themselves.

This would avert the threatened calamity for 20 or 30 years, but as the members died off the club would be weakened. It is a great evil which requires adjusting. The Odd Fellows club is all the fashion among the young men now, they seeing the evils of a public house club, which divides the money annually.

There is a club at *Totternhoe* held at the Bell Inn, which I believe follows the practice of supplying the members present with beer according to the full number in the club books.

One night about two years ago I heard a great "row" going on, and upon inquiring the cause I was told by the landlady that it was the "club," which it seems had been in weak numbers that night in consequence of several being "up in the hay "country," *i.e.*, near London, haymaking, and the half dozen that were there had all the beer to themselves, of which last they took good care to inform the neighbourhood.

Believe me to be
Yours truly,
J. H. SIMPSON.

To George Culley, Esq.,
Assistant Commissioner of
Children's Employment Commission.

122. Cases of Thos. Holland and William Piggott, of Tilsworth, as stated to the Assistant Commissioner.

122*a*. Thomas Holland joined the King's Arms Club at Hockliffe, which inn was then kept by a Mr. Hakford, who removed to the White Horse, and the club also removed their place of meeting to there, but subsequently returned to the King's Arms, which was and is now kept by a Mr. Inwards. He (*i.e.*, Holland) joined it in the year 1816; he was one of the original members, being the eighth that joined, and was always regular and punctual in his monthly payments of 1*s.* 6*d.* There were as many as 130 members in the club at one time, and a year before it was broken up there were between 80 and 90 in it; but about that time there were some of the original members who, having arrived at the age of three score and ten, were unable to earn their livelihood as formerly, and were expecting to reap the fruits of their lifelong savings, when the younger members complained, some of them even going so far as to shamelessly avow that "they were not going to 'help "'keep' an old man," and 40 of them left at one time. This was a blow that the club never recovered, and it was accordingly dissolved some months afterwards, each member receiving the sum of 5*s.* at the dissolution. One of the original rules was that each member upon attaining the age of 60 was to be in receipt of 3*s.* 6*d.* per week during his life, but Holland, who in common with several others consented to an alteration of the rule to the effect that 70 should be the age instead of 60, and 2*s.* 6*d.* the weekly receipt instead of 3*s.* 6*d.*, enjoyed the benefit of his self-denial but a short time after he attained the age of 70, the society having been dissolved. The expenditure was most reckless, for in addition to the annual dinner on Whit Monday, which cost on an average but little short of 30*l.*, it was the custom for a pint of beer per member (according to the number in the club, not of those present only) to be drawn, and if only half were present (which often happened) they would have double allowance. Thus the sum of 1*l.* 7*s.*.8*d.* per month was expended for the *sole* benefit of the landlord. At one time they had as much as 700*l.* in a bank at Bedford, and this was alleged by the younger and more reckless as a reason for keeping up the expenditure caused by eating and drinking, and when an old member ventured to remonstrate, he was assailed with such epithets as "hog," "beast," &c. This I have been told by one whose word I can rely upon. The rules of the society appear to be good (with the exception of Rule XII.), but they were habitually disregarded, and to such an extent was the breach of them carried, that to prevent the public scandal of a club funeral, the stewards *only* were allowed to go latterly. On looking at the rules, especial attention should be directed to Rule XII., which gives the landlord a power over the surplus money, and as an instance of the care and prudence with which he fulfilled his trust, it is only needful to refer to a circumstance which took place some years ago when the club was held at the White Horse. One day the box was missing. It was at last found in one of the landlord's fields, and the money (16*l.* 16*s.* and some pence) taken out of it, but only one of the papers was stolen, and that was a document signed by the landlord, in which he had undertaken to be responsible for any loss happening to the club funds upon its removal from the King's Arms. Holland is now in the receipt of 2*s.* 6*d.* per week and a loaf of bread from the parish, and is bordering on destitution. His is a hard case, for it is rarely that a *more deserving* man has met with a harder fate; he is one universally respected by all who know him.

122*b*. *Case of William Piggott.*

Belongs to the Union Benefit Society, held at the Five Bells Inn, Standbridge, and has been regular in his monthly payment of 1*s.* 6*d.* during the 37 years he has belonged to the club. He will be 73 years of age this next June, and being unable to work has been in the receipt of 4*s.* per week, in accordance with Rule 5.

A few weeks ago the weekly payment was stopped, and Piggott had to apply to the magistrates at Leighton for a summons calling upon the officers to hand over to him the arrears, *which has been done*, and now the younger members are complaining because they will have no surplus money to divide under Rule 22 as heretofore, for the purpose of spending in drink, &c., which of course cannot be done when aged and infirm members have to be supported. They are accordingly moving to alter the rule so in fact cut off the old members from obtaining assistance, in other words trying to divert the club from its original purpose and deprive the aged members of the relief and provision they have been making a lifelong effort to obtain, and all to please a few drunken dissolute fellows and a rapacious landlord.

If this club had not had such an unjust rule as Rule 22, it would have been worth nearly 700*l.* now, instead 80*l.* or 90*l.*, *i.e.*, 1*l.* per member.

Piggott is a very tidy respectable man, and has been so all his life.

123. King's Arms, Hockliffe, Friendly Society, begun January 1, 1816.

Rule III. . . . . "A member to have one pint of "ale on payment of one or more months."

Rule XII. (referred to in Thomas Holland's case). "The money belonging to this society shall (as soon "as the stock will admit and convenience serve) be "placed in the Bank of England or to interest on "some approved security, the remainder to be kept "by the landlord to pay sick members with, he being "responsible."

Rule XIII. "There shall be an annual feast, which "shall be held on Whit Monday, at which feast each "and every member shall pay or cause to be paid the "sum of 2*s.* 6*d.*, whether present or not, except in "cases of sickness or lameness."

124. The White Swan Friendly Society, Hockliffe, has no such rules as those quoted, III. and XII. of the King's Arms club, and instead of Rule XIII. of the King's Arms club Rule 28 of the White Swan club says that at the annual feast each member, *whether present or not*, shall pay 1*s.* 6*d.*, except in case of sickness, &c.

The rules of this club are not certified by Mr. Tidd Pratt.

125. The White Horse, Hockliffe, Union Friendly Society. The rules of this club are certified by Mr. Tidd Pratt. Rule 19 says, "A dinner shall be pro-"vided, and every member *that dines* shall pay "1*s.* 6*d.*"

Note.—(Hockliffe contains 416 inhabitants according to the census of 1861.)

126. United Tradesmen's Benefit Society, held at "White Bear," Woburn. Established June 21, 1852.

		s.	*d.*
Entrance fee at 18	- -	2	6
„ „ 25	- -	5	0
„ „ 30		7	6
„ (limit) 35		10	0

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Members having paid 12 months' subscription entitled to 10*s.* per week for 26 weeks, and 5*s.* per week for remainder of year if sickness continue. No member receiving relief for 12 months can receive any more relief till he has been off the books 12 months.

Rule 9. "On the death of a member 5*l.* to be paid "towards his funeral expenses, each member of the "club paying 1*s.* to box for that purpose. Upon the "death of a member's wife 3*l.* to be paid towards her "funeral, and all members to subscribe 6*d.* towards "box."

Rule 18. "If the steward whose duty it is to visit "the sick members at least once a week should fail to "do so, he will be fined 2*s.* 6*d.* or excluded. The "money allowed to the steward to be spent at the "club house."

The rules of the above club *not* certified by Mr. Tidd Pratt.

127. Goldington.—The Assistant Commissioner was shown the rules of a public house benefit club by one of its members. That club has been broken up twice from want of funds during its existence of 30 years, but has not been in difficulty since 1850.

128. Tingrith Friendly Society, held at the schoolroom at Tingrith, and extending its operations to the parishes of Tingrith, Eversholt, Westoning, Milton, and Henlington Wood End, had on the 31st December 1867 198 members, and a balance in favour of the society of 1,443*l.* This club had at one time 29 honorary members, now diminished to 19; and a great part of the trouble of working the club has fallen to the share of the rector of Tingrith, who is honorary secretary. From the remarks made by himself on the margin of the copy of rules sent to the Assistant Commissioner by the honorary secretary, it is evident that too much reliance has been placed on the donations or subscriptions of honorary members, and that in this club, where the rules are very much better than in the ordinary benefit clubs, they are not so good as to satisfy the secretary that the club could do without aid from honorary members. Rule 43 provides for a triennial examination of the engagements and position of the society by "competent persons," meaning, no doubt, an actuary or professional accountant. To this rule the secretary's note is, "This has "never been done, because an actuary once applied "to demanded only 10*l.*!!" This society therefore, having double the number of members of the usual village benefit club and managed on a much sounder basis, cannot afford an audit by a "competent "person."

129. Inquiry into the state of the dwellings of the rural labourers, 1864.

Dr. Hunter's report, page 146:—

"In the small county of Bedford 150 cottages were "visited. Of these 94 had but one bedroom;". . . . specimens of the worst being taken from Cockayne Hatley; Wrestlingworth, Eyeworth, Dunton, Sutton, Biggleswade, in Biggleswade Union; Houghton Regis, in Luton Union; Tilsworth, in Woburn; Eggington, Leighton Buzzard, in Leighton Union. Further on in his report Dr. Hunter describes Wrestlingworth as the village in which he found cottages of the meanest description. He mentions Potton, Cockayne, Hatley, and Dunton as very bad. Of Eyeworth he says, "At Eyeworth there is more "comfort and decency, and there are gardens to "nearly all (the cottages;) but this state is artificial, "the place belongs to one owner, and many men who "belong to and work in Eyeworth are obliged to "live in Dunton and the wretched Wrestlingworth."

The Right Hon. C. P. Villiers having received Dr. Hunter's report, wrote to ask Mr. Robert Weale, then Poor Law Inspector for the district including these villages, whether from his knowledge of the localities he could confirm Dr. Hunter's statement. Mr. R. Weale then writes on the 6th of May, generally confirming Dr. Hunter's statement with regard to the villages mentioned by him, and more especially with regard to Potton and Sutton. As to the causes of overcrowding in cottages in the Biggleswade district, Mr. Weale says, "A considerable portion of the land "in the Biggleswade Union is now cultivated as "garden ground, and this kind of cultivation is "yearly extending. Very much more labour is required on the land in consequence of this mode of "culture; and as dwelling-houses have not increased "in proportion to the increased labour required, "great difficulty is experienced by the labourers in "finding house accommodation. The straw-plaiting "is also extensively carried on in the neighbourhood, "and as this is a profitable employment for young "women, and one that gives them the command of "their own time, very few of this class will go out to "domestic service; and this again increases not only "the overcrowding of the houses, but the demoralizing practice of mixing up the sexes in the "way referred to by Dr. Hunter."

"Mr. Weale informed the Assistant Commissioner "at the state of the villages referred to is now very much what it was in May 1865, the date of his letter to Mr. Villiers. Coprolite works and brick fields may be added to the causes given by Mr. Weale for the overcrowding and use of bad cottages in the neighbourhood of Biggleswade.

130. *Mr. Graham*, superintendent of police and deputy chief constable, thinks the people might make much greater efforts to educate their children; are not nearly so alive to the benefit of education as in his native county, Cumberland. Does not know any cases where children suffer from severe work in agriculture, except that boys are employed too young in driving carts.

131. Extract from Report of Governor of Bedford County Gaol, dated Michaelmas 1867.

Out of 565 committals,—

6 read and write well.
162 read and write imperfectly.
160 read only.
257 neither read nor write.

132. Copy of letter from John Harvey, Esq., Chairman of Quarter Sessions, to George Culley, Esq., Assistant Commissioner.

20, Eaton Place,
March 9th, 1868.

My dear Sir,

I think I may say that the agricultural gang system, either public or private, has no existence in the county of Bedford.

Your questions I see exclude haytime and harvest.

The only approach to the system is, that in the spring a man will hire some bean dibbing by the acre; he then has three or four little children, generally his own, and I think always from the same parish, to put the seed into the holes he makes.

When grass is about to be laid for hay a man will have 10 or 12 children for a couple of days to pick up the stones. But this is only in the case (save in Bedfordshire, I am sorry to say) where the grass has been manured or dressed with earth.

In the garden grounds of Sandy and Biggleswade women are sometimes employed in onion picking; but as this is generally done in the barn and under cover, I imagine it hardly comes under the name of field labour. The reason why women are employed so little in the fields, I have no doubt, is their custom of making straw plait. Little boys are chiefly employed, and prevented from attending school by, 1st, "field keeping;" 2nd, driving carts and ploughs. With regard to the best method of combining instruction of boys in agricultural districts with the equally necessary habit of field labour, I have never seen any suggestion so good as that of my friend Mr. Baker, of Hardwicke Court, Gloucestershire, or rather that of Sir J. K. Shuttleworth, which Mr. Baker recommends. Mr. Baker, in a letter to the editor of the *Gloucestershire Chronicle*, says,—

"The second point is one of more general interest, "namely, the education of the lower classes. Much "as we dislike the term 'compulsory education,'

" most people feel that it is desirable to compel " parents to do justice to their children, as it is the " object of all law to compel every man to do justice " to his neighbour. Yet the means of doing so ap- " peared almost hopeless. To fine a poor man because " he tried to get another shilling a week for his " family by sending his boy to plough instead of to " school—and to enforce the payment of such a fine " —would be beyond the strength of mind of magis- " trates or local boards, or the endurance of the " public. Moreover, under such compulsion, a parent " would be most likely to hate the school, and the " child would readily adopt the father's view, and " learn as unwillingly and as little as possible.

" Sir James Kay Shuttleworth, however, suggested " a means of gaining the object, yet avoiding the " evil. He proposed simply to fine any person who " employed a child who had not got a certificate. " Examinations should be held once or twice a year " at every school. A boy might, if very clever, " pass his *first* examination at 9 years old. If he " did so it would enable him to be employed for " wages three days in the week, working in school " for the other three. If he could not pass this " examination at 9 years old he would be let " through more easily at 10; and at 11 he " might work his half-time even if he did not know " his letters. These are important and wise points. " The half-time system is most valuable in accus- " toming boys early to hard labour, and yet con- " tinuing some schooling to a later age, when the " child is better able to profit by it. At the same " time, it would never do to keep a stupid boy at " school so late that he will never make a hard-work- " ing labourer." And I earnestly hope some such suggestion may become law.

As to the question of cottage accommodation for the poor, it is one in which I feel so strongly, that I am almost afraid of expressing my opinions. I am convinced that till the labourer has a decent habitation you may try to teach him decency in other things in vain. It is the most frightful evil of the whole of the social condition of Great Britain. There is not adequate accommodation for the labourer in any county, in any town, in any district in England. How can you expect girls to be uncontaminated who have to sleep in the same room with grown up brothers, or worse, with their father and mother? Can a man be expected to keep away from the beer-shop when his cottage is what it too often is? But the practical difficulty of providing a remedy is enormous. Cottages, unless at exorbitant rents, will not pay, and till the Union Chargeability Act, 28 & 29 Vict. cap. 79, cottages were actually pulled down to save the rates.

I am very doubtful as to the working of that Act, and I think that every parish should be charged to the union rate in proportion to the number of labourers it *ought* to employ according to its acreage, *i.e.*, where any parish did not contain sufficient cottages for the number of labourers sufficient for its acreage under cultivation. I would double all the *union* or *common* charges on that parish until sufficient accommodation was provided.

I remain, dear Sir,
Yours very truly,
(Signed) JOHN HARVEY.

133. *Col. Gilpin, M.P.*, in answer to questions proposed by Assistant Commissioners,—

" I should say 10 years of age should be the limit " under which boys should not be employed in farm " labour, chiefly for the sake of education; and I " would suggest a limit of 10 hours for the work of " boys so employed. I think the half-day system " quite out of the question in agricultural labour. If " children are employed under 10 years of age, I should " like to see them sent to school three days a week. " I attribute the neglected state of education of the " young not to want schools, nor to the inefficient " mode of instruction in such schools in our country, " nor to the poverty of the parents, but to the indis- " position of the parents to forego the weekly sum " that may be added to the family earnings by the " children's labour. On this side of Bedfordshire, " when the plait trade is brisk, the earnings of the " children are considerable."

134. *Major W. C. Cooper*, Toddington, March 10, 1868, in answer to questions by Assistant Commissioner,—

1.—Is legislation required for the purpose of fixing the age below which boys should not be allowed to be employed in farm labour?
1st. To protect them from physical injury.
2nd. To secure for them a satisfactory elementary education.

In reference to Toddington and the vicinity I do not think legislation necessary. Boys at an early age are seldom employed at hard work. Young boys are employed at seed and harvest times "bird keeping," an occupation requiring but little exertion. As regards elementary education, the difficulty here is with the parents of children, who seem in most instances careless on the subject; being perfectly ignorant themselves, they cannot see the advantages of it. The practice of the families here is to keep the children at "straw-plaiting" as long as possible, thereby adding to the weekly gains, and this militates against their attendance at schools. The children when 3 or 4 years old are sent to "plaiting schools," where 20 or 30 may be seen sitting on forms in rows in close confined rooms, with bad ventilation, and the parents pay a small sum weekly for the tuition, which soon becomes a source of profit. The wages of farm labourers hereabouts vary from 9*s.* to 12*s.* per week, and this may in part account for the parents' apathy as regards education, for when the plait trade is bad the wages are not sufficient to maintain a large family, and to pay for education under these circumstances would be impossible under the present school system. An adult school for teaching girls domestic duties would be a great boon, but unfortunately none exists. The population of Toddington is nearly 2,500. The town is well situated and fortunately very healthy. The population is of the poorer class, and the cottages bad. The cottages mostly belong to small proprietors, and there are more than are required for the native population in consequence. The outcasts from surrounding villages readily obtain refuge, and any addition to the number of such dwellings would only increase the evil. The parish was enclosed at the beginning of the present century, and small allotments were made to those having the right of common, and hence the number of small tenement proprietors. The poor rates are very high. There are two National schools, the Church of England and the Wesleyan; both are well conducted.

W. C. COOPER.

Toddington Manor,
March 10, 1868.

135. *C. P. Stuart, Esq., J.P.*, Woburn Sands. Opinions on employment and education of children in agriculture.

Is legislation required for the purpose of fixing the age below which boys should not be allowed to be employed in farm labour?—So far as health is concerned, I do not think it is. Farm operations differ very materially from factory labour. Factory labour requires nimble fingers, but not necessarily strength of hand. Farm labour, from its nature, requires the use of the hand and some muscular exertion. In general I should say that such farm work as a child could do could not be injurious to its health.

Is there good ground for limiting the work of boys or girls?—Where I have resided, principally in the neighbourhood of Slough, I have never seen young girls at work. I have occasionally seen them

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in the hayfield and at harvest time. I do not know, as far as health is concerned, of any reason for limiting the hours of work. I have only seen young boys employed as bird minders, but certainly boys over 10 years of age are generally employed in various departments of farming. On the whole I should be disposed to say that as far as health was concerned no legislation was required.

I have been informed that young women going out hop picking and pea picking rarely escape demoralization.

As to the second series of questions, I believe there are more children receiving education now than at any previous period, but boys are usually sent out to work a year or two earlier than girls. In the neighbourhood of Slough and in my present neighbourhood there was no want of schools, and here they seem very well attended. I do not know the amount of education among the children, but certainly a large portion of adults cannot write their names. The school fees are generally small, but I think if the parents can get work for the children they would rather have them employed in earning their bread than learning to read and write.

I am of opinion that the poor generally speaking prefer paying some trifle towards the education of the children.

Compulsory education and compulsory rating have been advocated lately by many eminent men. It might be possible to get a compulsory rate, but that would press hard upon those who, as in this neighbourhood, already pay rates of 3*s.* or 4*s.* in the pound. Such a rate would put an end to charity in that direction, and consequently one would have to inquire into the present cost of the schools. I think a 6*d.* rate would be required in this parish. I am of opinion that such an arrangement would be bad in several ways. In one way at least I think it would. At present many of the gentry take great interest in the matter, but I think if it were made a forced contribution they would cease to do so. In the next place, the burden is usually borne to a large extent by the gentry, whereas in the case of a compulsory rate it would at first, without special legislation, come from the farmer. I believe too any such rating, unless it were union rating, would be more unequal than the poor rate. There are parishes were there are only 50 or 60 people. If a good school has to be kept up in such small parishes, the cost would be large. As to compulsory education, I do not see how that could be enforced without an enormous force of police. I have not got the figures before, but I think the police do not exceed one in a thousand of the population, and such a force is considered ample for all ordinary purposes; but to go and inspect cottages and drive the children to school would require some such army as Prussia maintains, amounting, I believe, to 20 or 30 per thousand. Of course the schoolmaster might have a register of all the children, and the parents might be summoned and fined if they did not send their children; but such a register would occasion a necessity for an additional officer in every parish. Again, how could fines be enforced in the case of illness? and admitting that a medical certificate would do to answer a charge, who is to pay for such certificate? Again, if there were some unruly boys or girls, would it be in the power of the master or manager of the schools to dismiss them as now? In that case, where the parents objected to education, the boys have only to be exceedingly troublesome, and it could not be enforced. It must be remembered that severe punishments, such as are inflicted on gentlemen's sons, cannot be inflicted on the children of the poor without a great outcry.

In conclusion, I would say that a limitation of the age below which boys should not be allowed to earn their bread would be desirable so far as scholastic education is concerned, but on no other ground; but I know far too little upon the subject to set a high value on my own opinion, particularly if opposed by others.

As to gangs, I do not know of any, but I have heard of one in the neighbourhood.

Compulsory education I consider could not be enforced. Compulsory rating might be, but it would not be desirable in my opinion.

136. Copy of letter from Capt. Polhill Turner to Geo. Culley, Esq., Assistant Commissioner.

SIR Howbury Hall, March 31, 1868.

RESPECTING the inquiries you are instructed to make, I can only state broadly, that I think no child should be employed in agricultural work under 10. That agriculture is a most healthy occupation, and neither boys nor girls are in these parts, nor in the agricultural district generally, overworked.

In this district, female labour is not much used; lace making and straw plaiting being very general. I think I may state that ample time is allowed for meals. In this parish we have an excellent and well attended school.

As to cottage accommodation, the subject has been much discussed at our diocesan conferences, &c., and the result seems to be that landlords should be assisted by Government in a manner similar to drainage works. That no lodgers should be allowed, and that a rigid inspection should be made periodically.

I think the circumstances of agricultural life so very different to the manufacturing that the Factory Acts would hardly apply, but I am not fully acquainted with the provisions of the Acts.

I am, dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,
F. C. POLHILL TURNER.

137. John S. Crawley, Esq., landowner and occupier, J.P., Luton, in answer to Commissioners' questions.

Question.—"Is legislation required for the purpose "of fixing the age below which boys should not be "allowed to be employed in farm labour, either to "protect them from physical injury or to secure for "them a satisfactory elementary education?"

Answer.—"Not in my opinion, as before 10 years "of age they have not sufficient strength to be of "any use. In this district the majority of children "are sent to school, the staple trade (straw plaiting "and bonnet sewing) enabling their parents to do "so. I don't think there is good ground for limit-"ing the hours of work of children employed in "agriculture."

138. Copy of letter from James Howard, Esq., of Bedford, to George Culley, Esq., Assistant Commissioner.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE given some thought to the subject upon which we had an interview, viz., elementary education. The following points have suggested themselves to my mind, and as you expressed a wish to hear from me on the question, I have put my views in as brief a form as I know how.

I contend for a comprehensive scheme of national education, the schools to be *subsidized* partly from the national treasury, and partly from local taxation, the local tax to be paid jointly by the owner and occupier.

That all schools be placed under the present Committee of Council on Education, which I think should be styled "The Board of Education."

That the country be divided into educational districts, which districts could be subdivided as occasion might require.

That an Educational Board be appointed for each district, charged with the management of the schools, including the appointment of masters and mistresses, and other duties to be defined.

That any acts of the local board should be subject to a reference to the central board.

That the local boards should be required and empowered to provide proper and adequate school accommodation in parishes and places *where such does not exist.*

That in the event of the local boards failing to provide the necessary schools and accommodation, the central board shall cause such to be provided; the expenses to come jointly out of the local or district rate and the national treasury.

That the local boards be elected by the several parishes in the same manner as is adopted in the election of the Poor Law Guardians; that all Justices of the Peace residing in the educational district shall be ex-officio members of the local board.

That the local boards shall appoint for each school or parish "school visitors," whose duty it shall be to report to the local board any improvements or alterations which they may deem desirable. The visitors may be selected from members of the local board, or from the clergy, ministers, or other residents in the parish, or from any adjoining parish. Ladies should be also invited to act as visitors of girls' schools.

In a parish or place where sufficient school accommodation already exists, such parish or place should be exempted from the general school rate of the district, and if such schools are supported without Government aid, although they may have received a grant toward the building, then such schools shall be exempt from the authority or government of the local board.

That local boards should be empowered to negotiate with and, subject to the approval of the national board, conclude the purchase of any existing school within their district, whether belonging to private individuals or otherwise possessed.

That in the appointment of teachers to the existing denominational schools, the teachers shall belong to the same church or denomination as the schools to which they are appointed.

That the local board shall, subject to an appeal to the national board, determine the curriculum of the schools, except so far as relates to religious instructions.

That the reading and reciting of Holy Scripture be the sole religious instruction, except as hereafter provided.

That a portion or portions of Holy Scripture be read and prayers offered at the commencement of the school and at its close.

That in order that no distinction should be drawn by the State between the various religious bodies, all parents shall be required, when making application for their children to enter a school, to fill up a form of application in which it shall be set forth whether they desire that their child be instructed in the religious teaching of the school beyond the reading of the Scriptures; and to meet the case of secularists, the same form shall contain a column in which the parent can signify his wish that his child shall not receive any religious teaching, nor attend prayers, or be required to be present during the reading of the scriptures.

The above provision I conceive would meet the difficulties of Churchmen, Wesleyans, Baptists, Roman Catholics, Jews, and Secularists; all would have the same liberty, and this whatsoever school their children might be about to enter.

I am opposed to compulsory education, because I believe in a free country like England it could not be enforced. I believe if children were not permitted to engage in agricultural labour until 10 years of age, the object would be secured, and there would be no need of any compulsory measure.

In some of the states of America the attempts to enforce education broke down. I may be told that in Prussia the result of the compulsory system is satisfactory. My answer is, that what is quite possible under Imperialism is, I believe, altogether impossible under a Constitutional form of Government like that of England.

I am, dear Sir,
Yours very truly,
JAMES HOWARD.

Bedford, April 9, 1868.
To George Culley, Esq.

139. Copy of letter from Rev. W. H. Bond to George Culley, Government Assistant Commissioner.

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DEAR SIR, Goldington, April 7, 1868.

THERE has been a day school for the education of the children of the poor in this parish for upwards of 60 years, and at Michaelmas 1865 the new schools were opened, and the children transferred to them. The parents have many of them availed themselves of the opportunity of sending their children to the day school, whilst others, either from ignorance on their part or from indifference rather than from poverty, have allowed their children to grow up in an untaught state; and I have noticed this to be the case in other parishes in which I have been placed. The defective state of education amongst the children of the poor, where opportunities have been at hand, must be attributed in my opinion in a great degree to the ignorance and low moral tone of many of the parents. As I have stated, some parents amongst the poor struggle against difficulties, and keep their children at school as long as they feel able to do so; and in this village, where fewer children are put down to the lace pillow than in many others, as they prefer becoming domestic servants, I have noticed that the girls remain at school to a much older age than the boys. We lose the boys before they are 9 years of age, often at a much earlier age. I am convinced that legislation is necessary to fix the age below which a boy should not be allowed to be employed in farm labour. If this be not done, the majority of parents would, as now, send their children to work at too early an age. I think, too, that the limit should be 10 years, under which none ought to be employed; and I am of opinion that it would act as a stimulus to the parents in sending their children regularly to school, if it were also enacted that children should not be allowed to be employed even at 10 years, unless it could be shown that the boy had attained a certain amount of knowledge in reading, writing, and arithmetic. This could easily be ascertained.

I do not know if it is necessary to limit the hours of labour. In this district boys are employed with the men from 6 to 6, except in winter, having an hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner.

It is only by direct legislation upon the subject of the education of the children of the agricultural poor, and their employment in agricultural labour, that any real good can be hoped to be arrived at.

The poverty of some parents, the ignorance and indifference of others, and the unwillingness to lose the child's small earnings on the part of others, and the unwillingness on the part of the farmers, who as a body are opposed to the education of the poor, would be found to operate most seriously against any and every attempt to educate the children of the poor, however young the age might be fixed below which the child should not be employed; and it is this consideration which brings me to the conclusion that any plan to be efficacious must be compulsory. The welfare of the community at large requires this, as well as the interests of the children. If it be left optional on the part of parents whether their children shall be sufficiently educated or not, a few would be found to prefer a sufficient education for their children, and would be ready to sacrifice a good deal to obtain it for their children; but the majority of them would be indifferent, and leave their children to grow up in ignorance. If education were compulsory it would relieve managers of schools from some difficulties, for they find in their efforts to induce parents to send their children to school, that the parents have a notion that the managers have some interest apart from the good of their children in wishing the children to be sent to school. If education were compulsory this question would be set right.

When I stated that this village had its day school for the education of the children of the poor for more than 60 years, it must be remembered that the mode of instruction in those early days was different from

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what it is at this day, but still some good was done by it.

Believe me to remain,
Yours truly,
W. H. Bond.

140. Signing with a mark as a test of ignorance.

From the table showing the proportional number of men and women that signed the marriage register with marks in the counties of England and Wales, it appears that for every one hundred marriages the

	Men.	Women.
Average for England was in 1865	22·5	31·2
Proportion for Bedfordshire was	35·0	43·8

Comparing the returns for the years 1855 and 1865, whereas the average improvement for England is for men, 7 per cent., for women, 10 per cent. For Bedfordshire it is, for men, 9 per cent.; for women, 12 per cent. If the sign by mark of the marriage register therefore be a test of want of education, the improvement in Beds was greater than the average improvement in England between the years 1855 and 1865, but the amount of ignorance is much greater in Beds than in the average of England; in fact, measured by this test it stands third in the list of English counties, putting the most ignorant first. As in the average of England, so in Beds; more persons sign the register with a mark in the rural than in the districts containing Parliamentary boroughs. As between men and women—

In England in 1855, nearly 12 per cent. more women than men signed with a mark; in 1865 this difference had fallen to under 9 per cent.

In Bedfordshire in 1855, barely 9 per cent. more women than men signed with a mark; in 1865 the difference was under 6 per cent. in a county where girls are employed at a very early age in straw plaiting and lacemaking.

Illegitimate Births :—

Per-centage in England	6·2
„ „ „ in Bedfordshire	7·8

In Beds Unions :—

In Bedford Union -	6·2
In Leighton Buzzard -	6·5
In Ampthill - -	7·0
In Biggleswade - -	8·3
In Luton - -	9·3
In Woburn - - -	10·0

Poor's Rate return.

During the year ending Lady Day 1868 the charges for the two items of in-maintenance and out relief were :—

In the Woburn Union,—2*s.* 2¼*d.* in the pound on the rateable value, and at the rate of 9*s.* 3*d.* per head for the whole population of the union.

In the Bedford Union,—1*s.* 4½*d.* in the pound on the rateable value, and at the rate of 6*s.* 10*d.* per head for the whole population of the union.

In Biggleswade Union,—1*s.* 7½*d.* in the pound on the rateable value, and at the rate of 8*s.* 1*d.* per head for the whole population of the union.

GENERAL EVIDENCE FROM BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

Buckinghamshire.

Mr. Culley.

Nos. 1 to 87 in the Evidence contain the Answers given in the Commissioners' Circulars to the Question III. 37, asking for a Description of the Cottages; and such other Evidence as is peculiar to each Parish; they contain also Evidence as to the Wages and Earnings of Labourers, and the Evidence given by the Labouring Class themselves.

Aylesbury Union.

1. Aston-Abbots, population, 1861, 311; acreage, 2,180.

1*a.* The *Rev. J. Thornton* says of the cottages, "The cottages in this village may be considered generally as model dwellings, rooms of fair size, 11 ft. square, well ventilated, lighted, and drained, with two lower rooms, and two or three upper rooms and pantry; most of the *groups* have a brick oven, pig-styes, and out-buildings, and *many* of them, and *all* of Lord Overstone's have ¼ acre of land."

Ownership.—24 cottages belong to Lord Overstone, five to Sir Anthony de Rothschild, 12 to Messrs. J. and P. Roads, farmers; five to Mr. John Gates, cattle dealer; and a few to other proprietors, but all are free from any stipulation as to dealings. The average rent for cottage and land jointly (¼ acre) is 2*s.* per week.

1*b.* *State of Education.*—Mr. Thornton told the Assistant Commissioner that he could not find a man who could read to make parish clerk, that he was teaching a man to read under promise of making him clerk if he could read in three months.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. John Beasley, Land Agent, to Geo. Culley, Esq., Assistant Commissioner.

Dear Sir, 27th May 1868.

Eight of the cottages you saw at Aston-Abbots cost 800*l.*, including every expense of sinking wells, fencing, &c. The whole of the others cost 150*l.* each, they are let with 40 poles of land at 2*s.* per week, and the occupiers are all tenants of Lord Overstone. They hold them under agreement, and are weekly tenants. In this parish Lord Overstone has 24 cottages, and is the owner of about 1,200 acres of land. In the adjoining parish of Wing, in which Lord Overstone is a large landowner, there are only 12 cottages belonging to his lordship.

The greater number of the cottages belong to small proprietors, and the village is in a bad state.

I am, dear Sir,
Your obedient servant,
J. Beasley.

2. Aston Clinton, population, 1,108; acreage, 3,640; cultivation, mixed.

For description of cottages, see Mr. James's evidence in Halton.

2*a.* *Sir Anthony de Rothschild* thinks that "if by legislative interference more children are induced to attend schools, such increased demand for school accommodation and teaching should not be expected from the present voluntary aid, but should be accompanied by a compulsory rate." Note.—(Lady de Rothschild has a girls' school, frequented by children from several parishes round).

2*b.* *Rev. C. W. W. Eyton* informed the Assistant Commissioner that many more public houses had been opened since Sir A. de Rothschild employed more labour; men earning 15*s.* a week give their wives so much, and spend the rest in drink.

2*c.* *Mr. Ambrose L. Taylor*, land steward of the rate of wages says, "At Aston Clinton we pay 14 men of the lowest class of labourers we employ 2*s.* 2*d.* per day, *i.e.* 13*s.* per week.

"Men trenching have 14*s.* per week. Drainers "earn on an average 15*s.* per week in piece work. "I know about 18 men who can earn 18*s.* per week "draining, but I never knew them earn more, the "price allowed for such work is too low to allow them "to earn more."

The following are examples of earnings of men taken from Mr. Taylor's labour book by the Assistant Commissioner:—

Thomas Stockford, 14*s.* per week for 48 weeks.
24*s.* „ for 4 weeks (harvest).
Average per week for year, 14*s.* 9¼*d.*, nearly.

James Morris and Chas. Green, two other examples, traced by the Assistant Commissioner, had 14*s.* throughout the year, except in harvest, when they were allowed to seek work elsewhere, and during which they would probably earn as much as Stockford, *i.e.* about 24*s.* per week for four weeks.

Mr. Taylor continued, "Some men will take their "wages on Saturday night, give you no warning, and "go off somewhere else to work on Monday; we pay "about the same wages as other people, our wages "have not varied much since 1864, but the tendency "is to rise."

3. Aylesbury, population 1861, 6,168; acreage, 3,200.

3*a.* *The Ven. Archdeacon Bickersteth, D.D.*, says, "I may remark generally that two causes have been "in operation for many years past tending to draw a "very poor population to Aylesbury, and to concentrate them here in a manner hurtful to health and "morals; (1) the removal of cottages from the "estates in the adjacent parishes, and (2) the existence of a large number of charities for the poor in "Aylesbury. These two causes have combined for "many years past to draw to Aylesbury far more "than its normal number of poor. I may add, however, that the evil is gradually being cured, partly "by the erection of a better class of labourers' cottages "in all the suburbs of the town, and partly by the "action of the 'Union Chargeability Act,' which will "no doubt tell favourably in the re-erection of a sufficient number of labourers' cottages on the adjacent "estates in the neighbouring parishes."

Mr. J. K. Fowler, occupier, says of the cottages, "On the whole cheaply constructed, ventilation bad, "drainage tolerably good, water supply really none in "many places, and what there is very bad, scarcely a "garden attached to the houses to be found. The "cottages are generally built and owned by small retired tradesmen builders, to employ surplus labour I "should fancy, not many belonging to landowners. "The rent is from 2*s.* 9*d.* to 3*s.* 3*d.* per week including rates.

"I pay my horsemen and men who work on Sundays 15*s.* per week; my other able farm labourers "13*s.* per week. Women are scarcely ever employed "in the fields in this neighbourhood. Plait being so "bad, about 10 women came to me this spring for "picking twitch for a few days. Girls are employed "in plaiting straw, and old women in making lace."

Boys at Work.

3*c.* *James Mason*, age 13. Was at National School till he was 10. "Cannot read nor write very well." Could spell his own name.

3*d.* *Geo. Garnett*, age 11. Was about a year at school. Doesn't know when he left. "Can't read "nor yet write much." Cannot spell his own name.

Hiring.

3*e.* *Mr. Ed. Stone.*—"There is very little yearly "hiring in Aylesbury Union; the hiring is weekly; "this, however, does not prevent labourers remaining "several years on the same farm; I think it rather "encourages them to remain; the services are longer "under a weekly than a yearly hiring."

4. Bierton, population 1861, 691; acreage, 2,470.

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f.

4*a.* *The Rev. H. W. G. Armstrong* says of the cottages, "Many are old and inconvenient, but new "ones are being built from time to time. The "drainage has been bad, but a pressure having been "brought on the landlords it is improving. The "water supply cannot be considered sufficient. Gardens are attached to most houses. Some of the "cottages belong to landlords, some to tradesmen, "some to yeomen. A private person non-resident "lets a field of a few acres as allotments to the poor. "My opinion is that it is a positive duty on the part "of landlords to provide their tenants with properly "arranged cottages. If cottage property is worth "holding I consider it ought to be properly attended "to as respects tenants."

4*b.* *Mr. Wm. Bell*, occupier, says, "I do not employ any females; occasionally a man's wife comes "to help her husband in piece work, especially in "harvest. I employ only two boys on my Bierton "farm; they are between 13 and 15 years of age, "and are plough boys. I don't care about boys, and "seldom employ them. I employ a regular staff of 16 "or 18 men. There are a sufficient number of cottages "near my farm belonging to various persons, and our "cottages are, with some exceptions, good and commodious; five or six of those occupied by my men "belong to my landlord. There is a good school "managed by the clergyman and a committee, and "the children attend well; they go as their parents "please to the Church, Wesleyan, or Baptist Sunday "School. In Bierton children are seldom employed "in agriculture till 12 years of age. This arises in "some degree from more than two-thirds of the parish "being in permanent pasture. The cottages belonging "to the estate have good gardens; many of those who "have no gardens have allotments. In 1867, when "the nominal wage was 12*s.* per week (now 13*s.*), "my men averaged 14*s.* per week throughout the "year in money only, and they had beer besides all "the summer months. A few of my men had no "allotments, and I gave them 20 poles each at 5*s.* per "annum. When men are paid 13*s.* a week, as in this "parish, they don't care about piece-work, except in "hay time or harvest. No agricultural labourer need "be out of employ in Bierton parish."

5. Buckland, population 1861, 732; acreage, 1,544.

5*a.* *Mr. Peter Parrott*, owner and occupier, says, "Very few of the cottages belong to the landowners; "nearly all have gardens or allotments. Water supply "is good. Rents vary from 3*l.* to 5*l.* a year. Men "ought to earn an average of 14*s.* to 14*s.* 6*d.* a week "throughout the year, including beer allowance."

6. Chearsley, population, 287; acreage, 914; cultivation mixed.

6*a.* *Mr. Charles Simmonds*, occupier.—The cottages are fairish in Chearsley; they belong to different people; rents are low, 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week with five or ten poles of ground.

I employ two or three married women couching, weeding, and hay-making; they have 1*s.* a day now, generally 10*d.*

I employ two boys under 10 keeping pigs.
„ four plough boys.
„ two unmarried lads of about 18, who get 12*s.* a week now in summer, and 8*s.* a week in winter.

The hours of labour for men and lads are 6 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Three men mowing by the piece cut 6½ acres of clover for me in two days, beginning at 2½ a.m. and working till dark. I paid them 35*s.*, so that each man earned 5*s.* 10*d.* a day. I gave them *as much beer* as they liked, and they drank nearly two gallons each per day.

7. Cublington, population, 288; acreage, 1,212.

7*a.* *The Rev. R. C. Burton* says, "There are no "allotments."

Buckinghamshire.

Mr. Culley.

f.

"Mr. Biggs gives a good many labourers about "eight poles each."

"The chief landowner, the Hon. R. Cavendish, "has one cottage."

"The drainage of the village, though it stands "high, is very bad."

Water is abundant.

One row of four cottages, and another of five, have only one privy to each row. Rent of cottages from 50*s.* to 80*s.* per annum.

7*b.* From Assistant Commissioner's notes :—

There is no parish school in Cublington, a small private school only.

Five very wretched dens in the roadside waste claimed by parish and occupied by five families rent free. The only drainage an open ditch between cottages and fence. One of these cottages has only one small room for all purposes, inhabited by man and wife and one daughter of 13, and this cottage was the neatest and cleanest of the whole.

7*c.* *Martha Kempster.*—"My husband is a farm "labourer, gets 12*s.* a week as a milker; he has to "go on Sundays. Have four children—boy of 10, "girl of 8, girl of 3, girl of 1.

"Boy gets 2*s.* 6*d.* per week, works to Mr. Hams "birdkeeping or anything. Girl of 8 can plait a "score a day, and her score sells at 4*d.* There ain't "much in it, but it keeps them out of mischief, and "keeps their clothes better, and they say as how "they musn't plait now. I don't know what they "be going to do with poor people."

7*d.* *John Ingram,* farm labourer, is paid 10*s.* per week; he works from 6 till 5.30, lives in a house with one bedroom; his family consists of his wife, one daughter 20, one daughter 18 and one boy 18, twins; one boy 15, one boy 13. He pays 2*l.* 10*s.* a year for his cottage.

Boy of 18 gets 7*s.* a week.
" 15 " 4*s.* "
" 13 " 3*s.* "

The mother goes out.

The two girls plait 14 score per week (one plaiting 8 the other 6). They get 5*d.* a score.

The boy of 13 cannot write well, he can read a little.

8. Cuddington, population, 1861, 590; acreage, 1,281.

8*a.* Assistant Commissioner's note, after visiting some of the cottages in Cuddington.—("The cottages "in Cuddington are not good, and many of them out "of repair, but the rooms are generally fairly large "and higher than in many villages, and those I have "seen kept pretty clean.")

8*b.* *Mrs. Oakley* (husband a farm labourer).—"Not many of them (farmers) give more than 11*s.* "My husband, he has 12*s.* Cowmen have 1*s.* more. "also the horsemen and shepherds count to have a "shilling more, 'cause they go on Sundays. Now "and then some farmers give 2*s.* more. When I "first came here there used to be plenty of men out "of work, now there's seldom they can't get work; "a good many of the young and able-bodied men "have gone elsewhere to better themselves; gene-"rally they go to London, most of them have gone "within the last three years. A girl must be pretty "good at lace-making before she can now 2*s.* a "week; she must be 14 or 15. It all depends how "soon they are put to it and kept at it whether they "are quick at it; if not put early you never get "quick; it is not like anything else. Some boys go "out at 6 years' old 'bird-keeping.' They don't "go to regular farm work till about 8 years; if "you can get anything for them to do they get 2*s.* a "week, not more than that up to 10 or 11. My "husband does very little great work, scarce any "except hay-time and harvest, then they do all by "the great. There is a few masters as give some "hoeing by the great, but my husband doesn't get "any; farmers don't like 'em to earn over much."

8*c.* *Mrs. Betts,* husband farm labourer.—"My "husband has 12*s.* a week, he don't work on Sundays. "We have four children, ages 17, 13, 10, and young-"est 7. We pay 1*s.* a week rent. My girl, 17, does "the sewing for the family. I make lace; I don't "make 1*s.* a week. The boys hadn't any work in "the winter, now one (the boy of 13) gets 4*s.* per "week, and the one of 10 gets 3*s.* per week. They "have to go a Sundays; one goes to feed horses and "the other feeds sheep on Sundays. My husband "hardly ever does great work except hay-time and "harvest. The girl, 7, goes to school.

(Expenditure of this family per week :—)

	s.	*d.*
"Flour, a bushel - - -	11	4
"Rent - - -	1	0
"Pork, 1 lb. - - -	0	8
"Tea, ¼ lb. -	0	6
"Sugar - - - -	0	7
"Hundred of coals - -	1	0
"Washing materials - -	0	6
	15	7

"When the boys can't get work we can't buy pork "or as much tea and sugar. My husband has only "had an allotment for 12 months, and that is 20 "poles in next parish, 1½ miles off; we pay 13*s.* a "year for 20 poles. The allotments in this village "are 20*s.* for 20 poles (*i.e.* 1*s.* per pole). There's "plenty of families of four and five with only the "man's money coming in. All women make lace."

9. Dinton, population, 1861, 814; acreage, 4,100.

9*a.* Notes of cottages taken at parish meeting held at vicarage.

Old cottages built of wooden frame, mud walls and thatch; newer cottages of brick and tile. Most of the cottages are owned by two landowners, some are very poor. Most labourers have allotments of from 20 to 40 poles. Water supply is pretty good, and rents vary from 3*l.* to 4*l.* per annum. Old women engaged in lace-making, young women and girls in plaiting straw. One or two married women, wives of labourers, employed couch picking and weeding. Ordinary labourers are paid 12*s.* per week. Sunday men, *i.e.* men employed with horses, cattle, &c., on Sunday, 14*s.* per week. Men cutting hay by the piece expect to earn 5*s.* to 6*s.* per day. (Four occupiers present agreed in the above statement as to the wages of labourers.)

9*b.* Copy of rule 4 of the Dinton parish school :—

"4. On Sundays the children will meet at the "school in the morning at 10, and in the afternoon, "from Michaelmas to Lady-day, at 2 o'clock, and "during the rest of the year at half-past 2. They "will then proceed together to attend divine service "at the parish church."

The following privileges are held out as inducements to parents to send their children to the parish school :—

"Children regularly attending the school will have "the privilege of becoming depositors in a penny "bank, and their parents, being day labourers, will "have preference of admission into a clothing club."

9*c.* *The Rev. A. C. Cuxson,* vicar, informed the Assistant Commissioner that he could fill his school if he were to allow plaiting in school, which he did not approve of.

9*d.* The following is a copy of a note from Mr. Farmbrough, occupier, Dinton, to the Assistant Commissioner :—

"The wages of an able-bodied man working on "my farm during the last 12 months were on an "average 13*s.* 6*d.* per week, generally at piece-"work."

10. Fleet Marston, population, 1861, 23; acreage, 929.

10*a.* *Mr. Wm. Mason,* occupier and guardian, says, "There are only 90 acres of arable land in the

" parish, and only three cottages, which are pretty " good, and belong to the rector. The weekly wage " for ordinary farm labourers is 12*s*. I have calcu- " lated the wages of my men; they earn 15*s*. a week " throughout the year on an average, not including " the beer allowance. All grazing farmers give milk, " and my men have as much as they like, not in- " cluded in their 15*s*. a week. Bird-keeping boys " get as much milk as they like, and generally get " fat with me."

11. HALTON, population, 1861, 147; acreage, 1,452. Cultivation, arable, and woodland.

11*a*. *The Rev. A. Shilson* says, "There are 20 " cottages, all good, the property of Sir A. de Roths- " child. The water supply is from the Chiltern " Hills Company. Each cottage has a Moule's earth " closet; gardens, and outhouses good."

11*b*. For the parishes of Halton, Aston Clinton, and Mentmore.

Mr. Jas. James, solicitor and agent to Baron L. N. de Rothschild, Baron M. A. de Rothschild, and Sir A. de Rothschild, Bart., says, "The whole parish of " Halton belongs to Baron L. N. de Rothschild, M.P. " In Aston Clinton the property belongs to Sir A. " de Rothschild, Bart., the Mercers' Company, and " others. In Mentmore nearly the whole parish " belongs to Baron M. A. de Rothschild, M.P.

" There is nothing exceptional in the labour ques- " tion in any of these parishes. Boys are employed " in agriculture from 8 to 10 years of age with " plough teams and in other farming operations.

" I know of no use made of female labour in agri- " culture, except in harvest, in any of these parishes.

" These parishes are small, and in no cases have " the children employed to leave their own village.

(NOTE.—This is in answer to the question as to how far children do have "to *go*" to their work. If the question had said "to *come*" to their work, the Assistant Commissioner thinks the answer might have been that Halton and Mentmore draw some of their labour from surrounding parishes.—G. C.)

" I would not allow boys to be employed under 10 " years of age; girls, I think, should not be employed " at all in farm labour.

" There are excellent schools in all of these parishes; " in Halton they are supported entirely by Baron " Rothschild, and in Aston Clinton a large girls' " school is maintained by Lady de Rothschild. " Another large infant school is now in course of " erection; the boys' school there is supported by " general subscription. At Mentmore a large school " is supported by Baron M. A. de Rothschild, M.P.

" In Halton, Aston Clinton, and Mentmore the " condition and position of the cottages are for the " most part satisfactory, but it may be taken as a fact " that this is not the case in the county of Bucks " generally, overcrowding being very common."

12. HARDWICK, population, 1861, 708; acreage, 2,300.

12*a*. *The Rev. Christopher Erle* says of the cottages, "The rooms are small, the drainage is pretty " good; some have only two rooms, some three, and " some have four. Some of the cottages belong to " landowners, some to tradesmen. The rents vary " from 1*s*. to 1*s*. 6*d*. per week. There are 173 " habitations."

13. OVING population, 1862, 436; acreage, 991.

13*a*. *The Rev. W. H. Young*, in speaking of the cottages, says: "A good many of the cottages are " out of repair; I do not know of any with three " bedrooms, several have only one. There is a fair " supply of water near, and generally a small piece of " garden. A large number of the cottages are " owned by the inhabitants themselves, being built " on waste land. A grocer at Aylesbury owns a " good many more, with whom most of the cottagers " deal through the small shops. The rent is gene- " rally 1*s*. per week, sometimes 1*s*. 3*d*. or 1*s*. 6*d*.

13*b*. *Mr. Thos. S. Curtis*, occupier and guardian, says, "Cottages as a rule are very middling, many " of them built on the waste and owned by occupiers. " When the occupiers of cottages on the waste apply " for relief, the guardians order the cottage to be " sold, and a pretended sale takes place; I have " known one or two pretended to be sold two or " three times and still remain in the same hands."

13*c*. *Mr. Wm Nash*, labourer, says, "I have been " 64 years in the parish, about 40 cottages have been " built on the waste since I remember, I don't think " them as lives in the waste cottages is any better " than those as pay rent, they don't get the parish " doctor; when a man owning a waste cottage applies " for relief they make him sell it, and a Mr. King- " ham has bought most and lets them at 1*s*. to " 1*s*. 6*d*. according as they is. A few cottages on " waste built of mud on stone foundation, most of " brick, some thatched, some tiled; rooms very low; " most have two bedrooms, kitchen, and scullery. " A famous place for water, no better in England."

13*d*. Examined two boys at work, Edwin Clark and Thomas Young, 13 years of age, whose answers to the Assistant Commissioner's questions did not exhibit much proof that they had ever been at school, which, however, was the case.

13*e*. *Thos Clever's* wife says, "We have a cottage " on waste belonging to Mr. Kingham, grocer at " Aylesbury, we don't deal with him, but the shop- " keepers here deal with him and we buy from them. " I have seven children here and my husband. My " eldest boy is 16, my eldest girl 13. I have only one " room, we get up by a ladder,—its miserable in " summer. We have three beds; there isn't any " room to move about; rent, 1*s*. My husband rents " ½ acre at 45*s*. for the ½ acre, he has 11*s*. per week, " and more by piece-work. When he had 17*s*. by piece- " work without beer, it did'nt seem to do him more " good than 13*s*. with beer—I'm sure he was as well " off."

Earnings of this family:—

Husband 11*s*. per week.
Son of 16, 5*s*. do.

"The rest only earned 9*d*. last week."
Total for week 16*s*. 9*d*.

Expenditure on family of nine for week:—

	s.	*d*.
Bread - -	11	9
Flour - - -	1	6
Tea - -	0	4½
Firing - - -	1	0
Rent - - -	1	0
Other things - -	1	1½

" We have no potatoes just now, and I don't know " when I did have any butter or meat; it has been " awful bad with us lately."

13*f*. *Mr. Edward Stone*, Chairman of Board of Guardians, informed the Assistant Commissioners that Oving parish was given up to the labourers under the old Poor Law, at a time when the rates were 25*s*. per acre.

14. STONE, population, 1,094; acreage, 2,520; cultivation, mixed.

14*a*. Several very poor cottages about the sides of the roads in this parish, built with mud walls and thatched; some of them claimed by occupiers.

14*b*. *Mrs. Woodford* (living in a cottage belonging to one of the landowners), says, "My cottage is a " very poor one, sir, my upstairs is out of repair, the " walls do keep tumbling (as was evidently the case); " I pay 1*s*. a week rent. I have six children, the " eldest 12, a boy at work, a girl 10, at home, one of " 8 and one of 5 at school, and two younger."

14*c*. *Mr. John Monk*, occupier, says, "I employ " no women on my farm, they make straw plait, ex- " cept some of the older ones, who make lace. I " employ five boys between 13 and 15, and 14 or 15

Buckinghamshire.

Mr. Culley.

f.

" men, and I would require four cottages per 100 " acres for my farm, which is rather more than half " tillage.

" I pay ordinary labourers 12*s.* per week. In hay " time and harvest they get extra wages, say 1*l.* per " week for 10 weeks, at this rate a man's earnings " would be—

42 weeks at 12*s.*
10 weeks at 20*s.*

" Beer allowance, say 50*s.* for the year.

" Total average earnings for 12*s.*-men 14*s.* 6*d.* per " week. (Beer is given in haytime and harvest and " for extra work, such as thrashing, filling dung, and " drilling.) Sunday men have 2*s.* extra."

14*d.* *Mr. Jos. Hughes* gave similar evidence as to value of wages, and added, " Stone and Hartwell " parishes have paid for many years 1*s.* a week more " than other parishes in Aylesbury union."

15. Waddesden, population, 1861, 1,786; acreage 6,010.

15*a.* *The Rev. T. J. Williams* says of the cottages, " There are a great many cottages built by small " freeholders on speculation with very small rooms " and without ventilation. The drainage is tole- " rably good. The water supply is short in dry " seasons. There are a great many allotments and " gardens in the parish about 100 acres. The allot- " ments average 40 poles. Very few of the cottages " belong to the chief landowners."

The following statements were made as to the value of wages, &c. at a parish meeting at Waddesden, on the 21st of May 1868.

15*b.* *Mr. Thos Bliss:* " I farm about 900 acres in " Waddesden and Winchendon parishes. I employ " five or six boys between 10 and 13, and pay them " 3*s.* a week; I employ seven or eight between 13 " and 18, and pay them 6*s.* per week. I employ " regularly on these farms 21 able-bodied men, each " of these men may, if he likes, cost me 15*s.* a week " for the year, four of them cost me 17*s.* each.

15*c.* *Mr. Richard Marks.*—" I farm 400 acres " half grass in Quainton. There are two schools in " the parish. I have three boys between 10 and 13 " and three between 13 and 18, and 12 men. I pay " ordinary men 11*s.* per week, Sunday men 12*s.* " I consider that men at 11*s.* per week, taking the " year through, increase their wages in this way:—

	s.
6 weeks, piece work, hoeing, &c. -	9
6 weeks in hay time - -	36
6 weeks in harvest - -	60
Beer and other allowances - -	52
	157

" *i.e.* about 3*s.* a week for the year, making 11*s.*-men cost or earn 14*s.* per week.

15*d.* *Mrs. Timms.*—Husband a farm labourer. Herself, husband, son 21, and two young children in a small low cottage paying 13*s.* per week rent.

" I always send 'em all to school, I never keep any " of 'em away not one half hour. My husband gets " 11*s.* per week, they won't give him money enough " to work by the piece."

15*e.* (Note.—Examined three boys just come home from work in Waddesden, two could both read and write, and one could read but write very badly. Boys ages 12, 14, and 14. Two of them very intelligent boys.)

16. Weston-Turville, population, 1861, 724; acreage, 2,450.

16*a.* *The Rev. A. Isham,* says of the cottages:—
" The majority are old, and not well ventilated.
" Some ought to have a second room.
" The water supply is good.
" The garden advantages good.
" The outhouse accommodation is generally good.
" Ownership various. No trade tyranny.
" Rent from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* 5*s.*"

16*b.* *Mr. J. P. Parrott,* occupier, says of the cottages, " Very few of them belong to the land- " owners, most have gardens."

Of the wages, he says, " An able-bodied man ought " to earn on an average throughout the year 15*s.* " per week. I am sure mine do by piece work, and " extra wages in hay time and harvest, *i.e.*, including " their beer allowance."

16*c.* *Mr. T. W. Morris,* landowner and occupier, says, " The lowest daily wage during the last 12 " months has been 2*s* per day, horsekeepers and " cowkeepers have 14*s.* per week, and shepherds " have 15*s.* My shepherd has 20*s.* extra in hay " time, 30*s.* extra in harvest, 20*s.* extra in lambing " time, and he makes about 20*s.* extra in sheep " shearing."

Cottages.

16*d.* *John Dering.*—Cottage, with one bedroom; two grown-up daughters and a child. Privy and shallow well very near each other, and very near the cottage. Rent of cottage and 40 poles of ground, 4*l.*

16*e.* *Thomas Bunce.*—Man and wife, two grown-up daughters, two grown-up sons, and two children of another daughter in house with one bedroom.

16*f.* A good many people in this village rear ducks, and some of them share their houses with them. One man feeds about 1,000 in the year.

17. Whitchurch, population, 884; acreage, 1,674.

17*a.* There are many very poor cottages in this village. Two schools, National and Wesleyan.

17*b.* *Mr. Jas. Epsley,* teacher of the Wesleyan school, says, " The attendance of children of the " labouring class becomes very irregular at 10. " Some, but not many, go to field work before 10; " bird-keeping and weeding in spring.

18. Upper Winchendon, population, 1861, 220; acreage, 1,184.

18*a.* *Mr. John Treadwell,* occupier and guardian, says, " Some good new cottages have been lately " built in the room of old ones, and others enlarged " for the largest families. The land and cottages in " the parish belong to his Grace the Duke of Marl- " borough."

Hiring.

" Only single men are hired for a year, some we " keep, others keep themselves; they are paid 6*s.* a " week, and from 6*l.* to 10*l.* at Michaelmas when " they keep themselves, and the same at Michaelmas, " with no weekly wage when we keep them; those " who keep themselves get vegetables, and have " cooking done for them."

THAME UNION.

19. Chilton, population, 364; acreage, 2,080. (For allotments, *see* Evidence on allotment system.)

19*a.* *Mr. Freeman,* occupier and guardian.—" The " cottages here are good and well cared for, but " there are not enough of them, some of my labourers " come from Crendon. One-half of my farm is per- " manent grass, and yet I never employ less than at " the rate of 3½ men to 100 acres. I employ two " women.

" They are paid as under:—

Weeding - - -	4*s.*	per week.
Hay time - -	5*s.*	"
Harvest - - -	6*s.*	"
Thrashing - - -	6*s.*	"
I pay 1 boy of 9 - -	3*s.*	"
" " 12 - -	3*s.* 6*d.*	"
" " 14 - -	4*s.*	"

" I pay carter, shepherd, and milkman 14*s.* a week.

" The three men you saw hoeing mangold have " earned 14*s.* a week throughout the winter. There " is no yearly hiring here, all are hired by the week."

20. Ickford, population, 437; acreage, 1,249. 14 acres of allotment.

20*a.* Evidence of *Rev. J. Hemsted.*—" Women

"work a good deal in the fields, and farmers will "hardly have a man whose wife will not go out. "Two-thirds or three-fourths of the women when "married are in the family way, but there is no "prostitution, and no infidelity ever heard of after "marriage, they simply don't care much about the "marriage ceremony. There is a dissenting as well "as national school. I insist on the children attend-"ing church once on Sunday. There is a grocer "here who has a dozen or more cottages, and com-"pels his tenants to deal with him. Many of our "cottages are very poor without common con-"veniences."

20*b*. *Mr. Thos. Fuller*, occupier.—"I employ "seven grown-up women all married, and two girls "between 15 and 18. They work from 9 a.m. to "4 p.m., resting one hour. They are employed "hoeing and weeding, and cleaning crops generally, "singling roots, planting beans, &c., and in hay time "and harvest. They do hoeing by the piece, and "earn from 1*s*. to 1*s*. 6*d*. a day. They plant beans "by the acre, and plaut half a bushel, earning 11*d*. "a day, sometimes they have their children with "them. Most of the girls under 18 are out at service, "we cannot get them for farm work.

Boys under	10	get 2*s*. 6*d*.	a week.
Boys of	14	„ 5*s*.	„
„	16	„ 7*s*.	„
Lads of	18	„ 10*s*.	„

"Most farmers employ too few hands.

"There are 14 acres of allotment ground which "belong to a clergyman at High Wycombe, and are "let at 9*d*. per pole. The value of the land to farm "is about 6*d*. per pole.

Milkers have 14*s*. per week.
Carters „ 13*s*. „
Other men, 11*s*. to 12*s*. per week."

20*c*. *Mr. H. Fuller*, occupier.—"I employ six "women, as a rule, of whom five are married. They "are hoeing mangold to-day as you saw. They work "from 9 a.m. till 4 p.m., resting an hour; and earn "from 1*s*. to 1*s*. 6*d*. per day by piece work. I have "known women earn 2*s*. a day.

"There is a shopkeeper here who compels his "tenants to deal with him, and turns them out if "they do not."

20*d*. *Mrs. Neal*.—Occupies a poor cottage, for which she pays 1*s*. 2*d*. per week; has five children, eldest 14; and only one bedroom.

Who is your landlord?—"Mr. Basson."

Does he compel you to deal with him?—"We have "to get things at his shop."

21. Long Crendon, population, 1861, 1,570; acreage, 3,120.

21*a*. *The Rev. Thos. Hayton*, says, "The cottages "are generally very defective in construction and "accommodation, most of them belong to speculators "or small tenement holders, few to chief landowners. "Some allotments are let by farmers and others at "10*d*., 1*s*., and 1*s*. 2*d*. per pole.

"There is no school in the parish.

"Boys attend Thame School, and girls only go to "lace schools; they of course attend Sunday school. "There is no night school in the parish.

"The chief landowners are Lord Churchill, All "Souls' College, Oxford, and the Dean and Canons "of Windsor (or the Ecclesiastical Commissioners "for them).

21*b*. *Mr. J. C. Crook*, occupier and guardian, says, "There is no yearly hiring for farm labourers. "Some few single men may be hired, but seldom; "the hiring is a weekly hiring. Occasionally they "are taken in spring on condition of remaining over "harvest."

21*c*. *Mrs. Weston*.—Husband a shepherd. Has four children:—

A son, age 20, a shepherd.
A daughter, age 15.
A son, age 12 } working with their father.
Do. 9 }

The only one of these four children who can read or write, according to their mother's account, is the daughter. The lads have not been to any school. A poor cottage with one bedroom, for which they pay 11*d*. per week.

21*d*. *Mrs. Hawks*.—Man and wife and five children in one bedroom:—

Daughter, 16.	Makes lace.	Can read.
Son, 13.	Gets 4*s*. a week.	Reads a little.
Son, 10.	Gets 2*s*. „	„
Son, 8.	Doing nothing.	„
Girl, 6.	At school.	

None of these children can write. Mrs. Hawks says, "I send my little girl (girl of 6) to school, but "I can't send more; it grieves me, but I can't send "but one."

22. Oakley, population, 1861, 420; acreage, 2,250.

22*a*. *The Rev. E. Boys*, says of the cottages, "The cottages are bad, *generally* built of brick or "stone and thatched, and one sitting-room and one "bedroom. Water supply and drainage good. Many "are owned by the occupiers, and the rest by the dif-"ferent landowners living in and out of the village."

22*b*. 100 acres of allotment ground in Oakley and the adjoining portion of Shabbington parish, *see* Evidence on allotment system.

22*c*. *Mrs. Mixey*.—Living in a very low poor cottage, with one bedroom, on the waste, and belonging to the occupier. Has six children:—

Son, 16.	At work.	
„ 14.	do.	
Girl, 12.	"Goes on land sometimes, and plays."	Can read.
„ 10.	Plays.	Can read and write her name.
„ 8.	Do.	Can read, but cannot write.
„ 5.		

22*d*. (Oakley bore a very bad character before Mr. Henley established his allotment system, and the power of reading and writing is not held in any great esteem yet.—G.C.)

23. Shabbington, population, 1861, 371; acreage, 2,138.

23*a*. *The Rev. B. Morland*, says of the cottages, "Construction, bad. Rooms, I should say not more "than 12 feet by 12. Ventilation, not good generally. "Drainage, as the village is high, that is the greater "part of it, tolerably good. In answer to Question "30, I have stated the deficiency of rooms. Water-"supply not very good. The occupiers are nearly all "owners, and therefore rent is immaterial."

23*b*. Statement of population and what they are doing, given by Rev. B. Morland:—

Cottagers and aged people living with them		123
Young men and boys at work	29	85
Boys at school	25	
Boys under four years	22	
Boys neither at work nor school	9	
Girls home from service	3	70
„ who go to work	2	
„ who look after children	6	
„ at school	36	
„ under four years	23	
Total cottagers and families		278
Other inhabitants of parish		51
Present population		329

23*c*. (Note.—A very poor village, most cottages of mud and thatch, built on the waste. Women work in Thame parish at about 5*s*. a week).

24. Worminghall, population, 1861, 354; acreage, 1,469.

24*a*. *The Rev. Jas. Statter*, says of the cottages, "Many of the old cottages confined and badly venti-"lated; the drainage is very fair. The new cottages "are in much better condition; the drainage is very

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" good; the sleeping rooms generally too small. " Water supply good. Garden ground in most cases " sufficient. Outhouses capable of improvement. With " the exception of two cottages belonging to a charity, " the rest are the property of the lord of the manor."

24*b*. Earnings of a family in Worminghall as given by Rev. Jas. Statter:—

Daniel Chudbone, age 49, has 10*s*. per week.
Wife, 46 (7*d*. per day), 3*s*. 6*d*. „
Daughter, 22.
Son, 21, has 9*s*. per week.
Do., 12, has 2*s*. 6*d*. per week.
Daughter, 10. At school.
Do. 7. do.
Two infants.

Total income of family 25*s*. per week to provide for nine persons and keep two children at school.

WINSLOW UNION.

25. Three Claydons, population, 1861, 1,477; acreage, 8,016.

25*a*. *Mr. Wm. Hinton*, says of the cottages, " Many of the old cottages were of wattle and daub, " with thatched roofs, and badly lighted and venti- " lated; but these are gradually giving way to " superior brick and tiled cottages having larger and " better ventilated rooms. In some cases there is a " well of water in the cottage gardens, but recently " a well in each village has been sunk by the present " Lady Verney, each yielding an ample supply of " pure water. This year a handsome cast-iron pump " and rustic porch have been placed over each of " these wells, which make them as ornamental to the " village as they are useful. For the most part the " cottages belong to the landowners."

25*b*. *Mr. A. Fraser*, land agent, says, " Very few " boys are employed in this district, which is chiefly " grazing, except in hay time and harvest, when a " few girls and women are also employed. There is " no agricultural employment injurious either to " health or morals. It would be an injury both to " parents and children to fix an age under which " they should not be employed in farm labour, as the " child must learn its work, and the parents in many " cases cannot do without the earnings of the " children. In this district children do very little " work in winter, and could therefore be kept at " school during four or five winter months. Two " cottages per 100 acres is sufficient for cultivation " of land in this district. The ordinary wages vary " from 10*s*. to 14*s*. per week. Boys earn from 4*s*. to " 5*s*. per week. Women in hay time and harvest " earn 1*s*. per day, not including beer. In the Three " Claydons, the cottages belong principally to Sir " Harry Verney, and consist of two rooms and back " premises on the ground floor, and two or three " bedrooms; rent, 3*l*. per annum. No family lives " in a cottage with less than two bedrooms. On Sir " H. Verney's estate there are sufficient cottages " belonging to him for the cultivation of the land. " I think it would be a great encouragement and aid " to landowners to provide suitable cottages if they " could borrow money directly from Government on " better terms than at present through public com- " panies, and without some of the restrictions im- " posed by the Enclosure Commissioners, some of " which I think absurd."

26. Great Horwood, population, 725; acreage, 2,389.

26*a*. Circular questions not answered for this parish. The cottages appeared to the Assistant Commissioner to be fairly good.

26*b*. *George Stokes*, a farm labourer: " I am a " Sunday man. I get 13*s*. a week. I get no victuals " nor milk, only a drop on Sunday mornings. I work " from 5 a.m. to 6 p.m. I get about 15*s*. a week in " hay time and harvest, a month at each time. I pay " 3*l*. 4*s*. a year for my cottage and four poles. I " have seven children, eldest 16, a boy; he gets 8*s*. " a week, and gives us 5*s*.; he finds his own clothes, " and pays his club 2*s*. 4*d*. a quarter; I don't know " justly what he gets. The boy 14 gets 6*s*. now; he " gives it all to us, and we find him all. The girl, 12, " makes a little lace. The boy, 9½, is at farm work, " and gets 2*s*. 6*d*.; he was at school till he was 9. " I wish he could have kept on; but we can't do " without his 2*s*. 6*d*., with bread so dear; all the same " I approve of that job keeping them at school till 10. " I heard there was some talk of keeping them till 13, " and that would not do at all. What I've told you is " every penny I have had since last harvest. There " are several men out of work in the village. I " rather think there's plenty of work, but may be " the farmers is rather short of money. If I had four " acres I could support my family on it, and I think " every family ought to have that. We have three " allotments, one rood each, and we work it amongst " us. We work by moonlight sometimes, and, with " my other work, it's almost too much for me, the late " hours."

27. Little Horwood, population, 1861, 449; acreage, 1,950.

27*a*. *The Rev. H. F. Ralph* says of the cottages: " The cottages are very bad, small, the great majority " of them with one bedroom only, thatched, the ven- " tilation and drainage good, water supply fair, gardens " good. The cottages belong chiefly to small owners, " some possessed by the cottagers themselves."

28. Hogston, population, 1861, 207; acreage, 1,526.

28*a*. *Mr. John Morris*, occupier, says of the cottages: " Brick and tiled, some brick and thatched, " rooms sufficiently large and well ventilated, drainage " good, water supply and gardens very good. Cottages " belong to landowner. Rent about 40*s*."

29. Mursley, population, 482; acreage, 2,840.

29*a*. Some of the cottages in the parish are good, some very bad; the cottages do not belong to the chief landowners.

29*b*. *Mr. Conway*, occupier, says, " Children are of " no use to us in this neighbourhood under 10; but " still I would not approve of any legislative interfer- " ence to fix an age under which boys should not be " employed. The hours of work on my farm are, in " in summer, from 6 to 5½; meal times, 1½ hours. " The average labourer's wage is 12*s*. Sunday men " have 13*s*.

30. Stewkley, population, 1861, 1,453; acreage, 4,330.

30*a*. *The Rev. C. H. Travers* says of the cottages: " As a general rule, the cottages are totally inade- " quate as regards accommodation. The ownership " being vested in small tradesmen, and the straw- " plait trade having brought an increase of nearly " 900 people into the parish in this century, a number " of tenements have been formed, some out of malt- " ing houses, &c., which readily let, and where fami- " lies are crowded together sometimes from six to " eight in one small room, the rents varying from 1*s*. to " 1*s*. 6*d*. per week. There are very few labourers' " cottages in the village with more than one bedroom, " and that one of miserable dimensions."

30*b*. *Mr. Thomas Woodman*, occupier: " I occupy " 590 acres, of which 535 are pasture. I employ 14 " or 15 able-bodied men throughout the winter, and, " as my farm lies two miles from the village, my " labourers have that distance to walk to their work. " My opinion is decidedly in favour of having cottage " accommodation provided for the labourers as near " as possible to their work. The average weekly " earnings of my men, who attend to cattle (exclu- " sive of an allowance of milk for breakfast, and 1*s*. " for Sunday service), has been for the past year 12*s*. " per week. The total earnings of my men who " have taken their work has amounted to 40*l*., or as " much as 15*s*. per week for the past year.

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30*c*. Evidence of *Messrs. Palmer, J. Vere Woodman,* and *James Kempston,* occupiers: "Wages are rather "lower in this than in the surrounding parishes. "Ordinary labourers have 11*s*. a week; cattle men, "who go on Sunday, 12*s*.; lads of 13 or 14 years "have 4*s*. 6*d*. a week. The hours of work are from "6 a.m. to 5 p.m. Labourers who have 11*s*. per week "in winter and spring, have 16*s*. for four or five weeks, "generally five in hay time, and 18*s*. to 21*s*. for four "weeks in harvest. There is not much piece work in "the parish. The beer allowance costs at least 40*s*. "per man per year. Men at 11*s*., with no other "piece work or allowance, would earn for the year an "average of 12*s*. 6*d*. to 13*s*. per week. Most of "them could add somewhat to this. Almost all have "allotments, most of them half an acre, some on "parish land and some on glebe. Very few cottages "belong to chief landowners. They are crowded in "many instances, and bad, with no drainage. From "two to three cottages per 100 acres would be suffi-"cient for the cultivation of this parish, probably two "per 100 acres."

30*d*. Visited three *one-bedroomed* cottages, unfit for people to live in, standing in a row back from the road. In one of them—

30*e*. *Mrs. Smith* (husband a labourer) has six children; rent, 1*s*. 1*d*. per week:—

Boy, 15, gets 5*s*.
Girl, 10, never been at any school.
Boys (8 and 7) at school.
Two younger not at school.
Husband has 13*s*. per week.

In another—

30*f*. *Mrs. Green,* her husband, and six children.

Girl, 16, at home.
Boy, 13, at work.
" 11, " occasionally.
Boy, 5, at infant school, others do nothing.

In the last cottage of this row are seven persons.

30*g*. Visited an old malting house made into seven very small cottages, with one small bedroom and a nasty open drain close to the doors. Rent of each cottage 1*s*. per week.

In one of these lives—

30*h*. *Mrs. Mead*: "My husband is a farm labourer; "he has 11*s*. a week; he worked on the road for 10*s*. "in the winter. I have 10 children: eldest 16, a "boy, get 7*s*. a week. He can read, but can't write. "The next, a girl 14, plaits; she can read, too, but "can't write. That drain in front is very nasty, the "rooms being small, and we can't sit out for the "drain."

31. Swanbourne, population, 1861, 603; acreage, 2,510.

31*a*. *Rev. M. D. Maulden* says of the cottages: "There are about 80 cottages, mostly thatch roof, "mud walls between rafters, with two or, at the "most, three rooms. Drainage not good, water supply "fair, deficiency of gardens and outhouses. About "half belong to the resident landowners, and the "other half to tradesmen and farmers. The rents "run from 2*l*. 10*s*. to 4*l*. I am not aware that the "tenants have to deal with the tradesmen their "landlords."

31*b*. There are five low, thatched, and very poor cottages on the road side, rent for three of them 1*s*. per week, two pay only the rent of ground.

31*c*. *Mrs. Rowe* says, "My husband has 11*s*. a "week; we are pretty well off, and don't complain. "I have no children."

32. Winslow, population, 1861, 1,890; acreage, 1,900.

32*a*. *Mr. William Neal,* occupier, says, "The "landlord's cottages are old and thatched, but much "more roomy than the modern ones, always having "two rooms below and two above, often three, and "a piece of garden ground at the back. Many of "the new cottages have no ground only what they "are built on. Some in the centre of the town have "no closet accommodation, obliging occupiers to "trespass or ask leave of their neighbours. They "frequent the nearest public pump for water, the "supply of which is good on the whole. The drain-"age of the town for surface water is good, but the "system of draining the closets into it without any "water works for flushing is sure to lead to bad "consequences in time."

"The rent of one front room with back kitchen "and two small bedrooms is 1*s*. 8*d*. per week."

32*b*. Some very bad cottages, with one bedroom each, at Tinker's End; five of them rejoice under the name of "Albert Place." Rent 1*s*. 2*d*. to 1*s*. 4*d*. per week. Farm labourers live in most of them.

32*c*. *Mr. Dudley,* land agent, says, "I employ a "good many labourers, and pay them 12*s*. a week as "regular wage, winter and summer, and for extra "work I pay them extra. I pay in hay time and "harvest 15*s*. for eight weeks. The greatest diffi-"culty the farm labourer has to deal with is im-"providence and the weakness of the family ties. It "is terrible to see the slightness of the family tie; "they think no more of father or mother than I do "of my dogs."

32*d*. *Mrs. Boyce,* Piccadilly, says, "My husband "is a farm labourer, and has 13*s*. per week. Have "five children—

Boy of 13, at work.
Ditto 11, ditto.
Ditto 9, at school.
Ditto 4, at home.
Girl of 6, at school.

"I have kept them all at school to 10. We pay "1*s*. 8*d*. a week rent."

32*e*. *Mrs. Vickers.*—Husband a farm labourer; has 12*s*. a week; has five children, two of 8 and 9 at day school, two of 4 and 6 at infant school, one of 2½ at home. "We have nothing else but my hus-"band's money. I manage to keep them at school, "but it's hard work, and we have had a hard struggle "to get on at all. As soon as my boy of 8 can "get work he must go, we can't help it."

32*f*. *John French,* in workhouse at Winslow because he cannot get a house, says, "I occupied a "wattle and dab cottage, with thatch and no win-"dows, at Nash; paid 6*d*. per week rent. Inspector "of nuisances reported the house, and landlord sent "me out, and said he would pull down the cottage "rather than put it right. I had 10*s*. a week. My "girl of 16 got her victuals for her work at a farm-"house, son of 14 had 3*s*. a week, son of 12 was at "school when he would go, son of 10 at school. I "like to keep 'em at school, but if a farmer will give "them 2*s*. a week, they must go and work, but there "ain't much as boys can get to do much afore they're "12."

32*g*. *Robert Turnly,* 10 years old, in charge of a cart with sand going from Winslow to Grandborough, sitting on the horse with his feet on shafts; has never been at any school except Sunday school; can neither read nor write. Name on the cart Morecraft.

BUCKINGHAM UNION.

33. State of cottages in Buckingham Union:—

The Assistant Commissioner received from one of the guardians of Buckingham Union a copy of a series of papers entitled "Rural Life in Buckinghamshire," published in the "Morning Star" in the autumn of 1863, and his remarks on the changes, if any, which had taken place in the villages referred to in those papers. The chief offenders in the way of cottages were, in 1863, Gawcott, Maids Moreton, Hillesden, Padbury, Adstock, Preston Bissett, and Twyford.

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In Twyford	82	out of	124	cottages had but one bedroom.
In Maids Moreton	58	„	94	ditto.
In Preston Bissett	36	„	66	ditto.
In Padbury	33	„	77	ditto.
In Gawcott	32	„	87	ditto.
In Adstock	31	„	70	ditto.
In Hillesden	12	„	38	ditto.

The only improvement in cottage accommodation which has taken place in any of these parishes is in Hillesden and Padbury, according to the Assistant Commissioner's informant, who says that Hillesden has been much improved by Mr. Morrison, and that a few new cottages have been built in Padbury. Many other parishes are found very serious fault with in these papers, in some of which the Assistant Commissioner was informed that improvement had taken place, and in others that there was no improvement. The village of Shalstone is held up in joyful contrast to all of those round it, and remains as a bright example of what a resident proprietor may do for the comfort of the labouring poor.

34. Addington, population, 1861, 111; acreage, 1,268.

34*a*. *Mr. John Linnell*, bailiff to J. J. Hubbard, Esq., says, "The cottages in this parish are con-" structed of brick with tiled roofs principally, well " ventilated, with a living room 12 ft. + 14 ft. + 8 ft. " 6 in. and bedrooms lofty and ventilated, with " garden, pump, washhouse, and coal place. There " are three bedrooms in almost every instance where " there is a family. These cottages are of superior " construction, and well fitted with respect to accom-" modation in every respect. They are the property " of the owner of the land; the rent varies from 1*s*. " to 2*s*. per week."

34*b*. Note.—(The cottages in this parish are not sufficient to supply the labour required. In answer to Circular Question III. 32, Mr. Linnell says, "We " obtain our labourers from Adstock, situated within " a mile."—G. C.)

35. Adstock, population, 1861, 385; acreage, 1,130.

35*a*. *The Rev. J. Niven* says of the cottages, " Some of mud or clay, others of brick; good water; " nearly all have gardens or allotment ground. A " number of the cottages belong to the poor men " who occupy them, and are generally kept clean; " others belong to landowners and other parties. " Rents vary from 1*s*. and 1*s*. 3*d*. per week. We " supply labour to Addington."

35*b*. Note.—(Most of the cottages are old and small, but the Assistant Commissioner found them cleaner than is generally the case in such cottages in Bucks.)

36. Beachampton, population, 1861, 272; acreage, 1,492.

36*a*. *The Rev. R. N. Russell* says, "The chief " landowners are James Walker, Esq., and Lord " Carington.

" James Walker, Esq., owns about 750 acres, and " has 28 cottages, eight new and good, with three " bedrooms, rent 1*s*. per week; some of remainder " fair, and some bad, rent 30*s*. a year.

" Lord Carington owns about 500 acres. On a " complaint of the condition of the cottages on this " property, they were pulled down, and a miserable " hovel-like farmhouse made into three cottages un-" approachable in winter, and having no water to " drink except pond water, unless it is fetched from " a distance; it would be most desirable to induce " the present owner to look into this matter.

" There are some wretched hovels built by a " squatter on the road-side adjoining Lord Caring-" ton's property."

36*b*. Four brick cottages in a row by road-side, with one small room downstairs and ditto above; rent 1*s*. 3*d*. per week; no outhouses or other conveniences. In one of these lives—

36*c*. *Mrs. Reynolds*, who says, "My husband is a " farm labourer, and gets 11*s*. a week. We have " four children, the eldest eight. I would be glad " to send him to work if he could get it. You see " there's six of us to keep out of the 11*s*. a week."

In another of these cottages lives William Alderman, who works at Wolverton Station, and has to walk, acording to his wife's account, four or five miles to his work, but cannot afford to take a cottage nearer, rents are so high.

36*d*. *Mrs. Betts*, occupying a cottage in another part of the village, says, "My husband is a farm " labourer, but he is never well very long together. " We have eight children at home.

" Lad 20, works, keeps himself and lodges here.

" Girl 17, makes lace.

" Boy 15, gets 5*s*. and gives me 4*s*.

" Boy 13, gets 4*s*., gives me all.

" Girl 10, makes lace (goes to school three after-" noons per week).

" Boy 8, goes to work, gets 2*s*.

" Two younger at home.

" Neither the girl 10 nor boy 8 can read or write. " It's a pity, but we had to send the boy of 8 to " work."

36*e*. *John Shean*, age 12, cannot read nor write, works about a farmhouse, "chopping wood, cleaning " milk buckets, and such like jobs."

37. Buckingham, population, 1861, 3,849; acreage, 4,777.

37*a*. *The Rev. W. F. Norris*, says of the cottages, " Ventilation bad.

" Drainage chiefly into the river, and the drains " *mostly* cheaply made with stones, and quite in-" sufficient.

" Water supply is good, and gardens are sufficient " for the population.

" Owners in every class of life.

" No compulsory dealing, though in certain cases " the tenant is expected to frequent a certain shop.

" Rent considerably higher than in the villages."

37*b*. *Mr. Thos. Ridgway*, occupier, says, "The " cottages are not so good as one would desire to see " them, still where the land is owned by large pro-" prietors improvements are being rapidly made in " most instances, the reverse being the case where " they belong to small tradesmen or speculators.

" Being in a market town they vary much in size " and construction. The accommodation is very " various. Water supply generally good. Being in " the town many of the dwellings have no garden, " and scant means of out-door convenience.

" The principal owners of cottage property are " tradesmen, who have built tenements for the use of " small holders.

" The rent varies, say from 2*s*. to 3*s*. 6*d*. per week, " according whether any garden belongs to the " cottage."

38. Foscott, population, 96; acreage, 714.

38*a*. Several wattle and daub cottages.

38*b*. *Mrs. Bryant*, husband a farm labourer, has 12*s*. per week.—" We have four children; the eldest " a boy of 10 goes to work, drives a plough, and gets " 2*s*. a week. Next a boy of eight goes to work " crow-scaring, and gets 2*s*. Next, child four years " old. Next a baby. Both elder boys were at school, " and one of 'em will go again after hay-time. If " Mr. Hall will keep him on, the eldest will go on at " work. The boys can read and write a little. They " go two nights a week to night school. My hus-" band earns more than 12*s*. at piece work, such as " wheat hoeing, bean hoeing, and hedge cutting, but " I don't ask for what he gets more than 12*s*. I " never count on having more than the 12*s*. We " pay 6*d*. a week rent, and have one very small " bedroom."

39. Hillesden, population, 1861, 251; acreage, 2,150.

39*a*. *Mr. Thos. Barge*, occupier, says, "About

"half the cottages in this parish are newly built, with "five rooms, good size, well ventilated, and drained; "large gardens, &c. The others are now in course of "enlargement and repair. They all belong to one "proprietor, the owner of most of the land in the "parish. The rent is from 1*l.* 10*s.* to 3*l.* per "annum.

"In some of the parishes in this district where "the land and houses belong to many and different "owners, the cottages are small and bad, and very "little improvement is taking place; on the contrary, "where the parish belongs to a large landowner, in "most cases, excellent dwellings for the labourers "are being put up, and great improvements are in "progress.

"The labourers wages are about 14*s.* per week; "other earnings very uncertain."

40. LECKHAMPSTEAD, population, 1861, 482; acreage, 2,522.

40*a*. *Mr. Thos. Attwood*, occupier, says, "The "cottages in this parish (although many of them are "old) are on the whole an average of the cottages in "other villages in this neighbourhood. They are "well supplied with water, there are but very few "that have not good gardens, and they mostly have "outhouses, &c. A very large proportion of them "belong to the landowners, and I can with safety say "there are not three of the occupiers that are re-"stricted in their dealings by their landlords. I am "under the impression that the average weekly rental "would not exceed 1*s.* 2*d.* per week."

41. MAID'S MORETON, population, 1861, 543; acreage, 1,260.

41*a*. *Rev. M. W. Davies* says, "The cottages are "badly constructed; many of them with but one "room below and one above, and these of course "crowded; the drainage is imperfect; the water "supply deficient; gardens are scarce; privy accom-"modation extremely bad; rents low, though high "enough for what the cottages are; ownership chiefly "vested in the landowners. Considering the many "drawbacks the morality and health of the parish are "very fair."

41*b*. *George Henderson*, a farm labourer, living in one of a row of six old and very bad cottages (called Well More or Moor) quite unfit for human beings to live in, with a small room on ground floor and ditto above, has six children.

Boy, 18, at work, gets 9*s.* per week.
Girl, 15, making lace.
Girl, 12, ditto.
3 younger girls.

41*c*. Girl, 12, *Louisa Henderson*.—"There is no "schoolmaster just now not for two or three months. "I cannot read nor write nor spell my own name."

41*d*. *Ellen Jones*, aged 12 (Wellmore).—"I work "at my pillow. I can't read nor yet write. I go to "school of a Sunday. I was at school a time, but I "didn't learn much. There ain't no school just now. "James Jones, my father, gets 11*s.* a week. Mother "is osier peeling. My eldest sister 15 is with her. "I've two sisters younger. None of us are at school. "There ain't never a school."

41*e*. *Mrs. Hands* (husband a farm labourer, has three children) says, "He gets 12*s.* a week. He "never gets great work. The eldest boy 10 works "for a farmer; he gets 2*s.* 6*d.* per week. He went "to school five years, but he didn't improve much "with his schooling."

41*f*. *Frank King*, labourer.—"I am digging gravel "for a poor man who has the road. He pays me 3*s.* "a day, from 6 a.m. till 4½ p.m. We rest a little, "over an hour. I live in Maid's Morton. Nearly "all the houses have only one room. We pay 1*s.* a "week rent."

41*g*. *James Anderson*, wife and four grandchildren, eldest a boy 19; second, ditto 15; pays 2*l.* a year rent, says, "It's a shocking place. My landlord "wanted me to buy it; I told him I would not have "it at a gift."

41*h*. *Thomas Jolly*, 18.—Can read and write a little.

41*i*. *John Jolly*, 15.—Can read and write. Left school four years ago.

41*j*. *William Jolly*, 12.—Can read and write a little. Gets 3*s.* a week driving plough. Was at school three weeks last winter.

42. SHALSTONE, population, 246; acreage, 1,320.

42*a*. The following account of the state of the cottages in Shalstone is copied from one of the articles before referred to, published in the "Morning Star" in 1863, and represents very truly the state of the village as seen by the Assistant Commissioner in 1868:—

"The village of Shalston is a gladsome contrast to the penury and suffering around. Here no old nor ill-conditioned cottages are to be seen. Nearly all have been rebuilt, all the old ones are well repaired, and all the new ones, built of brick, have four rooms, a pretty portico in front, wash-houses and out-houses, pump, well, and pigsty. A piece of well tilled garden is attached to each cottage, and plots of ground at cheap rates are available to each cottage."

42*b*. *Sophia Greaves* (single woman), working with another woman (married) picking twitch (or "switch"), gets 8*d.* a day. "I come out in February, "and work on in the field till Michaelmas, at any "job, weeding corn, &c. I live in Water Stratford, "and work on this farm in Shalstone."

42*c*. *Wm. Parkins* (an old man) says, "And "there's another thing in this parish, we have never "a public house, so the men can't waste their wages. "I've been out and about a good deal, and I think "there is nothing helps a man to save more, nor not "having a chance to spend his 6*d.* or so of a Saturday "night at a public house."

43. THORNBOROUGH, population, 1861, 694; acreage, 2,530.

43*a*. *Rev. Daniel Watkins*, says of cottages, "We "should be glad to have three bedrooms in each cot-"tage occupied by a man and wife and children of "different sexes, but with the present rate of wages "the cottagers could ill afford to pay a higher rent. "The water is good, and not deficient in quantity. "Most cottages have gardens attached. Ownership "very much divided; chief landowner has about 700 "acres, and owns three or four cottages. The rents "vary from 4*l.* to 2*l.* 10*s.* We supply labour to "Thornton and Buckingham."

43*b*. *Mr Bell*, occupies Coombe, says, "I employ "nobody under 10 years. I pay ordinary men 13*s.* "a week, and they have a good deal of piece-work "at which they earn about 15*s.* per week. I have a "brick yard, in which three boys of about 14 are "employed; this farm belongs to me, and is well sup-"plied with good cottages."

43*c*. *Mrs. Griffin*, Coombe; husband a farm labourer, has 12*s.* a week; occupies one of a block of three good brick and tile cottages, with 30 poles of garden at 3*l.* a year. Mrs. Griffin says, "We have three "children, the eldest, four years, goes a mile to school "at Thornborough; we get on pretty well considering "bread is so dear, and haven't anything to complain "of."

43*d*. *Mrs. Clarke* (husband a farm labourer, earning 12*s.* a week), says, "she has four children:

"Girl 10 years old, at lace school.
"Girl 7 " "
"Boy 6 " at day school.
"Boy 2 " at home."

The girl of 10 earns 1*s.* a week. "I pay 8*d.* a week "for the children at school" (meaning lace and day school) "we have hard work to get along, but we "get along somehow, and I often say as how I would "like to keep my girls at school, but how are we to "live if they ain't to work. My girl works 10 and "sometimes 11 hours a day, and it's long sitting. "The little one of 6 she grows thin on it, it don't "suit her sitting at the pillow so long."

Buckinghamshire.

Mr. Culley.

f.

43*e*. *Wm. Mundy*, 13 years old, working for a farmer; can read, but can't write; was at school a good many years ago: goes to Sunday school.

43*f*. *Martha Howard*, keeps a lace school.

Girl, 13, can read, cannot write, goes to Sunday school.
Girl, 12, can read a little.
„ 12, can read, cannot write.
„ 12 „ „
„ 12 „ „
„ 11, can read and write a little.
„ 8 „ „

44. THORNTON, population, 111; acreage, 1,332.

44*a*. *Mr. Macfarlane*, land bailiff, says of the labourers, "I consider labour here dearer than in "Oxfordshire, Northampton or Berks, and much "dearer than in the south of Scotland, where one "man is nearly equal to two of ours. Some men "working for Mr. Cavendish are now earning 15*s*., "16*s*., and 17*s*. per week, hoeing beans, and mangold, "&c., our beer allowance costs us about 3*l*. a year "per man."

44*b*. NOTE.—(This parish draws labourers from surrounding parishes.—G. C.)

45. TINGEWICK, population, 1861, 914; acreage, 2,072.

45*a*. *Mr. R. P. Greaves*, occupier, says of cottages, "Construction, fair generally. Brick and slate with "good drainage and ventilation; in such a number "of cottages, there will be some exceptions, we have "some miserable places run up on the waste years "ago, now scarcely habitable, small rooms badly "ventilated, containing in a few cases, large families.

"Accommodation. Two bedrooms generally, water "supply good, mostly gardens, and sufficient out-"houses.

"Ownership. Various, no large landowner pos-"sessing any, no tradesmen pressing their tenants to "deal with them.

"Rents moderate, from 3*l*. to 4*l*., including often good-sized garden."

NEWPORT PAGNELL UNION.

46. BRADWELL, population, 1861, 1,658; acreage, 891.

46*a*. *W. G. Duncan*, Esq., landowner, says, "Our "cottages are fairly comfortable; rooms are small, "but a poor man objects to a large room, he says it "is cold in winter. Ventilation and drainage good. "Accommodation generally sufficient, if they would "not take lodgers; water supply deficient; not many "with gardens; all with out-houses. Landowners "have scarcely any houses. The houses have been "built in rows by various persons buying plots of "land and running up houses to induce the artizans "from Wolverton to occupy them at a less rent than "at Wolverton, 1½ miles off. Rent 2*s*. 6*d*. to 4*s*. "weekly.

"This parish is very peculiarly circumstanced. "20 years ago it was peopled by a purely agricultural "population of about 340 inhabitants. But Wolver-"ton station works increased so much, that labour "was required there, and our labourers left farm "work and took to labour at the workshops. Agri-"cultural labour has been hard to get *in* the parish. "Just now, employment at Wolverton has decreased, "consequently, we have plenty of labour for our "farms, chiefly from the single men. The number "of children of the agricultural labouring class in "our school is very small. We have a very good "school, with three teachers; charge to each scholar "2*d*. weekly, and we have had 62 children on the "books, since Christmas 1867."

47. GREAT BRICKHILL, population, 1861, 590; acreage, 2,333.

47*a*. *Mr. Charles Gilby*, says of the cottages, "The accommodation, water supply, garden, out-"houses, &c., generally good; they belong to the "landowner.

"Rent, from 3*l*. to 4*l*."

47*b*. NOTE.—(As far as the Assistant Commissioner could see the cottage accommodation in this parish is well looked after.)

48. LITTLE BRICKHILL, population, 1861, 423; acreage, 1,047.

48*a*. *The Rev. T. P. Williams*, says of the cottages, "The rooms are for the most part small. "Drainage tolerable, and water supply sufficient.

"Gardens not generally adjacent to cottages, but "all have allotments of 20 poles in the immediate "vicinity."

48*b*. COPY of LETTER from REV. T. P. WILLIAMS to G. CULLEY, Esq., Horrabridge, Plymouth.

SIR, June 3rd, 1868.

SPEAKING generally, Little Brickhill may be considered well circumstanced as to the agricultural population.

The farmers (five in number) are considerate people who do not desire to press unduly on their labourers. The labourers are sufficient for the requirements of the farmers (in point of *number*) and not in excess. The average of wages, except in harvest time, is about 11*s*. for an adult. Women and girls are *never* employed in agriculture, but seldom even in hay-making.

Lace making and straw plaiting occupy much of the time of the young girls who are not at school. Many of the older ones go off to Dunstable or to Luton as "bonnet sewers." They do not, as a rule, affect domestic service.

The labouring men of this part of Buckinghamshire generally, do not compare favourably with the labourers of other counties. They are not fond of hard work, and are fond of beer. The wives having been usually straw plaiters or bonnet sewers, know little about promoting the domestic comfort of their husbands, or of properly bringing up their children.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
T. P. WILLIAMS.

48*c*. *Mrs. Ickford* (husband farm labourer, has five children, eldest 11, four of them at school,) says, "If "my girl (11) could earn anything she would be at "work, but plaiting is so bad, she can't. I like 'em "to be at school, but they must work as soon as they "can earn anything."

49. BROUGHTON, population, 1861, 155; acreage, 1,020.

49*a*. The *Rev. J. W. Wing* says of the cottages, "One sitting room and a pantry below, and two to "three bedrooms as above; one well for four houses. "Garden about 15 poles. Outhouse should be "farther from the dwelling, it now adjoins. Owner "is the proprietor of the entire parish. Rent, 1*s*. per "week."

49*b*. Extract of letter from the *Rev. J. W. Wing* to *Geo. Cully, Esq.*:—"I am of opinion that the "Factory Act should be extended to our lace "schools, for children of the tender age of 7 or 8 "ought not to be confined at work for many hours "each day in small close rooms. If we could have "them regularly each day up to 10 years of age, "then with a night and Sunday school we might "give them all the education needed for their station "in life. If we are to have a school rate parents "must be compelled to send their children to "school."

50. CHICHELEY, population, 1861, 265; acreage, 1,620.

50*a*. *Mr. Francis Coales*, occupier, says, "The "cottages are old fashioned but comfortable, and "standing in different parts of the parish on the "farms; they have gardens and outhouses, and are "the property of the landowners. Rent from 4*d*. "to 1*s*. per week, average about 7*d*.

"Men attending stock on Sunday get 14*s.* per "week, ordinary labourers 12*s.*, increased by piece "work to 16*s.*"

50*b.* Copy of letter from MAJOR CHESTER, J.P., Chicheley, to GEO. CULLY, Esq.

DEAR SIR, June 22, 1868.

I RECEIVED your letter and enclosure yesterday. The women and children (female) in this neighbourhood never attempt farm work, but devote themselves almost entirely to *lace making*, the girls commencing at the early age of 6 or 8. The hours of work of women and children and the distance from their homes to their places of work are much improved of late years; their health is good generally, and the state of their education tolerably good.

Believe me,
Yours faithfully,
C. M. CHESTER.

51. EMBERTON, population, 1861, 624; acreage, 1,860.

51*a.* *Mr. William Hawkins*, occupier, says, "The "cottages belong to many different proprietors and "are of very varied construction, from good to very "bad. Some, perhaps, 15 to 20 have but one room "above and one below, very few have above two "rooms on each floor, and not much attention is "paid to ventilation. The village is well supplied "with water, and of late sanitary regulations have "been better attended to. The rents vary from 1*s.* "to 2*s.* per week, they average, I should say, 1*s.* 4*d.* "without garden. On the whole I consider there "is a want of good cottage accommodation as many "cottages are too crowded. I do not, however, see "much prospect of amendment, as those cottages "owned by the lord of the manor are amongst the "worst in point of size and accommodation.

"Reckoning none but those of agricultural la-"bourers, there are 106 cottages inhabited by 464 "persons. There are 37 children between 8 and 10 "years, and 34 children between 10 and 13 years. "Very few of these go to school except on Sunday, "save that the girls go to lace schools."

NOTE.—(The school return shows that of the 34 children between 10 and 13 only one goes to the day school.—G. C.)

52. GAYHURST, population, 129; acreage, 840.

52*a.* *Mr. John Wilmer*, occupier, says, "I employ "a few boys, sometimes as many as 14 or 15 for a "few days in hot weather; boys whose ages vary "from 9 to 12. My wage for ordinary men is 12*s.*, "Sunday men 13*s.* with beer. In hay time I pay "no additional wage but they get beer. In harvest "I pay 3*s.* 6*d.* a day and five pints of beer. Harvest "is generally done by piece work, but when I take "them off I give them as above; I let all cutting by "piece work. The men clear at piece work in "harvest 25*s.* per week including beer, say, a guinea "and beer, no man has a right to earn less. Several "families earning most are worst off in my neigh-"bourhood, their wives are such bad managers."

53. HANSLOPE, population, 1861, 1,791; acreage, 5,540.

53*a.* *R. Walpole, Esq.*, landowner.

Ventilation tolerably good; *drainage* much improved of late years, but requires close supervision by the relieving officer, who is the inspector of nuisances, and does not inspect except on complaint made.

Some four, some two roomed, very few with three bedrooms; water supply very fair; gardens to a moiety; about 120 allotments varying for 10 to 30 poles; outhouses moderate.

Landowners and persons who have saved a little money are the owners of the cottages.

Rent, 3*l.*, 4*l.*, 4*l.* 10*s.*, and 5*l.* a year, a few 7*l.*; but a very fair rent for a cottage and garden is from 4*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.*; 4*l.* 10*s.* ought to be highest. Daily wages have increased from 10*s.* and 11*s.* a week to 12*s.* and 13*s.* during the last 12 years; and shepherds, cattlemen, and the like command 14*s.* and 15*s.* a week including Sunday work.

54. LAVENDON, population, 1861, 820; acreage, 2,562.

54*a.* The *Rev. G. W. Tomkins* says of the cottages, "Rooms generally average 14 feet square; "ventilation fair; drainage good; water supply "good; garden good. Ownership, very little by "tradesmen, but a good deal scattered."

55. OLNEY, population, 1861, 2,298; acreage, 3,140.

55*a.* *Rev. J. P. Langley* says of the cottages:—

"1. The drainage has been improved lately.

"2. Water supply good.

"3. The owners of cottages are many here, and of "various trades or professions; the lord of the "manor owns but few cottages. This state of things "is not favourable to the goodness of the cottage "accommodation. Some owners are non-resident "and cannot look after the repairs. Some cannot "get the rents paid and have no encouragement to "make improvements. Many cottages are built "down yards or alleys at right angles to the principal "street, with little or no room for out premises.

"4. The rent of a cottage of two rooms is, perhaps, "1*s.*, of four rooms from 1*s.* 3*d.* to 2*s.*"

53*b.* *Mr. John Yorke*, occupier, says of cottages, "All vary, from the merest hovel to decent and "respectable cottages. The rents vary from 50*s.* to "to 5*l.*, few at the last rate."

56. RAVENSTONE, population, 400; acreage 2,230.

56*a.* The following statement of the state of education of 30 families of labourers living near him was given to the Assistant Commissioners by the guardian for Ravenstone:—

In 24 families out of the 30 all the children above seven years old can read and write.

In one family one child of 8 cannot read nor write.

In one family one child of 13 cannot read nor write.

In one family of seven children, between 2 and 18 years, no child can either read or write.

In one family of three children two of over 12 years can neither read nor write.

In one family four out of five children over 9 years old cannot read nor write.

In one family three children over 9 can read but cannot write.

Most of the children of the 24 families who can read and write left school at 9 or 10 years of age, *i.e.* of those who are over that age, but many are still at school.

57. SHERINGTON, population, 1861, 839; acreage 1780.

57*a.* *Rev. Alex. King*, says of the cottages, "There "is a sufficient amount of cottage accommodation "and the cottages are well kept; ventilation and "drainage are good; water supply is good. The "cottages belong to landowners and small free-"holders, and some to the labourers themselves. "Rents are from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* per week."

58. STOKE GOLDINGTON, population 963; acreage 2,061.

58*a.* *Rev. C. Jerdein*, says (in a circular which was returned too late to be put into the summary of answers contained in such circulars), "The cottages "in Stoke Goldington are in general small, ill-con-"trived, and in *very many* instances quite inadequate "to the accommodation of the families inhabiting "them. The owner of the greater part of them is "the landowner. The rent of his cottages is small. "I feel deeply that my efforts to improve the people "are in a great degree counteracted by insufficient "accommodation. It is very prejudicial to the "morality of the poor."

58*b.* NOTE.—There is a night as well as day school at Stoke Goldington with an average attendance of

Buckinghamshire.

Mr. Culley.

f.

14 in winter and 10 in summer, all over 12 years of age. In the day school the average attendance of of children is :—

In summer—	
Under 10 - -	73
10 to 13 - - - -	3
	76
In winter—	
Under 10 - -	60
10 to 13 -	6
	66

There are no girls over 10 years of age at the day school.

59. Tyringham, population, 226 ; acreage, 1,736.

59*a*. *Mr. Morley* says, "We have built for Mr. Tyringham four pair of good cottages for 230*l*. including carriage, with three bedrooms, living-room, scullery and pantry, privies and ashpits, and barns for each ; one draw-well extra for four pairs, brick and slate nine-inch walls ; we can build such cottages with 14-inch walls for 250*l*. all included ; we let these cottages at 3*l*. a year including 15 poles of land."

60. Willen, population, 1861, 80 ; acreage, 657.

60*a*. *Mr. Wm. Whitworth*, occupier, says, "In the parish of Willen the cottages are good, but I am the owner of many old cottages totally unfit for human habitation. I charge them very little rent so cannot persuade the people to leave them, or would pull them down but do not feel inclined to build more."

The trustees of Dr. Busby's charity, Westminster, are the owners, and the rent 6*d*. per week with every comfort.

LEIGHTON BUZZARD UNION.

61. Cheddington, population, 628 ; acreage, 1,400.

61*a*. The Commissioner's circular has not been returned from this parish.

There are some new and good and some old and bad cottages, a few claimed by the occupiers.

61*b*. *Mrs. Rowe*, occupies a cottage with one bedroom and pays 3*l*. 10*s*. for cottage and very small garden, husband a farm labourer, six children at home :—

Girl 19, plaiting.
Son 16, at work.
Girl 14, plaiting.
Girl 8, at plait school.
Son 5, at day school.
Son 3, at home.

says, "I can't afford to send my girl of 8 to school, I would send her if I could. My girl of 14 can read but she can't write."

61*c*. *Arthur Seabrook*, 13, driving a harrow, can read and write, spell his own name, and add figures together pretty readily.

62. Northall (hamlet of Eddlesborough).

62*a*. *The Rev. W. Roberts* says of cottages, "Ventilation is often very faulty and the drainage poor. There is also in many instances a sad lack of wholesome water.

"The cottages in this hamlet are in the following proportion (approximate) :—

Landowners, one-third ; tradesmen, &c. two-thirds ; rent, fair.

62*b*. There are three schools in Eddlesborough parish at which the attendance is at present 207. Population, 1,671.

62*c*. (The drainage in the village of Eddlesborough appeared to the Assistant Commissioner to be exceedingly defective.)

63. Ivinghoe, population, 1861, 1849 ; acreage, 5,252.

63*a*. *The Rev. W. J. Hamilton* says, "There are some cottages with good accommodation, and garden ; others quite the reverse. The best are those belonging to the great landowner, Earl Brownlow. Some built by smaller owners as a speculation are good, but many have very indifferent accommodation. The water in the town is good, and sufficient. An outbreak of cholera took place in one yard, two years ago, the origin of which was attributed, in great measure, to the water of a well into which sewage and impurities had found an entrance. Of course, the use of it was prohibited till the defects were remedied. The houses there were badly drained, and imperfectly ventilated, and some very filthy."

63*b*. *Mrs. Stratford.*—Three children. Husband a farm labourer. Eldest child a girl, 16. Only one bedroom. Cottage very clean. Girl 16, can read and write. Boy 11, now working on a farm, was at school till very lately, "he gets 7*d*. a day." Pays 1*s*. 9*d*. a week rent : "Yes, the rent's high and we don't get much for it you see, I keep it as tidy as I can, but it ain't easy to keep a place clean when you have to do everything in it."

63*c*. Close to Ivinghoe village the Assistant Commissioner visited an extraordinary collection of cottages in a rag or chalk pit. These cottages are built against the west and north sides of the pit which is about 100 feet square. Eight cottages, with one room 10 ft. by 10 ft. and a back place 10 ft. by 6 ft. downstairs, and a low bedroom 10 ft. by 10 ft. upstairs, stand in a row along the west side of the pit, and eight cottages of the same size and description, but having eight other single-roomed cottages in one floor over them, stand against the north side ; the doors of the lower habitations in these last cottages opening into the pit, and of the upper habitations on to the natural surface of the ground behind. At the south end of the pit are some barns belonging to the cottages which open into it, and in front of the barns is a common midden for the 16 cottages facing it. The following description of the size of 24 habitations in the rag pit village was obtained by Capt. Drake, Chief Constable of Bucks, for the Assistant Commissioner.

Sixteen of these cottages consist of two rooms 10 ft. by 10 ft., and a back place of 10 ft. by 6 ft.

In these 16 cottages—

There is	1 family of	9	persons.
	1 „	8	„
	2 families of	7	„
	4 „	6	„
	1 „	4	„
and	7 „	3	persons or less.
Total	16 families containing	75	persons.

In the upper tier of eight one-floored habitations the sizes of the two rooms (or one divided) are 9 ft. by 9 ft. and 8 ft. by 7 ft.

Four of these are occupied by two families, and the other four by one family each. The largest family having to sleep in one of the bedrooms, 8 ft. by 7 ft., is five.

Supposing the rooms to be 7 ft. high, which is considerably above the height of some of them, as far as the Assistant Commissioner can remember, there are 40 of the 102 inhabitants of the pit who have to sleep in less than 100 cubic feet of air each, including the space occupied by furniture. The occupiers of the cottages in the pit are thus described :—

18 cottages are occupied by labourers.
1 by a straw plaiter.
1 is a plaiting school.
1 is occupied by a dealer.
and 1 by a rope maker.

There is no ventilation at the back of any of the cottages whose doors open into the pit.

AMERSHAM UNION.

64. Amersham, population, 3,019; acreage, 7,734.

64*a*. *The Rev. E. T. Drake* says of the cottages, "The drainage is pretty good in the town, and bad in the hamlets.

"Half of the cottages belong to the chief landowners, half to small tenement holders who are not tradesmen.

"There ought to be more bedrooms. Rents are about 1*s*. 6*d*. per week."

64*b*. Wages on four farms occupied by tenant farmers:—

Boys from 8 to 10, 3*s*. per week.
" 10 to 13, 4*s*. "
" 13 to 18, 4*s*. to 7*s*. per week.

Females for weeding and haymaking, 1*s*. per day.

Hours of work for boys, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

64*c*. Wages on Mr. Drake's farm:—

Men.—1 man at 16*s*. per week.
2 men at 15*s*. "
9 men at 13*s*. "
22 men at 12*s*. "

Each of these men has 21*s*. a week in harvest, and the 12*s*. men are raised to 13*s*. in hay time.

Boys.—7 boys between 13 and 18 at 5*s*. per week, raised to 12*s*. in harvest.
18 boys under 13 years at 3*s*. per week.

18 women in hay time at 1*s* per day.

(The above table was kindly sent to the Assistant Commissioner by Mr. Drake as an example of the wages of the parish.)

64*d*. *Mr. Crouch*, occupier and guardian, thus gives the average earnings per week of six men, from Lady-day 1867 to Lady-day 1868, taken from his labour book:—

	s.	*d.*
No. 1.	15	10
No. 2.	15	6
No. 3.	15	2
No. 4.	15	0
No. 5.	14	11
No. 6.	13	10

Average per man of six men, 15*s*. 0½*d*.

65. Chalfont St. Giles, population, 1,217; acreage, 3,690.

65*a*. *Mr. James Gurney*, occupier, says, "The construction of the cottages is inconvenient, and drainage bad. Water supply good. Gardens insufficient. Owners chiefly tradespeople, who do not compel their tenants to deal with them.

"Rents are moderate."

66. Chenies, population, 1861, 486; acreage, 1,744.

66*a*. *Mr. F. C. Rickards*, occupier, says, "All the cottages belonging to the Duke of Bedford have sufficient accommodation for the families who occupy them. There are about 72 cottages, but not more than 25 inhabited by agricultural labourers."

66*b*. *Mrs. Crutchley* (husband a farm labourer), says "My husband has 12*s*. a week, and in hay time about 15*s*. My eldest child is a girl 11 years old, she plaits and earns 1*s*., as I hinder her a good deal. My second girl, 8 years old, earns 1*s*. I ain't against education, but with all they can earn, it isn't over good living."

The girl 11 can read and write her name.

The girl 8 can read, but cannot write.

67. Coleshill (a hamlet of Amersham), population, 531; acreage, 2,810.

67*a*. *John Werge Howey, Esq.*, landowner and occupier, says, "Cottages have two rooms, one on the ground, one above, as a rule 12 ft. by 12 ft., height, 9 ft. Ventilation, door, chimney, or a broken pane of glass. No drainage, except to the road. The number of the family not taken into consideration. Water bad, and scarce in dry seasons; his hamlet is better supplied than generally in the parish. A small out-house, a small pot garden; when obtainable, a piece of potatoe ground. Owners, some out of business, some in trade. Rent, 1*s*. to 2*s*. per week. Cottages, as a rule, miserably poor in furniture, the bedding of the scantiest and most wretched description. After a meal, nothing left in the cottage, no bacon, no cheese, no lard, perhaps a piece of bread left for a young child. Beer shops are the curse of the hamlet.

"As a northern man, I cannot help contrasting the difference between a hind's house in the north, and a labourer's cottage in the county of Bucks. In the first you see useful substantial furniture, crockery ware, good beds and bedding. Overhead sides of bacon, cheese, bread; in the dairy, butter, milk, &c. The people go to work with a heart and good will. Now in Bucks, look into a cottage. You see a want of furniture, scanty bedding, perhaps the remains of a quartern loaf, and a mug smelling of beer. The family not having a good meal of victuals once in twelve months, do their work (except piecework), accordingly without a will. As a rule, they are honest and well conducted, but their enemies are want of economy, ignorance, and the beershop."

68. Latimer (hamlet of Chesham).

68*a*. Of the wages, *Mr. Metcalfe*, steward to Lord Chesham, says, "The average wages of able-bodied farm labourers, take the year round, are at least 14*s*. per week. We only give beer in hay time and harvest. There is very little work for boys under 10; we don't care to take them. If I employ such a boy he gets 8*d*. a day. Boys from 10 to 13 get from 8*d*. to 1*s*. per day.

69. Great Missenden, population, 2,250; acreage, 5,731.

69*a*. *The Rev. Joshua Greaves* says (in a circular which was not returned in time to be put into summary), "There are 300 cottages in the parish, most of them have only one bedroom, some have two, and very few have a third. Those who live on the high ground depend for water on tanks and ponds; the tanks are found very useful. We have 20 acres of allotment gardens, besides others let by private persons; this is in addition to gardens round the houses. There has been some improvement of late years in cottage accommodation. My own opinion is that cottage property, if the buildings are suitable and kept in repair, will not pay more than 3 per cent.; the cottagers here cannot afford to pay more than 4*l*. per annum rent. No females are employed in agriculture except in hay time and harvest, and boys are subject to no ill-treatment or hardship from such employment. I think there is no necessity here for fixing an age below which boys should not be employed in farm labour, except it be for the sake of educating them, and only a small portion would come to school unless they were obliged to. I see no reason for restricting the hours of work of boys unless that be also for the sake of education to which my last remark would apply. As to the modes of enforcing school attendance under the Factory Acts, I think the third method, by demanding a certain number of hours attendance during preceding six months, would suit our neighbourhood best. School attendance is only partially affected by the poverty of the parents; there is an indisposition on the part of children to come, and the parents do not enforce it; they go chiefly to the plaiting schools. I believe the subject of cottage accommodation is of the greatest importance, and that we shall never raise the poor socially until it receive the attention of the legislature."

69*b*. *Mr. Carter*, secretary to South Bucks Friendly Society, says, "It would be very little hardship to the parents to compel school attendance up to 10 years of age."

Buckinghamshire.

Mr. Culley.

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69c. *Mrs. Carter* (husband a farm labourer, has seven children, three eldest a girl 16, a boy 15, and a boy 12, sleeping in same bedroom as parents), says, "It's not wholesome nor yet decent. My boy of 12 "can only get work occasionally in throng times, "such as haytime; there is very little farm work for "boys in this parish."

WYCOMBE UNION.

70. Bledlow, population, 1861, 1,189; acreage, 4,130.

70a. *Mr. Henry Gibbons*, landowner and occupier, says of the cottages, "The construction, flint and "brick; rooms about 10 feet square, and a buttery "10×6. Upstairs, one room and one small one. "Some are thatched, with no upstairs. Ventilation "bad, except where windows are broken. No drain-"age. Water supply from ponds, should be tanks, "as this is a hill country. Gardens are good, out-"houses bad generally. Ownership, by landowner; "some few by others; no compulsion to deal. Rents "average 1*s.* 6*d.* to 1*s.* 9*d.* per week. Owners of "improved built cottages will not have degraded "tenants, thus good cottages raise the standard of "morality in a village or town. These questions as "answered will be correct as to what is termed the "lower part of the parish where, being situated in a "vale, water is easily obtained from springs. The "population of each division of the parish may be "assumed as equal.

71. Horsendon and Ilmer, population, 124; acreage, 1,192.

71a. *The Rev. W. E. Partridge* says of the cottages, "There is generally a kitchen and washhouse "downstairs, two rooms above, the youngest children "generally sleeping in their parents' room. Water "supply is good; generally about 12 poles of gar-"den. The newer cottages of a superior class which "I have constructed have 20 poles of ground, with "two good rooms below and three above, pantry, "scullery, and common bakehouse. They are occu-"pied by railway porters, police, and a nurseryman. "The rent of these last cottages is 8*l.* per annum.

72. Little Kimble, population, 182; acreage, 750.

72a. *Mr. Fordom*, occupier, says, "There are 28 "cottages, which would be sufficient for our parish, "but we have to find labourers for Great Kimble. "I occasionally, but not often, employ adult women "picking couch and weeding. Young women plait "or make lace. We offered a premium in the Ris-"borough Agricultural Association for shirt making "to wives and daughters of labourers, and no single "girl competed. I pay regular men 12*s.* a week, "Sunday men 14*s.* The men at 14*s.* a week would "get 20*s.* at hay time and 50*s.* at harvest extra, and "beer allowance. My men work from 6 to 5; "some men work only till 4 o'clock. There are "schools at Great Kimble for both parishes."

73. Little Missenden, population, 1,109; acreage, 3,173.

73a. *Rev. T. S. Pepper* says, "The cottages have "sufficient water supply, good gardens, outhouses, "except in a few instances at Hyde Heath."

73b. *Mrs. Lancaster.*—Husband a farm labourer. Occupies a cottage with two bedrooms. Has seven children, eldest 12 years.

Girl, 12, goes to parochial school, reads and sews two days, plaits three days, and plays one day.

Boy, 10, has 2*s.* 6*d.* a week; only began work at 10, was at school up till then. "Wasn't at work sooner, "because they don't employ 'em so young; my "husband has 12*s.* a week, and we have to get on "as best we can; we have to wait for new clothes "till we can catch 'em."

74. Radnage, population, 470; acreage, 1,352.

74a. *The Rev. G. Phillimore* said, "The only "women employed in agriculture are in harvest, "when families take piece work; women are usually "employed in lacemaking. As soon as girls are able "to make lace they take them from school. None "of them can make up their own clothes. Boys are "employed in farm labour and chairmaking. Chair-"making is withdrawing boys a good deal from farm "labour, and farmers complain of this. The school, "from the population of 450, is almost an infant "school, and the age at which attendance ceases is "about 10. A few families say they cannot pay for "school. In winter several men have only 10*s.* a "week. I don't think the work of children in agri-"culture is injurious to them, but the contrary. I "consider that a strictly compulsory scheme of "education is impracticable in an agricultural district "of this kind."

75. Monk's Risborough, population, 985; acreage, 3,220.

75a. *Mr. George Humphreys* says, "The cottages "are pretty good, of various sizes, but generally "speaking two rooms up and two downstairs, in some "cases three upstairs. Owners chiefly landed pro-"prietors. Rent from 2*l.* to 3*l.* 10*s.*, according to "the size of the garden."

76. Prince's Risborough, population, 1,050; acreage, 2,000.

76a. *Mr. Charles Brown*, landowner and occupier, says of the cottages, "Construction as to size of "rooms, ventilation, and drainage is fair, accommo-"dation mostly good, water supply improving with "the greater use of tanks. Allotments and gardens "sufficient. Ownership various, some cottages owned "by landowners, a few by tradesmen. Rent averages "4*l.* a year."

76b. *Mrs. Henry Lonun.*—Husband a farm labourer, has 12*s.* a week; her boy of 16 has 8*s.* Child of 6 goes to school; pays 1*s.* 8*d.* a week for her cottage with two bedrooms. "No privileges in any way, no "garden; my boy of 16 has been at work eight "years, he went when he was 8; he got 1*s.* 6*d.* a "week at first." The boys says, "I've never been "at day school since I went to work; I'm a plough-"boy; I can read and write pretty fair, can write a "letter to my brother."

76c. *Mrs. Smith* says, "My husband is a farm "labourer; he has 13*s.* a week, because he goes "with the thrashing machine; he can't get much "piece work as he is often with the machine. My "eldest girl, 17 years old, has been ill a long time "with gastric fever, and my second girl, 15 years old, "has to wait on her. My boy, 13 years old, gets "3*s.* a week as a ploughboy, and the youngest, 10 "years old, is at school. I can't hardly keep him "there, but I like to send them to school. We have "a garden about 40 poles, and pay 5*l.* a year and "rates for house and garden."

77. Saunderton, population, 232; acreage, 1,590.

77a. *The Rev. F. A. Faber* says, "The cottages "generally have two rooms, about one-third have "three, size about 12 ft. by 12 ft. by 7 ft. Ventilation "fair. Drainage open. Water from wells pretty "plentiful. They always have gardens of from 10 "to 20 poles, outhouses, and in some of the hamlets "a common oven. Pigsties made by the cottagers "themselves.

12	cottages	belong to	Lord Dormer.
3	„	„	Lady Dashwood.
4	„	„	farmers.
6	„	„	a tradesman.
2	„	„	the occupiers.

4 public houses are rented by brewers at Wycombe.

"Cottage rents are about 1*s.* 4*d.* per week."

77b. *Mr. R. Gurney*, occupier, says, "I farm 325 "acres, of which 300 are arable. I employ no boys "under 10 regularly, occasionally one or two in "summer, when my regular staff is engaged in "making hay, &c. I never employ women, except "a few in harvest. I employ three boys of about 14.

"I employ 12 to 14 men regularly, and I would require for the use of my farm 10 cottages. I have five cottages attached to my farm. The cottages in the parish are pretty good, but there are not sufficient for the labour required in the parish. The rent of the cottages is about 3*l.*, and they belong to different freeholders. One proprietor has about 700 acres, principally arable, and he has 12 cottages. I do not think legislative interference is necessary for the sake of education, unless it took the form of compelling them to attend evening schools. I would have another boy or two if I could get them, they go chairmaking. The women eat opium very much, they go into a shop and say, 'I'll have twopence or threepence to-day,' meaning opium, with which the shopman supplies them without asking what the twopence or threepence are meant for."

78. WENDOVER, population, 1,932; acreage, 5,719.

78*a*. *Mr. Wm. Horwood*, occupier, says, "I never employ women except where men take harvest by piecework, and his whole family assist him. I employ no boy under 13; two between 13 and 18, and ten regular men. The cultivation of land in my parish would require four cottages per 100 acres. I farm in four-course rotation. I pay regular men 12*s*., cattle men, 13*s*. My men work from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m.

79. WOOBURN, population, 1861, 2,200.

79*a*. *Rev. F. H. Ashley*, says, "The worst cottages have gradually disappeared the last 20 years. The new cottages (which are going on rapidly increasing) though far superior are *not* what they ought to be; they have generally good water and gardens.

"The ownership is very varied, those cottages built or possessed by the landowners or residents are the best. It would be well if there was a law which would apply stringently to the new cottages building, or about to be built." Rent, 2*s*. or more.

80. WYCOMBE, population, 1861, 8,373; acreage, 6,318.

80*a*. *Mr. Wm. Treacher*, landowner, says, "There are not many cottages in this district of the parish, excepting the town where some few of the agricultural labourers reside."

80*b*. *Mr. Wm. Edmunds*, occupier, Wycombe: "I hire my shepherd, carters, and ploughers by the year from Michaelmas, and many farmers do in this neighbourhood.

"My shepherd has 12*s*. a week and his house, and 6*l*. extra at harvest.

"My carters have 12*s*. a week, a house, and 5*l*. extra at harvest.

"Ploughboys have 5*s*. a week, their lodging, and 2*l*. 10*s*. extra for harvest (boys from 13 to 18).

"I employ women, some single and some married, weeding sometimes, and haymaking, I pay them 1*s*. a day, and give them beer in hay time."

80*c*. *Mr. Wm. Guy*, occupier, Wycombe: "The hiring for ordinary men is weekly, but shepherds, carters, under carters, and ploughboys, are hired by the year from Michaelmas.

"They are paid about as follows:—

"Shepherds, 13*s*. a week, and 6*l*. at harvest.

"Carters, 13*s*. a week, and 5*l*. to 6*l*. at harvest.

"Under carters, 8*s*. a week, and 5*l*. at harvest.

"Ploughboys, 5*s*. and lodging, and 2*l*. 10*s*. to 3*l*. 10*s*. at harvest.

"I think two cottages per 100 acres sufficient for farms in the Chilterns in five-course rotation.

"I have one ploughboy from the workhouse, who came to me at 13, and is a very good boy. I think that a boy beginning at 13 labours under no disadvantages compared with a boy beginning at 10, except what may be got over in a few weeks.

80*d*. *Mr. Edward Hutchinson*, chair manufacturer: "I employ 54 persons on my premises, and 16 out. Of the 54, nine are women above 18, five are girls between 13 and 18, and one is a girl of 11 years. We employ women only in caning, lad under 18 in finishing. The chairmakers in the outlying districts draw their labour from the agricultural labouring class. Girls from 13 to 18 earn 7*s*. 6*d*. a week, boys of 13 or 14 earn 5*s*. or 6*s*. Lads of 16 to 18 earn 14*s*. and 16*s*. a week."

80*e*. *Mr. Smith*, chair manufacturer: "Children employed in chair making from 12 to 16 years of age earn from 5*s*. to 9*s*. a week, in farm work from 3*s*. to 6*s*. I employ about 130 hands, of whom 28 are females between 13 and 30 years of age. We employ boys of 13 years and upwards, none under 13 because the Factory Act makes it so troublesome, we discharged three boys under 13 on that account."

ETON UNION.

81. BURNHAM, population, 2,223; acreage, 6,250.

81*a*. *Mr. R. J. Rogers* says, "The cottages occupied by the labouring poor in this parish consist chiefly of a living room and back kitchen or washhouse on the ground floor, and two bedrooms, one of which is usually very small. They are badly ventilated, and have scarcely any drainage. They are owned chiefly by small capitalists, in some few cases by landowners, but not at all, so far as I know, by tradespeople with whom the people deal. In the large majority of cases large families are muddled together in such cottages as I have described."

81*b*. *Mr. Joseph Trumper*, occupier, says, "I employ from eight to ten women in weeding and couching, but not in hay-making; they are all over 16 years; some are married. They work together, not mixed with men, under an old man, my servant. They work from 8 till 4, with one hour's rest at dinner; they are seldom at work at 8. They get 9*d*. a day. They live in Burnham village. They prefer this work to domestic service, there is less restraint.

"I think such employment injures women morally, but not physically. I employ no boys under 10. I have three between 10 and 13 driving ploughs, hay-carts, or any farm work, and about five between 13 and 18. Boys from 10 to 13 earn 3*s*. to 3*s*. 6*d*.; they come at 6 a.m. and leave at 5 p.m., and have one and a half hours for meals. They have half a pint of ale, while the men have one pint. They are in no way injured by their work. Day men have 13*s*. a week, carters 14*s*.; by great work they earn 15*s*. to 16*s*. When we thrash they have two pints of ale. They all leave off work at 5; in hay-time, if we keep them till 8 o'clock, they have 15*s*., and have from five to six pints of ale per day."

81*c*. The following is quoted from the "Burnham Magazine" of May 1868, which was sent to the Assistant Commissioner:—

The Dwellings of our Poor.

"We published in our last number an indignant letter from a correspondent, which, although it only just touched, in a few warm sentences, upon the miserable condition of the so-called "Barracks," seemed to us to furnish an occasion for noticing one of the chiefest social evils amongst us—the terrible state of the dwellings of our poor. We are crippled at the first in our wish to state our case as plainly as we would, because if the mischief is literally patent to all, the details are wholly unfit for publication. To talk modestly about "overcrowding" is simply to use a decent word to keep out of sight a shameless indecency. Not only are many of these cottages in the worst state of tottering dilapidation, but there is so little accommodation in them at the price, that the families who live in them must be huddled together irrespective not only of kindred but of sex. Church-going won't cure this: all the sermons in the world won't make a shaky cottage wind-tight, or give it another room. And after all, bad as they are, the "Barracks" as an abomination do not stand alone.

Buckinghamshire.

Mr. Culley.

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At the other end of the town there are some rival "dens" where the demoralization of our poor may be equally guaranteed. Human nature caged up in them must become degraded, and when these "homes" are emptied, from the sheer impossibility of living in them, the beer-shops of course are filled."

81*d*. The following information was given to the Assistant Commissioner by the *Rev. Thos. Carter*, vicar:—"There are a great many cottages in a bad "state, a row, for instance, called the Barracks. "Lord Orkney pulled all the cottages down at "Taplow, and drove the poor and bad characters "into Burnham. Women reap and go hay-making, "and the girls work with their mothers. Cottages "are very dear, obliging the occupiers to take "lodgers. Cottages which were 2*s*. or 2*s*. 6*d*. are "now 3*s*. 6*d*. a week. I pay men working about my "premises 14*s*. a week. Farmers could not do without female labour in harvest. Men come here for "harvest from North Bucks, Berks, and even Wilts. "There should be a public inspector of cottages. "Licences to beershops should be granted in the "first instance by the magistrates, and should be "more sparingly granted."

81*e*. *Mrs. George Aldridge*, Barrack, Burnham:—"My husband has 14*s*. a week. We pay 2*s*. a "week rent. I have six children. My eldest boy "15, gets 4*s*.; my second, 12, is getting 3*s*. now, "but did nothing all winter. I have a girl 9 and a "boy 8, the rest younger; none of 'em are at school, "they haven't clothes to go in. It costs me 10*s*. a "week all but a penny for bread. My husband has "14*s*. a week and 30*s*. extra for harvest, that's all I "know about it. I can't send my children to school "off my husband's wages; if I can get some reaping "they'll go again."

81*f*. *George Denton*, his wife, and four children, in a poor cottage with one bedroom. Eldest girl, 15, can read and write a little; girl, 12, cannot read nor write.

81*g*. *Susan Middleton*, aged 21, works on a farm at all times of the year, when she can get work at 8*d*. She gets 1*s*. in hay-time; she does not reap, but gets 1*s*. for barley raking.

82. Datchett, population, 982; acreage, 1,630.

82*a*. *Mr. C. S. Cantrell*, occupier, says, "The "cottages vary very much; some are very old and "inconvenient. The more recently built ones are "great improvements; they chiefly consist of two "rooms below and three above, viz., one good size "and two small ones. Rent 3*s*. and 3*s*. 6*d*. per "week, exclusive of rates. They have generally a "small outhouse and a *small* plot of garden, say 10 "poles or thereabout.

"The cottage accommodation in Datchett is bad, "and the rents *much too high* for labourers. His "Grace the Duke of Buccleuch is kindly endeavouring 'to better' this state of things, by enlarging "cottages and making them more healthy and comfortable, and letting them at moderate rents. I "hope he will build some on the farm I hold under "him this summer, and which I propose to let at low "rents to my best labourers, as boon and encouragement to good conduct."

82*b*. *Mr. Cantrell* gave the following examples of men's earnings by piece-work from his labour book, 1868:—

Hoeing potatoes between the rows, four men earned 3*s*. 3*d*., 3*s*. 1*d*., 3*s*. 1*d*., and 2*s*. 10*d*. respectively. Same four men hoeing mangold earned 3*s*. a day each. Same men hoeing wheat at 4*s*. per acre earned 2*s*. 9*d*., 2*s*. 8*d*., 3*s*. 2*d*., and 2*s*. 6*d*. respectively. Thrashing wheat (which includes "feeding, thrashing, half winnowing, and tying up straw") at 2*s*. 3*d*. the load of 36 trusses, men earned from 2*s*. 6*d*. to 3*s*. 6*d*., the machine going smoothly. Picking gravel by the piece, Mr. Cautrell's men earned 2*s*. 6*d*. to 3*s*. per day. Spreading dung by the piece, at 1*s*. 6*d*. per acre, men earned from 2*s*. 6*d*. to 3*s*. At hedge trimming two men earned 3*s*. 9*d*. a day each. Mr. Cantrell says, "The ordinary weekly wage is now "13*s*.; was 12*s*. before corn was so dear, and will "probably be 12*s*. again if corn becomes cheap. I "have two young men of 19 and 20; they get 7*s*. "a week in winter and 8*s*. in summer, with 5*l*. at "harvest. They live in my house, and find their "own food; I find firing for them, and give them "small beer. Boys of 16 have 4*s*. 6*d*. in winter, 5*s*. "or 5*s*. 6*d*. in summer, and 50*s*. at harvest. My day "labourers earn on an average 15*s*. a week throughout the year."

83. Farnham Royal, population, 1,378; acreage, 2,910.

83*a*. *Rev. S. F. Marshall* says of the cottages, "A sitting room and kitchen 12 ft. by 10 ft.; a back "kitchen and landing, 10 ft. by 8 ft., and 7 to 8 in "height; with bedrooms of the same size respectively over them, with the general accommodation. "2. The water is fetched from wells or springs adjacent. 3. The ownership is various, some belonging "to the landowners, others to tradesmen and other "proprietors not resident in the parish. 4. The "rents vary from 7*l*. 10*s*. to 4*l*. 10*s*."

In speaking of the cottages, Mr. Marshall said, "Owners should not be allowed to recover rent for "cottages unfit for human dwellings."

Note.—(There are some very poor and crowded cottages in Farnham.)

84. Hitcham, population, 205; acreage, 1,370.

84*a*. *Mr. Richard Webster*, occupier, says "There "are some bad cottages in this parish, and cottages "are very dear. The better ones are occupied by "gentlemen's servants and persons better off than "agricultural labourers, and these have often to content themselves with a poor cottage at 2*s*. 6*d*. a "a week. The best system is where cottages are "built attached to farms, and let with the farms. "Men are then better housed, and can have a good "garden near their house.

"I pay carters 14*s*. a week; day-men 13*s*.

"I employ three married women weeding and "couching in spring, at hay and harvest in summer, "and in trimming turnips for sheep, &c., in winter. "They are paid 9*d*. a day when they work from 8 "till 4, with an hour's rest. In hay time and harvest "they get 1*s*. a day, and work from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., "when they rest half-an-hour at 11 a.m., and half-an-hour at 4 p.m., besides the dinner hour at 1 "o'clock. They have three pints of beer per day in "hay time and harvest. Two men and a boy look "after eight horses. I rent two cottages for a carter "and shepherd to have more control over them, and "to secure cottages for my men. In a farmhouse "which I don't occupy lives a head carter and two "lads. Lads of 17 hired by the year have 6*s*. a "week, and 40*s*. to 50*s*. at harvest. They find their "own food, and I find them lodging and firing. Lads "of 14 hired in the same way have 4*s*. 6*d*. a week, "and 40*s*. at harvest."

84*b*. *Mrs. Rush* (living in one of six one-bedroomed and very poor cottages at Hitcham New-town) says, "We pay 2*s*. and have about 10 to 15 poles. My husband is a farmer; is a labourer; he is truck-filling "to-day; he earns at day-work 2*s*. 9*d*. to 3*s*., but I "can't rightly tell, not if you gives me a guinea. I "have seven children, and my father sleeps here. "Three go to school, and we pay for them. I'm "obliged to work to keep them at school. The eldest "at school is 9, I think, but I'm no scholar; my "husband puts them in the book."

84*c*. Note.—(The cottage rents are very high; 3*s*. for anything like a decent cottage; good ones 4*s*. to 4*s*. 6*d*. All who can do so take lodgers.)

85. Horton, population, 810; acreage, 1,200.

85*a*. *Mr. S. Pullin*, occupier, says, "The cottages "are all built of brick with tile or slate covering, "except three of thatch. They are in groups of "three or four, with good water. The general size "of rooms are from 10 to 12 feet square, with two

"rooms up and two down, with mostly a small shed "for tools, coals, &c. Held by owner. Rent from "2*s.*, 2*s.* 6*d.*, and 3*s.* per week, including rates, &c. "Parish under Small Tenement Act."

86. Iver, population, 1861, 2,114; acreage, 6,133. Cultivation chiefly arable.

86*a*. Answers to shorter circular of inquiry by *C. Tower, Esq.*, Huntsmoor Park.

Boys are employed in farms in Iver parish from 8 years of age; some all the year, others in the spring and at harvest.

No girls are employed in farm labour.

Two-thirds of the women in the parish are employed in farm work, in fruit gardens, or at a paper mill.

Those who are employed on farms have no long distances to go to their work.

The hours of work of children and women are from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. generally, and in harvest as long as they please.

Children should be restricted from working on farms till they are 11 years of age, and be kept at school, and after that age up to 14 or 15 years they should go to school for some portion of the day or week.

There are three day schools in the parish, conveniently situated, and a lads' night school in winter, not as well attended as they should be, chiefly owing to early labour and the ignorance of the parents.

The cottages are not sufficient for the supply of labour, and are many of them bad, overcrowded, and without ventilation. Water is deficient in some localities. About four-fifths of the cottages have gardens.

87. Stoke Poges, population, 1,600; acreage, 3,153.

87*a*. *Mr. H. Cantrell*, occupier, says, "I employ four "women, but not constantly; they have 1*s.* in hay-"making, and 9*d.* at other times. They are all married "women. My single men sleep in my house; we "live so far from the village I am obliged to have "them in my house, but I would much rather have "cottages attached to my farm. I have no worker "who lives less than a mile from my farm, and some "live one and a half to two miles, except, of course, "the young men who live in my house. The dealers "who buy peas from farmers employ Irish people to "pick them; whole families come and sleep any-"where they can, sometimes 30 or 40 in a barn, the "families sleeping together. It is said that very little "immorality takes place owing to the greater chastity "of the Irish girls."

88. Taplow, population, 811; acreage, 1,920.

88*a*. *Rev. Chas. Whateley* says, "There are cot-"tages not occupied by agricultural labourers; some "very crowded. Water supply bad. Owned not by "tradesmen with whom the tenants deal, but by per-"sons who built them as an investment. Rent 4*s.* a "week. No garden. Drainage not bad. Ventilation "good."

88. Answers given by the Buckingham Bench of Magistrates to the Assistant Commissioner's Questions.—Rev. W. A. Uthwatt, J.P., Chairman.

1. Is legislation required for the purpose of fixing the age below which children (*i.e.*, under 13) should not be allowed to be employed in farm labour?

Either to protect them from physical injury, or to secure for them a satisfactory elementary education?—"No."

2. Is there good ground for limiting the hours of work for children? and if so,

What are the limitations you would propose?—"No."

OPINIONS OF BOARDS OF GUARDIANS.

Aylesbury Board of Guardians.

89. Minutes made at a meeting of this Board held at the board room on the 20th of May 1868.

Mr. Culley attended the Board and introduced the questions as to the employment of women and children in agriculture, and the education of such children which had been mentioned to the board last Wednesday, and, after discussion,

It was resolved,

That in the opinion of the board no legislative restrictions are necessary with reference to the employment of boys and girls in agriculture, either in fixing a minimum age or to protect them from physical injury.

That having regard to the number of schools of late years established in almost every village throughout the rural districts of the county, and the facilities now being offered for the education of the children of the poor, it is not expedient to put in force any compulsory system of education.

Thame Board.

90. Extract from the Minutes of the Thame Board of Guardians made at their meeting on the 25th June 1868.

"George Culley, Esquire, a Commissioner appointed to inquire into the employment of children, young persons, and women in agriculture, attended the Board and stated the objects of the inquiry with a view of ascertaining the opinion of the guardians thereon.

"Resolved that, in the opinion of this board, boys under 10 years of age (if employed at all in agriculture) should not be entrusted with the care of horses.

"That children of both sexes should be kept at school until 10 years of age.

"That no legislative interference relative to the employment of children in agriculture after that age should be made."

William Parker,
Clerk to the Guardians.

Buckingham Board.

91. "The Guardians of the Buckingham Union are of opinion that legislation is not required for the purpose of fixing the age below which children should not be allowed to be employed in farm labour, either for the purpose of protecting them from physical injury, or of securing for them a satisfactory elementary education."

91*a*. Copy of a letter from Mr. Henry Hearne, clerk of the guardians, enclosing a copy of this resolution to the Assistant Commissioner.

Buckingham Union,
June 24, 1868.

Dear Sir,

I am directed by the guardians to enclose you their reply to the questions put to them by you, which, as you will see negatives the necessity for legislation on the subject of the employment of children in farm labour. I may, perhaps, add that the question was very fully and ably discussed before this decision was arrived at. The board seemed to feel a difficulty in supplying authentic information as to the rate of wages in the several parishes comprised in the union; but there appeared to be an opinion that more cottage accommodation was wanted, although many new cottages have been within the last few years built in the district.

It seems to me that union rating has removed the chief obstacle which has existed to the erection of cottages on or near the farms requiring the labour which the cottages shelter, and that if reasonable power is given to tenants for life, &c., to charge their estates with the cost of building and repairing a

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necessary number of labourers' houses, nothing more can be expected of the legislature in this direction.

I am, dear sir,
Yours very truly,
HENRY HEARNE.

NEWPORT PAGNELL UNION.

92. At a meeting of the Board of Guardians held at the union workhouse on Wednesday the 10th day of June 1868.

"It was moved by Mr. Walpole and seconded by Coales, and

"Resolved, that in the opinion of this board there is no objection to restrict the employment of boys in field labour to those who have passed their tenth year.

"It was moved by Mr. Walpole and seconded by Mr. Tarver, and

"Resolved, that in the opinion of this board it is of great importance that increased support, by way of pecuniary grants as payments for results be given by Government, to night schools whether superintended by certificated or uncertificated teachers, and that the age at which boys should be admitted to such night schools be fixed at 10 instead of 12."

WILLIAM POWELL,
Clerk to the Guardians.

AMERSHAM BOARD.

93. Minutes of a special meeting of the Guardians of Amersham Union held June 16th 1868.

A special meeting of the Guardians of the Amersham Union held at the workhouse, Amersham, on the 16th day of June 1868, for the purpose of giving information and assistance to the Commissioners appointed under the Royal Commission, "to inquire "into and report upon the employment of children, "young persons, and women in agriculture, for the "purpose of ascertaining to what extent and with "what modification the principles of the Factory "Acts can be adopted for the regulation of such "employments, and especially with a view to the "better education of such children."

Present:

Thomas Tyrwhitt Drake, Esq., Chairman.

William Lowndes, Esq., J. W. Howey, Esq., Captain Harmar Hardy, Mr. Birch, Mr. Rickards, Mr. Gurney, Mr. Crouch, Mr. W. Weller, Mr. Charsley, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Judge.

George Culley, Esq., an Assistant Commissioner appointed with the approval of Her Majesty's Secretary of State, attended the meeting.

Proposed by William Lowndes, Esq., seconded by Mr. William Weller, and carried. That if the principle of the Factory Acts is to be applied there should be an absolute prohibition from employing children in agricultural labour under the age of 10 years, but after that age all further interference should end.

ETON BOARD.

94. At a meeting of the Board of Guardians for Eton Union, held at the union workhouse at Slough on the 30th of June 1868, it was "Proposed by Mr. "Way and seconded by Mr. Irvine, that it is desirable to legislate to prevent children being employed "in agricultural labour up to 10 years and to compel "their attendance at school; an amendment was put "by Mr. C. S. Cantrell, seconded by Mr. Geo. Botham, "that it is not expedient to legislate for the purpose "of fixing the age at which children should be employed in agriculture. There were for the amendment nine votes and for the resolution four, showing "a majority in favour of the amendment of five "votes."

94*a*. Extract from letter from Mr. R. Barrett, clerk to the Board of Guardians for Eton Union, Bucks, to the Assistant Commissioner.

DEAR SIR, June 24th 1868.

FOR your guidance I may state that as a rule (in the district) boys are not employed under the age of 12, and girls scarcely at all until after 16, when they rank as adults and are paid the same as women, their hours of labour from 8 till 4.

Of course there are exceptions to this rule during harvest and probably when the thrashing machine is in operation, but my experience leads to the conclusion that the exceptions are few.

* * * * * *

I am, dear Sir,
Yours very truly.
R. H. BARRETT.

94*b*. Rules of the Eton Board of Guardians for placing out children to board and lodge.

The following copy of the above rules was kindly given to the Assistant Commissioner, along with a copy of the register of school attendance of the children of widows receiving relief, which must be presented every time an application is made for renewal of relief.

Copy of Rules.

"The board will pay 3*s*. 6*d*. per week with each child, provided they have a sufficiency of good wholesome food and warm and cleanly lodging; the money to be paid on the weekly visits of the relieving officer for the district.

"The board will supply each child with a proper outfit of clothing as per list annexed, which is to be renewed and kept in decent repair by the party with whom the children are placed, and for this, after the expiration of three months, 6*s*. 6*d*. quarterly will be paid in advance. It is however to be understood, that it is optional with the board whether to pay this sum in money, or to supply its value in clothing. A list of the clothes will be supplied with each child, which is to be shown when required either by a member of the board, or by the relieving officer on his weekly visits. The clothing to be at all times considered to be the property of the board.

"The children shall be sent regularly to school on week days (and to Sunday school where opportunity offers), and on Sundays shall attend divine worship. After 13 years of age they may be employed for wages in any labour of which the guardians through the relieving officer may approve. Two-thirds of the wages they may earn when at work will be deducted by the relieving officer from the weekly payments, the remaining one-third will be the property of the person who may lodge and clothe them, as a compensation for the extra food and clothing which may be considered necessary in consequence of such employment."

The Report of the school committee to the Eton Board also given to the Assistant Commissioner is very interesting, and shows the great interest taken by the board in the education of children falling under its care.

95. Copy of a Letter from G. O. Rogers to Geo. Culley, Esq.

Newport Pagnel,
SIR, July 17th, 1868.

IN reply to the two questions proposed in your letter of June 19th, I beg to say that *females are not* employed in agriculture in this neighbourhood.

With reference to the boys, there is no doubt that the poverty of the parents compels them often to interrupt their attendance at school while quite young, and to take them away from school at much too early an age (greatly to their disadvantage), yet I do not think that legislation is necessary to counteract this evil.

Indeed, it would, in my opinion, *at the present rate of wages* be oppressive to the poor.

I remain, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
GEO. OSBORN ROGERS.

RELIEVING OFFICERS' EVIDENCE.

THAME UNION.

96. *William J. Nash*, relieving officer, Bucks district, inspector of nuisances:

"The cottages are not good throughout my district, and are very bad in some parishes. Worst in Brill, Towersey and Shabbington. The poor in the district are very badly off. As inspector of nuisances I have summoned 10 persons in 12 months."

BUCKINGHAM UNION.

97. *Mr. Richard King*, relieving officer, Tingewick:

"The worst cottages, as a rule, in my district are in Marsh Gibbon. In Marsh Gibbon a few women are employed in general farm work, such as setting beans; they get 1*s.* 8*d.* per bushel for bean planting; the men if planting beans make it a rule to plant a bushel, and then go and work at their allotment, some few work out the day, and can earn 2*s.* 6*d.* a day at it."

NEWPORT PAGNELL UNION.

98. *Mr. Wm. Gardener*, relieving officer, and inspector of nuisances:

"The cottages in my parishes are, as a rule, pretty good, the worst village I have, is Hanslope. Some very poor cottages in Olney. No women work on farms except a little in hay time and harvest. Girls make lace and sew shoes round Olney. Farm labourers have 11*s.* to 12*s.* a week; horse keepers 14*s.* There are two many beerhouses in some of our villages. I don't know any village of any size without a school. Very seldom see a boy at work under 10 years, except a few 'bird keeping.'"

99. *Mr. Chew*, relieving officer, and inspector of nuisances:

"I have 24 parishes, of which three have no schools; of these three, Shenley is the largest. The labourers' cottages in my parishes are generally good, the exceptions are North Crawley, and Little Brickhill: the cottages are very good in Great Brickhill, Water Eaton, and Broughton. Wages, average 12*s.* Few children are employed in farm labour under 12 years. I think the labourers are well off in my district."

AMERSHAM UNION.

100. Chesham district, *Mr. H. Scarr*, relieving officer:

"The wives and daughters of farm labourers in Chesham plait. The rents of their cottages vary from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* per week.

"Farm labourers wages vary from 11*s.* to 12*s.* a week in winter, now they are getting 15*s.* a week, haymaking, men mowing by the piece make 20*s.* to 22*s.* per week.

"The worst cottages in Chesham parish are in Botley and Ashley Green, and belong to small tenement holders. Boys seldom go to work before 10, and are generally at school up to that age. There is plenty of work for good labourers, but there are some the farmers would not employ at any price."

101. Amersham district, *Mr. W. Bryan*, relieving officer:

"In spring, boys are employed as young as 8 in weeding and 'bird starving,' but they are not generally regularly employed before 10 or 11. They get 4*d.* and 6*d.* a day picking couch.

"A few adult women are employed weeding by the piece they make 1*s.* to 1*s.* 2*d.* a day. In harvest they help their husbands in piece work. The cottages in my district generally are not good. In Penn and Chenies they are remarkably good where they belong to the landowners. There are bad cottages without ventilation or drainage in Washington Row in Amersham. There are very bad cottages in Chalfont St. Giles, and in Lee, belonging to small owners. If corn gets dear the farmers raise wages, last winter they gave 11*s.* to 12*s.*, the winter before, 10*s.* to 11*s.*

"The water supply is bad in Great Missendon and Amersham commons, and Penn."

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WYCOMBE UNION.

102. *Mr. J. J. Painter*, relieving officer, Stokenchurch district:

"In my district in Bucks children are a good deal employed in agriculture often below 10; up to 10 some go to school, and some do nothing. There are very few parents who cannot keep their children at school up to 10, after 10 the very poor people cannot keep them at school. In my Bucks district (part of district in Oxford) very few women work in fields. The Board does not pay for school attendance of children receiving relief, but encourages them to send them. The absence of the children from school arises chiefly from the carelessness of the parents."

103. *Mr. Russell*, relieving officer, Great Marlow district:

"I think the parents could send their children to school much more than they do. The ordinary wage near Marlow is 12*s.* a week.

ETON UNION.

104. *Mr. H. A. Aberdeen*, relieving officer:

"Children are rarely employed in farm labour in my district under 10.

"The boys who would be in the union house are farmed out with respectable cottagers, calculating 3*s.* 6*d.* for a boy's keep per week we deduct 2*s.* 3*d.* of his earnings or supposed earnings to pay the difference to the person he lives with. Suppose the boy can earn 3*s.*, we pay the person he lives with 1*s.* 6*d.* The cottages in my district (Datchet, Denham, Eton, Horton, Ives, Langley, and Upton,) are good, but the rents very high, 4*s.* to 5*s.* a week; the cottagers let part of their house which sometimes leads to crowding; very few cottages in Slough are altogether occupied by one family. Farmer's men earn 12*s.*, 13*s.*, and 14*s.* a week, and get 1*l.* a week for a few weeks in harvest. A good many women are employed weeding and couching, they get about 1*s.* a day in summer and 8*d.* a day in winter, and work from 8 a.m. till 4 p.m. Horses, and the boys with them, cease work at 2, and the boys help to look after the horses. The people are and have been healthy for some time past. As far as my experience goes, a single man, or a man and his wife without children, are more likely to get to the workhouse, than a man with a family."

Burnham district, *Mr. R. J. Rogers*, relieving officer:

"The effects on morality of the employment of females in agriculture are the worst possible, rendering them wholly unfit for domestic duties. I consider that there should be a system of compulsory education applicable to both sexes. The standard should of course be low, but I would enact that every child must be able to read and write, and do simple sums in arithmetic before he or she be permitted to receive wages. When the child had attained to this educational standard, he or she should be furnished with a certificate entitling him or her to work. It should be made a misdemeanor to employ any child unable to produce such a certificate. The cottages are very dear in Burnham parish, 3*s.*, 3*s.* 4*d.*, and 3*s.* 6*d.* a week for anything like a decent cottage; 14 cottages called 'the Barrack' are very bad and dirty, are let at 2*s.* per week."

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SCHOOL TEACHERS' EVIDENCE.

Aylesbury Union.

106. *Mr. Wm. Gibbins.*—National School, 1st class (certificate), Waddesdon; 9 years teacher.

"The vast majority of young persons in the parish are growing up without any education to be of practical use to them. They come to school at 3, and attend till about 8, and their attendance is so bad that they come back to the night school in a year or two unable to form their letters. In Standard V. of the Revised Code, in five years, I have only presented seven boys and three girls, and of these only five boys and two girls belong to the class of farm labourers. In Standard VI., I have presented one boy and two girls, speaking of children for whom I can claim a grant. A boy of average ability, if kept regularly at school till 10, would be able to read and write, and cipher easily, and I think the night school would be sufficient with good attendance, say an attendance of 36 nights of 1½ hours, to keep up their education. This school would be much better if there was only one in the village."

107. *Mr. H. H. Clark.*—Aston Clinton National School; 7 years teacher; 3 years at Aston Clinton.

"Boys, as well as girls, are withdrawn from my school for plait. Some boys are obliged by their parents to plait 18 scores per week, about 12 of these come to me from three to five half-days in the week; they are obliged to come three half-days to obtain the benefit of Lady de Rothschild's clothing and shoe clubs, into which they pay 5*d.* per week and receive shoes and clothing to the value of 10*d.* Some boys as young as 7 are employed in the gangs about the grounds at Aston Clinton. If a boy attended school regularly from 6 to 10, he should be able to read, write, and use the first four rules of arithmetic for ordinary purposes; if they were compelled to attend a night school regularly for the winter half-year it would be sufficient to keep up this elementary education. Day attendance during three winter months would be quite as effective, or more so. One hour's attendance in day school is equal to three in night school."

108. *Mr. Jas. Little.*—Dinton, certificated teacher; 14 years' standing.

"If a boy came to school at 5 and remained till 10, attending regularly, he would be able to read and write tolerably well, and do the first four rules of arithmetic. I think that if after 10 he attended regularly at a night school, say six months of three nights per week, it would be sufficient to keep up that education. I think the parents in this parish are anxious to send their children to school."

109. *Mr. Thos. Eagleton.*—Stone; 27 years' teacher.

"If a boy attended school regularly from 5 to 10 years of age, he would be able to read with facility, and do the first four rules of arithmetic. Between 10 and 13, this elementary education might be kept up by attendance during four winter months, or regular attendance at night school. Such education would be quite sufficient for agricultural labourers."

Winslow Union.

110. *Mr. Thomas Piper.*—National and Free School teacher. A teacher for 30 years, in Gloucestershire, Devonshire, Hampshire, Kent, Suffolk, Middlesex, Herts, and Bucks; 3 years in Winslow.

"I think the ability of children varies a good deal in different counties, and that town boys are sharper than country boys, as a rule. I think the children I have here are slower than those, for instance, in Herts or Suffolk, or Kent or Gloucester. The sharpest boys of the agricultural class I have had were in Kent. I think that the boys here, if they could attend regularly from 6 up to 10, would require very little school attendance after 10 to maintain their reading, writing, and cyphering; say attendance at night schools up to 13. I visit, as a Scripture reader, many parents of children attending and not attending school. When children are not attending I find it is in consequence of the want on part of the little money the children earn at bird keeping, for instance. The cost of living in this parish is very high, and wages low and irregular, and I therefore think that many parents with large families could not afford to keep their children at school without some assistance."

111. *Mr. J. R. Ager.*—Middle Claydon, certificated teacher, 12 years' standing.

"If a child came at 6 and remained in regular attendance up to 10, he should be able to read and write pretty well, and ought to be able to use thoroughly the first four rules of arithmetic; between 10 and 13, I think half-time attendance would be sufficient to maintain this elementary education. I mean by *half time* such portions of the year, not less than six months, which should be specified beforehand, and regulated by the requirements of agricultural labour. And I think the requirements of agricultural labour in this district would allow such attendance. I think a good deal of pressure is put upon the parents by the farmer to obtain the labour of children for the sake of saving the wages of a man."

112. *Mr. Chas. Willcocks,* Beachampton, says, "I have been master of this school for 13 years, in "which time only one labourer's child has reached "the first class. There is an endowment of 70*l.* for "boys, we never refuse girls, but find it difficult to "get them to attend."

Leighton Union.

113. *Miss Pearson,* Eddlesborough:

"I have been teacher seven years. We teach plaiting in school; the children plait three hours per day. We stopped plait under 8 years old last week. We let the children plait to induce them to attend school. The attendance is very irregular after 8. The parents cannot keep their children without plaiting. Wages are very low in this parish, from 10*s.* to 11*s.* per week."

114. *Mr. Wotton Winsor.*—Certificated teacher, 3½ years standing.

"At 10 a child should be able to read and write easily, and use first four rules of arithmetic for ordinary purposes, attendance having been regular from five years old; from 10 to 13 four winter months' schooling would keep up this elementary education. I have a good many children of agricultural labourers up to 12. Our attendance is very good."

Amersham Union.

115. *Mr. Jas. Dolman.*—Chemies. Certificated master; 6 years.

"After regular attendance to 10 years of age, a half-time attendance would be necessary up to 13 years of age to keep up the elementary education gained at 10, and secure the power of using it in after life, say half-day, or alternate day, or even alternate week's attendance; but the interval for work should not be longer than a week. I think the boys here are tolerably sharp for an agricultural district. I found them duller in Surrey and the Isle of Wight."

Eton Union.

116. Copy of a Letter from Mr. T. F. Mason, schoolmaster, Denham-Uxbridge, to George Culley, Esq.:—

Sir,

I have been requested by B. H. W. Way, Esq., of this parish, to state to you my view of educating children after they have been employed for a time at field work. My opinion is, and has always

been the same, that a child should be sent to school at an early age and there remain until he is at least 12 years of age, and under no pretence whatever should he be allowed to be kept from school to bird keep, or any other field work, until he is old enough to be permanently taken away to earn his daily bread. My opinion has been very carefully formed, and is the result of at least 20 years' experience as master of this school situate in an agricultural parish. I have long ago discovered that if a child has been kept from school, say during the summer months to go to farm work, and then returns on the approach of winter, with very few exceptions does that child come back again with the same teachable mind as when he left school. He is restless, he is not docile, in a word, he shows symptoms of insubordination, and perhaps rightdown rebellion. It may be asked, what has wrought this great change in the once tractable, submissive, and quiet child? and the only answer that can be satisfactorily given is, that for the last four or five months, his companions or associates have been farm labourers, who have contaminated him with their coarse language and brutalizing conversation, coupled with the fact, that when at work they are not under the slightest discipline either at home or under the farmer who is his employer. I think boys living in an agricultural parish ought to leave school permanently to follow farm occupations at the age of 12 years, and not to exceed 13, except in rare cases, such as parents who are in better circumstances, and perhaps can afford to apprentice their children to trades, or other more lucrative positions in life than farm labourers.

I remain, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
T. F. Mason.

117. Marginal notes written by Sir Harry Verney, Bart., M.P., landowner, Claydon, Bucks, on a copy of the Assistant Commissioner's instructions:—

"I do not think that legislation is required for the purpose of limiting the hours of work for boys employed in agricultural labour, nor for the purpose of securing proper meal times, nor for the purpose of limiting the distance to which they should be allowed to go to their work, nor to protect females from unhealthy or unsuitable employment in agriculture."

"The defective state of the education of the young found at work, where such education is defective, is to be attributed to the indisposition of the parents to forego the weekly sum that may be added to the family earnings by the child's labour, and to the low moral tone of the parents."

"If it were decided to fix an age below which boys should not be allowed to be employed in farm work, I would suggest 10 years; but that would bear hard on a large young family, when a boy of 9 might earn 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* per week by bird keeping."

"A labouring man, with regular employment and a thrifty wife, can pay their children's schooling, excepting in cases of sickness or large families of young children (a wide exception)."

"Over-crowding of cottages is a great evil; much has been done to provide against it. I sometimes suggest to parents to let the boys or a young man sleep downstairs for a time, but they do not like it."

"Young girls are never employed in agricultural labour. A stout young woman or even a mother of a family can earn about 1*s.* daily haymaking."

"If any enactment were desirable, interfering between the farmer and labourer or labourer's children, I would suggest that ability to pass a very low examination in reading and writing is better than a limit of age."

"Such an examination might afford some stimulus to parents to take interest in their children's schooling."

"Care must be taken not to interfere in a way that may appear unjust to either; a little farmer often struggles as hard as a labouring man to make both ends meet. Neither farmer nor labourer ought to think that the latter is under the peculiar protection of the Government. There is some danger of employers of labour losing the sense of responsibility for their labourers and of parents for their children. Interference between farmer and labourer is a very nice point."

"I have often discussed with my rector, my steward, farmers and labourers, the question where cottages for farm labourers ought to be built: in the village or near the farm house, when at a distance, say, one or two miles from the village."

"My rector says near the school and church; the labourer's wife says the same, including, of course, as her reason the village shop, living near her friends, &c."

"Her husband objects to walking a long distance to his work, especially if he is walking all day, which is usually the case with the carter, ploughman, &c.; but the work of many farm labourers is more of the hands and arms than of the legs, such as hedging and ditching, plashing hedges, pulling thistles, thrashing, and thatching. These do not suffer by a walk to and from their work. The most responsible man on a farm is the carter; the farmer likes to have him live near, in case of an accident, and to bait his horses."

"When the horses come in in winter they get first a little hay, then the carter goes to his dinner, and then ought to spend 1½ or 2 hours baiting (oats and chaff) and cleaning his horses, after which he leaves his horses with their supply of hay for the night. For this duty a carter ought to be near; but if his cottage is TOO NEAR, the children would always be in the farm yard, to the great annoyance of the farmer."

"What I desire for my outlying farms is to have a couple of cottages for each, on the hard road, supplying a dry walk to the village; and I would let those with my farm, so that the farmer would have entire control over his labourers living in them. This power might occasionally be abused, but it would be to the interest of both farmer and labourer to do fairly by each other."

"Formerly the carter used to be unmarried, and live in the farm house."

118. Copy of Letter from Rev. W. R. Fremantle, Claydon, to Geo. Culley, Esq.

Claydon Rectory,
July 7th, 1868.

Dear Sir,

I find, from a conversation with Sir Harry Verney, that you are in possession of all the information which I could give you with respect to the state of education at Claydon; I will not, therefore, trouble you with a repetition of it. I will only venture to make a remark which is based upon the experience of 30 years in a rural district. The real difficulty of school-keeping is to secure the attendance of children. Labourers in the receipt of 10*s.* or 12*s.* a week prefer the 2*s.* or. 2*s.* 6*d.* per week which a little boy of 7 or 6 years of age will earn by keeping a pig in the lane or minding sheep, to the payment of 2*d.* per week for his learning to read and write. Many of the farmers encourage this, because they too often obtain work at 2*s.* 6*d.* per week out of a big strong boy, which otherwise would cost them 10*s.* from an adult. I am not at all sure whether the fault does not lie more in the employers than in the employed; but wherever the evil lies there is only one cure for it, and that is in a protective law for little boys and girls—protection against the covetousness of parents and the covetousness of employers. The law I should like to see passed would be of this nature: no boy or girl shall be employed in manual work until they can produce a testimonial signed by a certificated master or mistress, and countersigned by the clergyman of the parish, or the minister of the chapel or church to which the individual belongs, that they can read and write. The advantages of this law would be twofold: first, it would prevent little children being put to hard labour before they are fit for it, and secondly it would compel the employer to pay a just price for work done, and enable parents to do better for their children. Often and often I have known a strong father out of work while a little boy has been the breadwinner of

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the family; and I may add that, generally when a child has been long enough at school to learn to read and write, he is not hastily taken away, the benefits of a good education are realized. I was looking over our school registers not long ago, which have been kept since 1825, and in tracing out the history of a generation I have found that almost in every case where the boys began life by a regular and continuous attendance at the school, they have turned out well, and to this there is scarcely an exception, whereas in the example of irregular attendance, and of short duration, the boys have either come to grief, or have grown up into the type or the ignorant alehouse sot, their families a burden to everyone. Of course, there may be here and there an exception to this, but it is rare. Hoping that Government will take this view of the subject in hand,

I am, dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,
W. R. Fremantle.

P.S.—I am of opinion that the present system of Government inspection does not work well. The efforts of the masters and mistresses is to give the children a sort of mechanical knowledge of the three subjects which will secure for them the Government grant, beyond this next to nothing is taught. I am perfectly certain that our boys were better taught, knew more, could answer general questions better, write quite as well, and read as well 20 years ago as they do now.

119. Copy of a letter from B. H. W. Way, Esq., J.P., Lord of the Manor of Denham, to Geo. Culley, Esq.

Dear Sir, June, 30th, 1868.

I write a few lines to add to anything that may have been said at Slough to-day with reference to the education of the lower orders, I am still of opinion that compulsory education would be of great value to the community for many reasons, among others—

1. He would be amenable to wholesome discipline, say from 6 to 10 years of age.

2. He ought in that time to have mastered reading, writing, and the four first elementary rules of arithmetic, to which might be added history and geography, and of course have received religious instruction, which otherwise, he must, I apprehend, be totally without.

3. A man that cannot read, if out of work, or if it be too wet for his labour, instead of being able to amuse himself with a book, is driven to a public house for relaxation, where he spends in beer that which ought to go in bread, and drunkenness is the curse of the labourer.

4. Take up any calendar at any assize, and see how Imp., R., and N. will preponderate among the prisoners.

5. The child is father to the man, how then can a boy who has been utterly neglected make an honest and industrious labourer?

I could continue much longer, but will conclude now having given my opinion so far. I may however add that, I think it would be very desirable that parishes which are anxious to have "compulsorily education," should not be deprived of the means of acquiring it, because certain people are blind to its advantages, and one of their number considers education the greatest curse of the labourer.

I think the employment of boys in bird keeping is a great mistake, a man with a gun would be much cheaper and more efficient, as it is impossible to keep boys in such work.

I am, dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,
B. H. W. Way.

Lord of the Manor of Denham, Bucks.

120. Extract from a letter from Mr. W. Brown, land agent, of Tring, to the Assistant Commissioner, enclosing a report of a lecture on "The labourer and the cottage," delivered by Mr. Brown at a meeting of the Royal and Central Bucks Agricultural Association, held at Aylesbury in April 1867.

Sir, Tring, July 1868.

I send you the only report I have of the paper read at Aylesbury last year. My experience since that time confirms my opinion that the greatest drawback to the improvement of the agricultural labourer is the confounded beershop and the temptation to men to drink more than is necessary for their good. The beershops are the curse of the country. It is seldom that an honest, temperate, and industrious man allows his family to be brought up improperly, and so long as such temptations are held out for drunkenness, I see but little chance of improvement. If the Commission with which you are connected overlooks this crying evil I shall regret it.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
Wm. Brown.

To G. Culley, Esq.

The following are extracts from Mr. Brown's paper. After speaking of the contest going on between town and country in the labour market, and of the inducement which may be held out to young men to remain in or return to their native villages as farm labourers, Mr. Brown goes on to discuss the question of education, where he says:—

"I think I may calculate on the general assent of my audience (nearly all Bucks farmers) when I say that the early age at which children are now employed in labour to the neglect of their education, is both morally and physically wrong. The mode and extent of the education they should receive is a contested point, but no one will deny that to train them up to fear God and honour the Queen, it is necessary they should not only be taught to read and write, but made to understand religious truths and principles, so as to enable them to perform their duty in after years. . . . . It has been contended that children should not be sent to work until they are 10, or for a whole day until they are 12 years old, and suggestions have been made that half the day should be devoted to education and the other half to suitable labour, or according to the system of Mr. Paget, which has many recommendations, on alternate days; but I can scarcely see my way to any general adoption of this system, because the farmer has but little need of a boy, unless his services are continuous. It has occurred to me that, as full employment can be found in summer and the reverse in winter, it would be better if the boys under 12 or 13 received their education during the winter months, restricting the labour to the elder boys and men, who would be better able to battle with the rough weather. I am aware how difficult it is for a labourer with a family to earn sufficient to enable him to do without his boys' earnings up to 12 years, but with better management it may generally be met."

On the subject of labourers' cottages, Mr. Brown says, "Does not every good farmer at the present day " demand more and better shelter for his cattle, and " conveniences for preparing their food, and does he " not insist that they are absolutely necessary to the " proper cultivation of the soil? If this be so, is " it not right that the man who is to till the soil and " look after these cattle should be treated equally " well; in fact, are not the dwellings of the labourers " part and parcel of the manufactory of the farm " . . . . . These cottages cannot be erected in " this neighbourhood at a cost less than 250*l.* the " pair, which at 4 per cent. (treated as farm build- " ings), would make the rent 5*l.* per annum or say " 2*s.* per week, and this the labourer, with such " conveniences and a garden at the rear of his house, " can well afford to pay, indeed better than half the " sum for a miserable cottage and scanty garden. I " approve of the allotment system near towns and " villages, but half the quantity of land at the rear of " the cottage is of as much value as double the quan-

" tity at a distance. The spare minutes of himself, " his wife, and family, can be better devoted to the " cultivation under such circumstances."

On the subject of wages, Mr. Brown quotes examples of wages paid on farms in Dorsetshire, Wilts, Bucks, Lincolnshire, and Yorkshire, tending to show that there is no such great difference as is supposed in the actual earnings of farm labourers and their families, or rather of the means of earning at their disposal if they choose to avail themselves of them, in the different counties named; that the cost of labour on farms does not vary with the nominal wage of the district but rather with the management, kind of cultivation, and merit of the labourers employed; and that the general tendency of increased means of communication is to equalize wages. In conclusion, Mr. Brown says, "Why do I advocate education, I " will not say better education because some do get " it, and I regret to add, abuse it afterwards; but " what I am contending for is a suitable education, " that a youth, when he approaches manhood, may " know how to read and write, that his spare time " may be devoted to the improvement of his mind, " and that he may comprehend why he does certain " things, and not move about very often with less " sagacity than the shepherd's dog. You cannot " fail to see that better stock, better implements, and " expensive machinery are being kept, and to whom " are these to be entrusted? To an ignorant la- " bourer who may ruin an animal or spoil an imple- " ment in a very short space? Again, why do I " advocate good cottages and gardens upon or near " the farms? It is to encourage the respectable, " honest, industrious man, to prevent his having to " pass a beershop every time he goes to his home " or to a crowded town or village where 'Evil com- " 'munications corrupt good manners.' . . . . . " Why have I troubled you at such length about " wages? It is because I believe it to be a pressing " matter, and that you will have to use greater dis- " crimination upon this point. A good, honest, in- " dustrious labourer, who does a fair day's work and " interests himself in his master's welfare, must be " treated differently to those who get through the " day as easy as they can and care but little about " the result. From what I have read to you the " highest wages are not the most costly per acre, " and from my own experience, good men at good " wages are cheaper in the end. I have lately seen " it stated that in certain localities the farmers, unso- " licited, have agreed to raise the rate of wages 1*s.* " per week all round, but I submit to you that this " is a mistake and wrong in principle. You cannot " make alterations all at once, or reduce some men's " pay to what they are actually worth, but you can " increase the wages of the deserving, whether he " be a married or a single man. I strongly advocate " paying men by piece-work whenever practicable. " I believe the farmer will get more for his money, " and the industrious the advantage to which he is " entitled over the indolent."

121. Copy of Letter from Mr. William Paxton, Land Agent, to Geo. Culley, Esq., Assistant Commissioner.

Gt. Berkhampstead,
June 6th, 1868.

SIR,

I HAVE perused the instructions from the Commissioners, and am unable to see their applicability, as a whole, to this neighbourhood, as women and girls are not employed on the land, and few boys under the age of 13 go to daily labour.

This, no doubt, is attributable to their being engaged in straw plait making, and to their being able to earn, when the trade goes pretty well, much more money than they would if employed in farming work, also with less wear and tear of clothing, and not so large consumption of food.

The question as to what "legislation" is required for the protection of juvenile or female labour in agriculture, and for the promotion of the education of the young throughout the agricultural districts, may, I think, be answered in very few words, viz., "to pay " better wages, and provide decent accommodation in " the cottages."

The first step to be taken is to "humanize" the individuals by providing them with proper sleeping apartments to separate the sexes, and to effect this object no cottage should be allowed to be erected unless it contains three spacious and well-ventilated bedrooms.

Secondly, to regulate wages "proportionately to " the value of agricultural produce," and to fix as a standard one peck of flour, or the value thereof, to be paid for a fair day's labour.

If the Legislature can be induced, in the face of the supply and demand of the labour market, to remedy the two existing objections "of insufficient accommo- " dation in the cottages, and inadequate wages," there will, I believe, soon arise a more satisfactory state of things in the agricultural districts.

The late Earl Brownlow took very great interest in the welfare of the cottage tenantry on his estate, and forbad any cottages being let with the farms. He was continually directing improvements also to be made for better accommodation, and I am happy to say the present Earl is equally desirous to add to their comfort and improve their condition.

The proportion of Earl Brownlow's cottages to the acreage of the estate varies considerably in the different parishes, but I think if taken as a whole it is ample.

I remain, Sir,
Your obedient, faithful servant,
WM. PAXTON.

Geo. Culley, Esq.

122. Copy of Letter from Mr. Thomas Beards, Land Agent, Stowe, to Assistant Commissioner.

SIR,

June 22nd, 1868.

I WAS not at home when your note and enclosures arrived, otherwise I should have called on you for a few minutes' conversation regarding the subject in question. I have not much time to write thereon, but having a large intercourse with agricultural labourers in many counties I do not believe they are so badly off and harshly treated as some would-be philanthropists represent them to be. No doubt there are many improvident farm-labourers, and some employers not exactly what they should be, but the same case applies to the manufacturing classes. My opinion is our legislators might find better employment for their talents, if they possess any, than to keep boys idle until 13 years of age, or to educate them by Act of Parliament.

I am, Sir,
Yours obediently,
THOS. BEARDS.

123. Answers to Assistant Commissioners' Questions by Rev. P. T. Ouvry, J.P., Wing, Leighton Buzzard.

1. Is legislation required for the purpose of fixing the age below which children should not allowed to be employed in farm labour?—Yes, for the purpose of securing for them a satisfactory elementary education. Boys over 13 are now discharged in favour of smaller boys at less wages. Boys are now employed at 7 years of age. I think it should be enacted that no boy should be employed in farm labour under 10.

2. There is no injury done to children employed in farm labour in this district through the hours not being limited.

3. As to the Factory Act principle.—Half-days, or alternate days, at school and work are quite impracticable. School attendance for a certain number of hours during preceding six or 12 months would do pretty well. The best plan I think would be alternate weeks. A farmer who now employs 10 boys would then employ 20; there should be a certificate of the past week's schooling to qualify for the week's work.

Buckinghamshire.

Mr. Culley.

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124. Answers to Assistant Commissioner's Questions by W. G. Duncan, Esq., J.P., and Chairman of Newport Pagnell Board of Guardians.

I do not think legislation is required in this county to fix the age below which children should not be allowed to work on farms. Farmers do not care to have a child about their premises who is so young as to be of no use; but at 9 years old, the time when they may be of use in odd jobs, they are better learning how to do work than at school, learning only to read and write. Labourers with large families cannot afford to lose what their boys of upwards of 9 years of age can earn for them. Besides, the boys are learning how to be good labourers. I never knew a boy kept at school till he was 13 that was any use as a labourer when he grew up. I have known several such cases.

I should say, as a general rule, 9 years of age is early enough for most boys to go out, but some boys at 8 are stronger than some at 9.

I should not advise any limitation to the hours of work of children.

Half-day at school and half-day at work is ridiculous, neither would any farmer employ a boy three days a week, nor is it necessary. In my opinion education should be left to the parents. It is impossible to enforce education. Lodges and cottages, lying two miles perhaps from the school, how is it possible for a child under 9 years of age to be frequently at school. If the State means to have education compulsory, the State must take the school to the child, and pay for its schooling.

W. G. Duncan.

125. Copy of letter from the Rev. J. Tarver, Filgrave, to Geo. Culley, Esq.

Dear Sir, June 24th, 1868.

I find that I cannot fill up the answers in the form you left with me, as to the employment of children in agricultural labour, to any purpose. Our numbers are really so small as to yield nothing. I cannot make up half a dozen boys of our own inhabitants, and we do not employ girls in the fields at all. The lace pillow is a great difficulty with us, as it draws off the girls almost at an earlier age than the boys are taken on to the farms, and I don't know where we could get a vote like that passed at the Newport Pagnell Union so as to affect them.

Believe me,
Faithfully yours,
J. Tarver.

126. Copy of Letter from the Rev. F. A. Faber to Geo. Culley, Esq.

Dear Sir,

So far as the *boys* are concerned I don't think that anything but compulsory education will be of any avail. They are taken away from school as soon as they can earn anything in the fields, either by tending animals or scaring birds. This applies even to the Sunday school, and prevents any regularity. The girls are not taken so early, and so they have a better beginning. They are, however, employed in weeding and stone picking, and if this were not the case there is the lace pillow at home. There is no doubt, however, that the girls, as a general rule, are more advanced than the boys.

Faithfully yours,
F. A. Faber.

127. Copy of Letter from Mr. E. M. Baynes, solicitor and clerk of the Magistrates acting for the Hundred of Ashendon.

Dear Mr. Culley,

Speaking solely as to this locality I do not think that legislation is required, except that I consider that no lad under 14 years of age should be allowed to have the sole charge of a horse and cart upon a public road; there is a penalty for allowing a child under 13 years of age to drive a cart or waggon on a turnpike road, seldom enforced and not applying to other public roads. I am not aware that any ground exists for limiting the hours of work of children, but, if there be, I should say let the limit be 10 hours a day between April 1st and Oct. 1st, and 8 hours for the rest of the year, including a proper allowance of time for meals.

As regards the education of the children of the labouring class, I think that is pretty well attended to *now* in most parishes; but it has frequently struck me, when seeing the children that are brought up in the union workhouse here and contrasting their clean, cheerful, healthy appearance with that of *most* of the children one sees running about the villages, what a good thing it would be if some plan could be devised and adopted by which such of the labouring population as thought well might be enabled to have their children, say, from 4 or 5 to 10 years old, maintained, clothed, and educated at some public establishment in the neighbourhood (totally unconnected with the union workhouse), the parents paying a small weekly sum for each child so taken off their hands. There would of course be a great prejudice, at first, with parents against such an establishment, and it is probably altogether impracticable, but could it be carried out, I think, in a great many cases, both parents and children would be great gainers, and society also. I would give every facility for parents, friends, and others visiting the children, and let them have two months' holiday, during July and August, if desired, and at other times on application under certain regulations.

Believe me, dear Mr. Culley,
Yours very truly,
E. R. Baynes.

G. Culley, Esq.,
&c. &c.

ALLOTMENT SYSTEM.

128. Mr. Henley's allotments.

The following is a statement of the number, size, and rent of the allotments in Shabbington and Oakley parishes, provided by the Right Hon. J. W. Henley, M.P., from information given to the Assistant Commissioner by Mr. Higgs, of Oakley, who lets and collects the rents of these allotments:—

Parish.	Name of Field.	Total Number of Allotments.	Total Acreage.	Average size of Allotment.	Rent per Acre.	Rent per Pole.
			a. r. p.	a. r. p.	s. d.	d.
Shabbington -	Open wood - -	43	60 3 10	1 1 26	21 4	1¾
Do. -	Grubbing ground	29	11 1 27	0 1 27	28 0	2
Oakley - -	Oakley wood -	29	20 3 5	0 2 34	33 0	2½
Do. - -	Burnt cover -	29	5 3 29	0 0 33	22 3	1¾

Total number of allotments, 130.
Total acreage in allotments, 98 a. 3 r. 31 p.

The following is the evidence of James, Cox, woodman, who showed the allotments to the Assistant Commissioner:

"Oakley was a wild blackguard place, and Mr. Henley have done it to cure the place; they are not allowed to plough, and that makes so much more work, you see, sir; I am certain the allotment system keeps down poaching and such like; the first as is caught poaching loses his allotment, and they be afraid to go a poaching for fear they should lose their land, and that be a wonderful good thought of Mr. Henley's, I reckon."

DORTON ESTATES.

129. The following is a statement of the allotment system in the Dorton estates.

Parish.	Acreage in Allotments.	Number of Tenants.	Number of Cottages.	Average size of Allotments.	Rent per Acre.
	a. r. p.			a. r. p.	s. d.
Dorton - - -	4 2 0	24	21	0 0 30	23 8
Chilton - -	19 0 0	101	53	0 0 30	26 5
Boarstall - -	19 0 0	13	21	1 1 34	24 0
Brill - -	39 0 0	105	11	0 1 20	42 8½

Total acreage in allotments, 81 a. 2 r.
Total number of tenants, 243.
Total number of cottages, 106.

OVING.

130. Of the allotments in Oving the *Rev. W. H. Young* says, "They are not equitably distributed, "some have a good deal, some none. At rents varying from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* per acre."

AYLESBURY.

131. *Mr. Fowler*, occupier, gives his labourers 20 poles of his best land at 50*s.* per acre (his own rent) and returns the rent, with some addition in prizes for vegetables.

STONE.

132. *Mr. Joseph Hughes*, occupier, said, "Nearly "all the labourers have allotments, most have 40 "poles, many half an acre. A man should not have "more than a rood if he is to do justice to himself "and his employer. I think every man ought to "have 30 or 40 poles, but not more."

133. *Mr. Monk*, occupier, gave the same opinion.

134. *John Howlett*, a labourer, occupying two roods of allotment ground in Stone parish and unable to work much, gave evidence as follows: "I pay 40*s.* "for two roods and 3*l.* for my cottage, we could not "pay our rent if it was not for the allotment, to pay "our rent, 5*l.*, and keep us in vegetables is as much "as ever a man can do with two roods."

DINTON.

135. At a parish meeting four occupiers present agreed that 20 poles of good ground are sufficient for a regular farm labourer, and that he ought to have it.

BIERTON.

136. *Mr. Bell*, occupier, said, "A few of my men "had not allotments and I gave them about 20 poles "each at 5*s.*"

LUDGERSHALL.

137. *Mr. Stone*, landowner, says, "I let 30 acres "in allotments; the tenants are bound to spade husbandry; the allotments are from half an acre to "two acres. This had great effect in depauperizing "the parish, this was begun just at the time of the "introduction of the New Poor Law in 1835."

NEWPORT PAGNELL.

138. *Mr. Chew*, relieving officer, says, "I consider "any allotment over 40 poles too much. I think 30 "poles the right size for growing vegetables."

BENEFIT CLUBS.

139. *Robert Fowler*, labourer, Great Brickhill. "There is a feast to-day of the Duncombe Arms "Benefit Club. I am the oldest member. The club "was formed 30 years ago and I think it will last "my time. Some years ago Sir Henry Foulis offered "through honorary members to secure the club 40*l.* "a year if we would meet at the school and have a "supper at 1*s.* a head instead of the club feast at "2*s.* 6*d.* They were as if they would swallow me "when I proposed this to the club, and they would "have nothing to say to it; they like to have an "'all joble,' and a good many young ones join for "the sake of the holiday and beer; we have about "30*l.* in hand and 55 members, we have had above "70 members. Sir Philip Duncombe has helped us "sometimes. I had eight children, and I had 'em "all taught to read and write, one of 'em can write "like a young lawyer. Plait is not good now, but "I have known it worse."

SOUTH BUCKS FRIENDLY SOCIETY.

140. There is a large friendly society called the South Bucks Friendly Society, having its centre at Great Missenden, about which the following statement was made to the Assistant Commissioner by the secretary, Mr. W. M. Clark.

"We have 894 ordinary and 80 honorary members, and invested capital of 11,280*l.* and a floating balance of 126*l.*

PLAITING SCHOOLS.

141. The Assistant Commissioner received from the chief constable of Bucks (Captain Drake), "A "Return showing the number of Plaiting Schools "in the Central and South-eastern Divisions of "Bucks," giving the name of the teacher, situation of the school, description of room, number and age of children employed, and time so employed daily. The following is a summary of this return:—

The number of schools in these divisions is 102 in 30 different parishes; the number of children attending these schools at the time the return was made was—

Children under 8 years of age - -	658
" between 8 and 13 years of age	799
Total -	1,457

The parishes included in these returns are—

Princes Risborough.	Cheddington.
Monks ditto.	Horton.
Ellesborough.	Marseworth.
Stoke Mandeville.	Slapton.
Great Kimble.	Ivinghoe.
Little ditto.	Wingrave.
Buckland.	Aston Abbots.
Great Missenden.	Stewkeley.
Wendover.	Dunton.
Dinton.	Hogston.
Aston Clinton.	Chesham.
Weston Turville.	Amersham.
Wing.	Penn.
Cubbington.	Chesham Bois.
Eddlesborough.	Little Missenden.

The plaiting rooms are thus described:—

3	are described as	"Parish Schools."
2	"	"Large room."
20	"	"Schoolroom."
58	"	"Cottage room."
5	"	"Front kitchen."
1	"	"Back kitchen."
8	"	"Badly ventilated and crowded."
6	"	"Badly ventilated."

The sizes of rooms are only given in four instances. They are—

ft.		ft.
12	+	12.
12	+	11.
12	+	10.
12	+	9.

Buckinghamshire.

Mr. Culley.

f.

The number of hours the children are employed is given as under :—

In	6	schools for	12 hours.
In	2	„	9 „
In	6	„	8 „
In	1	„	7½ „
In	35	„	7 „
In	4	„	6½ „
In	34	„	6 „
In	2	„	5½ „
In	3	„	5 „
In	1	„	3½ „
In	8	„	the hours are not given.

Of the 21 schools in the parish of Chesham it is said. "Nearly all the schools in this parish employ "the children up to 9 p.m. when the trade is good ;" and the same might be said of many others, adding about three hours to the usual six or seven hours when trade, as at the time the returns were made, is not good. The usual hours returned as 8 or 9 a.m. to 12 noon, and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., would be lengthened by adding 5 to 8 p.m. or 6 to 9 p.m.

Of two of the schools it is said reading and writing are taught.

Great Missenden.

142. *Mrs. Hall* has 22 children in her school now, used to have 30 or 32. "Some children come to me "half the day, and go to the day school half the day, "5 of the 22 do so. All these children can read ; I "teach them the lessons for next Sunday. It was "very close when we had 30 children."

At another plait school in Missenden visited by the Assistant Commissioner, the children were taught to read the lessons for the following Sunday.

Cheddington.

143. *Mrs. Tooley* :—"I have had a school off and "on for 30 years. I think to become good plaiters "they should begin at 5 years old ; they should "*not* begin before 5. I think if they did not begin "to plait till 8 they would take a long time to "become good plaiters. If a child begins at 5 it "takes 12 months before it can earn enough to pay "for the straws. There were 22 children in the "school ; the eldest girl I have in school is 15, the "youngest 8. Before the policeman came I had "five or six under 8. I have had 40."

144. Per-centage of males and females signing the marriage register with a mark in Bucks :—

In 1855, men, 39·2 ; women, 45·3.
In 1865, „ 28·4 ; „ 28·9.

Per-centage of improvement in 10 years in Bucks :—

Men, 10·8 ; women, 16·4.

Per-centage of improvement in England :—

Men, 7· ; women, 10·

Per-centage in England who signed with marks in 1865 :—

Men 22·5.
Women, 31·2.

Poor Rate.

145. Cost per head of population (census 1861) of charges for the maintenance and out-relief for year ending Lady-day 1868, in four unions in Bucks :—

Union.	In Maintenance.	Out Relief.	Total Relief.	Average per head of Population, 1861.
	£	£	£	s. d.
Aylesbury - -	1,827	9,483	11,810	9 7
Thame - -	646	5,052	5,698	7 5
Winslow -	452	2,606	3,058	6 7½
Wycombe - -	2,318	11,070	13,388	7 7½

EXTRACTS FROM RETURNS.—Mr. C. J. BOYLE.

(*Compiled by Mr. P. Selby, Secretary to the Commission.*)

HUNTINGDONSHIRE.

The illness and consequent resignation of Mr. C. J. Boyle interrupted the progress of his inquiry in Huntingdonshire. However, 26 returns to the circulars distributed by him have been received. These returns embrace a wide and important agricultural district; they include a population of nearly 14,000 people, and cover an area of about 50,000 acres.

Some of these returns come from parishes where private gangs are to be found, and the state of education among children employed in these gangs is generally admitted to be neglected, though some of the returns do not allow that "gang work" is the cause. The returns in many instances show that the school attendance is fair, but that the children leave school at too early an age in order to go to work, and that this loss is only partially, and at best inadequately supplied by evening schools.

The returns also show that the attendance of the children is very little affected either by distance from the school or by the inability of the parents to pay the fees.

The question is not the payment of the school pence, but the loss of the child's earnings. It was publicly stated at a recent meeting of the Peterborough Chamber of Agriculture, that "the supposed in-" "difference of parents to the education of their" "children was really a question of income."

Several witnesses speak strongly of the village beer-house as the great enemy of the school.

With respect to the employment of boys and girls in agriculture, 1st, as such employment affects their health; and 2nd, as it affects the morals of girls and their future aptitude for domestic duties, these returns disclose a striking unanimity of opinion on both points.

With the exception of children overworked in gangs under 10 years of age, it appears that field work is not only not detrimental to the health, but is by some witnesses pronounced to be highly beneficial. But the same witnesses, with scarcely an exception, agree in condemning the employment of girls in farm work, both as injurious to their morals, and as disqualifying them for home duties.

A large majority of the returns concur in recommending that a limit should be assigned below which children should not be employed; 10 years is generally taken as the limit, though some witnesses place it at eight years.

So far as these returns permit a conclusion to be arrived at, it appears that about one-fourth of the children and young persons employed in agriculture in that county, including those in private gangs, are under the age of 10 years, and many of these are under eight years.

In some brief notes, which Mr. Boyle's failure of health prevented him from expanding into a report, he has expressed his concurrence in the opinions on the subject of cottage accommodation either given to him personally or embodied in returns which are quoted below. With some exceptions, the cottages throughout the district visited by Mr. Boyle are insufficient in number, and defective in the accommodation they afford to their inmates.

Mr. Boyle quotes the words of a large farmer whose industry and skill had raised him from a humble origin to be the occupier of about 1,000 acres in the highest class of cultivation,—"Give them" (the labourers) "airy roomy houses and build them on the" "farms near to their work, and you will find there" "will be more cheerfulness *inside*, and less of the" "beershop *out*. A man who comes home after a" "long day's work to a clean comfortable room, will" "not be wishing to run out again directly and leave" "it; he will like to rest and sit down at his own fire-" "side, and enjoy his bit of supper there."

PARISH OF BLUNTISHAM.

Population - - - 1,351.

Extracts from a Return sent in by the Rev. John Bumff, Rector.

Education among the young of both sexes employed in private gangs "is very much neglected. The gangs" "work in the fields eight months of the year. Harvest" "is two months, so that there is but two months for" "school. The little gained in early days is lost by" "disuse, except where adult schools are established," "and these very adult schools in some measure act" "injuriously. The parents will not send their small" "children to week day school, because the money" "they earn goes into the family purse, and the excuse" "they make is that when grown up and on their own" "hook 'they can pick up as much larnin as they want" "'at the night skule for northin.'"

"The half-day system as recommended in the report very good in theory, but impracticable. The girls return home very wet, and have to change everything and dry their clothes for next day. There is neither inclination nor time for the afternoon school at two o'clock, always bearing in mind that children who have enjoyed the liberty of the gang will not submit to the necessary subordination of the school, in fact they hate it."

The half day at school and half day at work system is "impracticable."

"Equally so the alternate whole day at work and whole day at school, in consequence of weather, upon which so much of out-door employment depends."

The school attendance is chiefly affected by "the" "beerhouses, of which," writes Mr. Bumff, "I have" "one to every 42 men, women, and children, or to" "every eight families. Drinking therefore abounds" "without much drunkenness. 'Lowance' is also" "very common, three pints a day. This thins our" "school. If it were not for drink all would be well" "off and able to send their children pretty regularly."

With regard to cottage accommodation. "The" "cottage property, as a rule, belongs to small trades-" "men, and has been purchased for investment. I" "have one with a single bedroom in which upon *two*" "beds sleep father and mother, Mary aged 24, Lizzie" "18, Sam 19, John 16, and till very lately *two other*" "*young men*, one now dead and the other married," "and *the young woman to whom he was engaged.*" "No curtains! When Mary was confined her two" "youngest brothers slept at the bottom of the same" "bed with her and her sister, their feet coming in" "the middle."

A very interesting letter on the half-time system, addressed to Mr. Boyle by Mr. Charles P. Tebbutt, of Bluntisham, will be found in Appendix, Part 1., p. 147.

PARISH OF UPTON.

Population, 152 Acreage, 1,093.

Extracts from a Return sent in by the Rev. R. C. Dickerson.

"No case of injury to health or constitution from excessive labour has come under my observation. They themselves maintain that their life in the open air is healthful."

"The tone of morals is low." "Field work makes the woman's hands horny, which unfits them for needle-work. It also makes them averse to domestic duties."

"If any restriction is put on the employment of females in field work I would limit it to a defined age, say, for instance, that none should work in the fields till 17 years of age. This would induce parents to send their children to domestic service."

"The school attendance is not affected with us by the pecuniary resources of the parents." "The chief

difficulties are the want of efficient teachers and the disinclination to leave home at night when fatigued by the day's work."

PARISH OF PAPWORTH ST. AGNES.

Population, 165 - - - Acreage, 1,280.

EXTRACTS from RETURNS sent in by ARTHUR SPERLING, Esq., J.P.

"The only field labour injurious to health is weeding in high wet corn."

"Education is fair in this parish. It is quite the exception for a middle aged labouring man or woman to be unable to read."

"I think the employment of females in agriculture injurious to them. The girls are made coarse, the women lose more by neglect of their home duties than they earn in the fields. I would allow none to work under 8 years, and separate the sexes, and would prohibit females from working between 12½ and 18. I would also discourage but not prohibit all female labour in the fields."

"The half day at school and half day at work I think impracticable. The alternate whole day system might possibly answer."

"The school attendance is not affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents. The attendance at evening school is chiefly prevented by weariness after work."

PARISH OF HOLME.

Population, 644 - - - Acreage, 4,274.

EXTRACTS from a RETURN sent in by the Rev. EDWARD B. KNIGHT.

"The state of education of those who work on the land is miserable."

"I think the same restrictions necessary in the private as in the public gangs, especially as to the separation of the sexes and the character of the gang-master."

"The employment of females in agriculture unfits and indisposes them for domestic duties, and as a rule is unfriendly to morality. I believe the employment of girls is not necessary, and is most undesirable. Such labour sucks the blood of all social improvement, for even if they get no harm, I am certain they grow up to be the worst wives and mothers, helpless and ignorant in every domestic work. I would restrict their employment until the age of 14 or 15. This would encourage their being sent to school. No restriction should be placed on female labour in harvest time."

"I believe insufficient cottage accommodation to be decidedly prejudicial to the morality, health, and sobriety of the poor. It is impossible that a whole family can be brought up with the use of only one bedroom and escape injury. The depression and languor resulting from close and crowded rooms, especially in weak constitutions, is a great help to disease, and a great promoter of intemperate habits; I believe legislation is more needed here than in the matter of private gangs."

PARISH OF STILTON.

Population, 724 - - Acreage, 1,570.

EXTRACTS from a RETURN by the Rev. THOS. HUTTON, Rector.

"Field work as a regular system, is very injurious to the morality of females. It unfits them for domestic duties. In winter, when there is no field work, they are thrown upon the streets, and thus form the most serious obstacle to the moral elevation of the labouring classes." "I am inclined to think that the labouring classes would be great gainers in the end if all female labour in the fields were prohibited except in harvest. The next best step to this would be to prohibit all females under 18 except at hay and corn harvest. The prevailing opinion among farmers here is that female labour is unnecessary except at those busy seasons."

"An intelligent farmer here suggests that, in the case of boys, education should be made compulsory up to eight years of age, and also from 8 to 10 during the winter half year and from 10 to 12 during the three winter months; any further restriction he considers would be an undue interference with the claims of labour. He also thinks the half day and alternate day plans impracticable."

"The pecuniary resources of the parents affect "school attendance" to a large extent, not however so much from inability to pay the school fees as from unwillingness to exercise any self-denial to meet such a requirement. Every eighteenth house in this parish is a public house, and during the half year ending last Lady day 140 persons, or about one-fifth of the entire population, had recourse to parochial relief."

The want of cottage accommodation "has a most injurious influence on the condition of the labouring poor." "The moralities of life are not to be expected when its decencies are impossible. Ill constructed and unhealthy cottages have a most important influence on the self-respect and general habits of the labouring poor. They tend to turn wives into drabs, and husbands into drunkards; the children even when not employed are kept from school, either from want of decent clothing or because the means which ought to have gone for their education have been squandered in drink."

"The construction and drainage of cottages in many instances are very defective. There are 130 cottages in this parish, of these 64 have only one bedroom, 60 have two, and six three bedrooms; 40 have no back entrance; one family of five persons, four of six, two of seven, three of eight, two of nine, and one of ten persons occupy cottages with only one bedroom. The worst cottages generally belong to persons of limited means; nearly two-thirds of the whole are totally unfit for families to live in."

"The average rent is 1*s.* 6*d.* a week."

"It would be a great encouragement to industry and frugality, if every facility were given by law, and by building societies under the direction of the county gentry, to enable the labourer to purchase his own cottage in the course of a series of years by monthly or quarterly instalments."

PARISH OF ST. MARY, RAMSEY.

Population, 1088. - Acreage, 6,000.

EXTRACTS from a RETURN sent in by the Rev. WILLIAM COLLINS.

The state of education among the young of both sexes is "low, but not attributable to gang work."

"I consider that all children should attend school for four years at least before working in gangs or in field labour generally; that they should not work under eight or nine years of age; that from eight or nine to 13 children should attend school three or four months each year; this would keep up their learning, and be no hardship to either child or employer."

"I have not myself seen or heard of any evil or hardship arising out of the private gang system.

"I do not think that the employment of women in agriculture is hurtful to morality, but I do think it is not a good training for domestic duties; I do not recommend any restriction on such employment; it is an evil, but a necessary one."

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